Students seek changes to sex education

BY GRACE ANDERSON
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Two candidates hoping to be the next high school principal visited Lab this month. The search committee of nine U-High teachers, counselors and administrators met Jan. 14 to discuss the candidate visits, and according to committee chair Sandy Sidkey, middle school principal, and University Schools Director Mattie Appleby will make a decision soon. Mariama Richards

“I think the curriculum needs to be relevant to the present generation,” Nathan said. “There are many ways in which the health curriculum needs to reflect today’s teenager, and LGBTQ issues are just one instance.” He added that it is key for health teachers to include topics with which students identify. Assistant principal Thomas Paine, PE, department chair and health teacher, the main focus will be to make sure students understand that much of the information they learn about contraception and STDs applies to people of all sexual orientations. “We also discussed different books that students could be steered towards,” Mr. Paine said. “And Nathan gave me several titles that I believe are already in the library. The biggest thing that I took from the meeting is that he’d like us to speak more freely about different sexualities. Some kids may not even know what their sexual orientation is, but we can help to spark conversations and it’s really up to the students where those discussions go.”

Mr. Paine said that the PE department looks to make changes, ultimately it is difficult for teachers to address each student’s individual concerns. “In a perfect world, I would devote more time to sex-ed within our curriculum and develop it further so it encompasses all sexual orientations.” Mr. Paine explained. “In the past, we’ve talked about things we don’t know much about, but the feedback I’ve heard from students is that they hate sitting in a classroom for six weeks. Doing it separately from PE would be ideal, but I’m not sure how we could formulate this.”

Since changes to the curriculum do take time, Ms. Housinger has been working with Mattie on opportunities for the students to register their sexual health questions during lunch. In December, LaSurea Company hosted the first informal session. Students could also ask questions anonymously in advance. “Kids were really positive and asked a lot of good questions,” Ms. Housinger said. “We are going to continue having them, but since only women were in this first PE Calleri will be run- ning the next one.”

She said she has also been in communica- tion with the student health counseling department at the University of Chicago about what they could visit and respond to questions. Mr. Paine noted that it is an important stu- dent need for him to have the opportunity to ask questions outside the classroom. “I honestly think it’s really important that these seminars are occurring and that students are taking advantage of them,” Mr. Paine said. According to Mattie, she is personally involved in developing this seminar due to the fact that she has studied human sexuality and wanted to create a space where students could directly address their concerns. “This is something I’ve been interested Principal finalists share ideas for U-High with students

BY ALEX HARRISON
MANAGING EDITOR

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since freshman year when I read an article in The New York Times about sex-ed in Amer- ica, and I thought it was really cool,” Mattie said. “Ever since then, I’ve been studying human sexuality.”

Ms. Housinger noted that although stu- dents asked a wide variety of questions, many focused on the relationship between a person’s anatomy and birth control. In par- ticular, she mentioned that many girls did not understand how the hormonal regula- tion of the menstrual cycle functions.

To ensure students retain the informa- tion, teaching sex education in a relatable manner is crucial, Ms. Housinger explained. “When you’re talking about abstract science in class, you don’t think about in the same way as Let’s talk about how your body functions.” Mariama Richards said. “I think people are more comfortable teaching it as an abstract scientific system, but it sticks more when you apply it to your own body.”

Building off this idea, Mattie’s motive for developing a space that was creating a space where students could talk more openly was the idea of not only teaching students about creating a sense of shame.”

Mattie also noted that sex education should be an honest conversation, a activity that she believes the seminar effective. “Communication is about consent,” Mat- tiejistributions,” Ms. Housinger said. “I want to hear from you.”

With the recent controversies at Lab, Mr. Pernick explained how he would deal with difficult issues. “I was a principal in NYC on 9/11,” Mr. Pernick said. “I think it’s really important to create a space where everyone can get their thoughts out there while being respectful of each other’s feelings. I do think it’s impor- tant to find spaces for all arguments to be heard. Of course, I’m interested in creating a space where students can talk about what they think is important to make it somehow available to students. I’d like to be visible before, during and after the school day,” Mr. Pernick said. “I want people to know I am here as a place of inter- est, but I understand it takes time to break down those walls. I’ll admit I’m not very good at keeping food in my office, but that says to my inability to control myself. I don’t understand how my colleagues who have food don’t snack on M&M’s all day.”

He uses a unique platform to connect with his students. “I’m currently on Twitter and humbly ad- d I’ve broken 608 followers,” Mr. Pernick said. “I’m at a local radio station that I can connect to on a regular basis where I am. I also tweet student artwork as a way to recognize student performance, art and achievement. It helps everybody to bear all the great actions that happen within our school day and celebrate student achieve- ment.”

Platforms like Twitter allow him to forge relationships with the school and allow stu- dents to contact him in a familiar way. “If you write to me via email or send me a direct message, I will write back within 24 hours, but it will most likely be within the same day. I think it’s important to make it somehow available to students to learn from me.”

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Mr. Pernick said he is looking for more Lab than just his experience. “The most important thing I’ve learned is that I don’t know everything,” he said. “I’m so much more aware of what I don’t know now than I did five or ten years ago. I think it’s more valuable than to know what you do. My job never ends, and it’s about continuing to ask questions to learn more about the process of doing as a school and what direction we’re going. It’s my job to create that path.”

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Six students attend national diversity conference

BY MANA BOUSLEY MANAGING EDITOR

Despite the University of Chicago Laboratory Schools hopes to bring students from a diverse background to the Chicago by offering a local diversity of student perspectives.

Six U-High students attended the Student Diversity Leadership Conference in Tallahassee, Florida Dec. 3-5, accompanied by nine Lab teachers from high school, middle, low, and kindergarten.

The People of Color Conference for Independent Schools was run by the National Association of Independent Schools.

In their conference, students broke into discussion groups. With 1,600 students from inde- pendent schools across the coun- try, most were done in groups of 10 or 60 students selected randomly.

Student attendees included sen- ior Arun Sharma, junior Zoe Gold- berger, and Nathan Isaacs; juniors Jaelm Alaua and Nigel Telman; and sophomore Olivia Cheng.

Arun Sharma was convinced to go after hearing good things about it from his friends, who had at- tended in previous years.

"I would say that the main reason that I heard peo- ple really liked it was because as a minority at this school, it was just a really affirm- ing experience. There were quite a lot of students that have similar experi- ences to you," Arun said. "Another major reason why I wanted to go is because two of my very close friends were also going this year, so I thought I might as well join on board."

Along with being split up into random, diverse groups, students also broke into affinity groups — groups of students with a common identifier.

"I think being in the affinity groups was probably my favorite part of it," Arun said. "The big- gest thing I really gained was a sense that there was a lot of people like me that really cared about social issues, socially conscious, and people who have the same interest with me.

"We have a good momentum and we just want to sustain it and keep people involved," Arun Sharma, captain said.

Students go through a process in order to be a part of the sci- ence team and compete. There are 18 categories to choose from, making it possible to specialize in what they want to do. The team is flexible to students' interests and what they want to do, rather than imposing topics on them, said Mr. Catlett. Once stu- dents have chosen what they are interested in, they take an individ- ual assessment test, which guides them.

"The biggest thing I really gained was a sense that there are a lot of people like me that really cared about social issues, socially conscious, of diverse backgrounds at other independent schools."

"Arun Sharma, another student, said.

"If you don't have a really good feeling about it, you're not saying it is for some peo- ple. For me that is huge value. And I think why I was really excited is that they learned in Tampa into action here in Chicago by sharing with peers at this conference," Ms. Campos said.

"We will host a diversity conference in the Chicago area. About 20 students per school will be able to attend, according to Ms. Campos.

The idea of a Chicago conference occurred when Ms. Campos and other deans expressed frustration struggling to attract students to the national conference.

"It won't be the exact same ex- perience obviously," Ms. Campos said, “since it is being led by differ- ent people and it's only one day, as opposed to three. But I'm really excited about the opportunity to have a lot of students from independent schools to go back to school and do more with think we would like to see differ- ent, they were saying I'm a fourth grade teacher. It is so helpful for me to hear this because I can now go back to my fourth grade students and think about how I set the foundation. What work do I need to do so that when they get to high school, their experience will lead them to really tell you that your are saying it is for some peo- ple."

Six students attend national diversity conference

Plan in works to host Chicago event

BY MANA BOUSLEY MANAGING EDITOR

This year, the Science Team has worked on making the team stron- ger, both by prepping and by hav- ing good spirit.

The Science Team aims to give students an opportunity to use knowledge they gained in science courses and apply it, according to coach James Catlett.

The team is very driven, and works hard in order to place well at every competition, but the team- work and support of the group is also a major part of this team, said coach James Catlett.

"We want to win and to place well," Emma said. "But most im- portantly, we create the opportu- nity for people to go farther with science, and to explore subjects that don't get attention in class." We want to provide a lab environ- ment that's required."

The first invitational of the year was a Science Olympiad on Dec. 12. Students were asked to do a variety of activities including a lab or building a robot, which was done in a panel by a panel of students from Illinois.

"Both var- iety and fun got third in their divisions, and we're looking forward to more events med- dicine and biology," Emma said.

For variety, there is team experience. Personally, I've been working on forensics for three years, and was super happy to be an opportunity to participate. A lot of the very junior members of sci- ence team have been science team, since freshman or sophomore year, so now as upperclassmen they know what they're doing. For JV, they're a very interested, hardwork- ing group, so even though they're not familiar with the events they're studying they did really paid off."
Exchange students discuss culture differences

Q&A with students from Beijing

BY MARISSA MARTINEZ

University recognizes Branham for diversity

BY SOURKAB SHARIQ

MIDWAY EDITOR

Charles Branham, a U-High history teacher, has been awarded the Diversity Leadership Award from the University of Chicago.

Mr. Branham received the award Jan. 14 along with Denise M. Jorgens and Nancy Schwartz at the University of Chicago’s Martin Luther King reception.

Mr. Branham has taught U.S. History and African American History at U-High for 25 years, and he plans to retire this spring.

He earned his Ph.D. from the U. of C. in 1980. Before he taught at U-High, his teacher had taught at the Archdiocese of Chicago.

Mr. Branham has authored numerous publications on African American history and politics.

Connections hopes to raise $800,000 this year

BY KATHERINA LOPEZ

STAFF EDITOR

Connections, Lab’s annual fundraising drive, will be held at the Garghery, 5220 S. Hoyne Ave. on Saturday, March 12, and will include 800 alumni, alumni and staff to raise money for student financial aid. Tickets will be sold online for $250 each starting Feb. 1, along with a chance to donate.

Lab founder John Dewey hoped to change the public school system. He founded Lab and Connects, hoping to honor the distinct qualities that have made Lab one of the leading independent schools in the country, called “Black Experience.” On this show, Mr. Branham discussed African American history and politics with活性. He also co-hosted and produced a 36-hour telephone program on WTTW and universities including Roosevelt University, Chicago State University, Illinois Institute of Technology and Chicago Theological Seminary.

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understandably reluctant, to take on the story since a lawyer accuses Cardinal Schreiber is hired as the assistant editor. "Spotlight" tells the story is no exception. shows the Catholic Church is no easy un- dertaking, and "Spotlight" expresses significant doubt, for example. The team's first task is to unearth court documents to the Gregan case, which would involve studying the Catholic Church. In a case with an Irish-Catholic judge, unsung but of significant information about their obligations to legal ethics. Through talking to Phil Schaffel, a member of the Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests and a former priest who con- ducted research into mole- stan in the Catholic Church, the team realizes the Gregan case is just the tip of the ice- berg, not just about the investigation to an alarming extent. The team has a knack for capturing personal tales, like McAdams' neighbor- hood. Ruffalo's character, you're in the midst of it. 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“Fresh Off the Boat,” “Black-ish,” “Master of None” step away from the norm by giving minorities substantive roles on all screens

BY SONNY LEE | ASSOCIATE EDITOR

When “Fresh Off the Boat” first hit the screens in the beginning of 2015, I liked the teaser on Facebook and told all my friends about it. I was thrilled. Before this, I had never seen so many Asian faces on an American TV show. But from the first episode, I could tell that Eddie, the main character, was just like me. My parents immigrated from East Asia 25 years ago, specifically from Hong Kong and Taiwan, just like Eddie’s parents. My mom and dad opened a restaurant in hopes of fulfilling “the American Dream,” just like Eddie’s parents. Eddie and his Taiwanese family were outsiders in an all-white suburb, while my family and I live in the quiet neighborhood of Bridgetown with a lot of white people populating it, close enough. Luckily, Eddie was ridiculed and made fun of in school for his Chinese lunches, just like I was. The story was boring, nothing had the impact on me when I was rewatching reaps of my life on TV all the time. I continued actually living it.

Fast forward about a year and I want to watch the show again, except now I don’t want to see what my parents think of it. As the show begins to roll its cannons laughter and grin jokes, my parents laughed along and watched they way I did. “You’re so close!,” Eddie complained to his mother that she ever cares about money. The mother, played by Constance Wu, responded, “You find a homeless man and ask him whether he thinks money matters or not,” and see what he says.

My father pointed out that this line was true in many ways. He has always told me, “Go to school, get into a good college and make money,” I’ve heard this line played over and over again like a broken record. I hated when my parents used to tell me this, but with time, I understood that it was something I needed to remember.

“My money isn’t everything,” my father explained, “without money, you can’t get anything.” For years my father embodied an important line in me.

“Never be like me,” he said.

He doesn’t want me opening a restaurant business, “You lose so hard to fit in that you lose your own identity,” he warned. And sure, I had never seen so many Asian faces in an American TV show, let alone one where they were given the same respect as everyone else. In “Fresh Off the Boat,” Asian faces are cast in substantive, normal roles, and come off as cartoonish or one-dimensional stereotypes.

These characters are one-dimensional, social norms, reinforce this image. These characters are one-dimensional, social norms, reinforce this image. These characters are one-dimensional, social norms, reinforce this image.

“Asians are cast as oddballs and othered, of course, in customer service.”

Recently the topic of a “single story” has come up many times. Chimamanda Adichie gave an informative TED talk about the one-sidedness of American television; it has given American television a one-sided perspective of African culture. Too often, people assume that all minorities are the same as the exaggerated stereotypes seen on television. Characters like Apu on “The Simpsons,” a convenience store owner with a ridiculous accent, or Han on “Broke & Riced” seem clueless about American social norms, racist even. These characters are one-dimensional, and come off as cartoonish representations of established stereotypes. This only serves to reinforce the idea that all Asian people are the same.

Shows like “Fresh Off the Boat,” “Black-ish” and “Master of None” have all shown American minority characters in roles that they normally wouldn’t receive, challenging these perspectives. These shows promise a brighter future, one where children aren’t white will be able to watch shows they can relate to, shows that look like them on television.
With or without snow, there is lots to do this Windy City winter weather.
Sex Ed must adapt to student needs

Leaving out biases when views on Israel

The end goal is to ensure that each student will receive relevant, in-depth and helpful Sex Ed that is easy to access. While reading about STDs and birth control options may be informative, our sex education should go beyond just factual memorization. Our sex education needs more depth about more relevant topics.

This article presents the opinion of the Midway's Editorial Board.

“From my experience visiting, I realized that in America, the media allows the issue to appear polarized and presents both sides as unreleatable extremes. I learned that this is not the case, and both sides have their issues.”

Published 10 times during the school year by journalism and photography students at University High School, University of Chicago Laboratory Schools.

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OPINION • THURSDAY, JAN. 21, 2016

U-HIGH MIDWAY • UNIVERSITY HIGH SCHOOL, CHICAGO

L

ab students know a lot. They learn high-level concepts from the start, stand constant teaching and learn about the vast world around them along with the history of hu-

manity. However, students have recently come forward to say that they don’t know enough about themselves. They want to know more about their physical and so-

cial health.

One senior has proposed that the physical education health curriculum in-

clude more information on LGBTQ rela-
tionships and safe sex.

Another se-

nior, knowing how long changes in curriculum can take, sought help from a bio-

logical teacher to address these gaps in the health program, and a club began holding voluntary sex-education information sessions during lunch, with more coming up this quarter.

When these students realized that the school’s sex education curriculum was lacking, they actively sought answers from adults in the community by advocating for themselves and is-

sues they feel are important. It is a credit to the strength in our student body to talk about change and take steps

toward implementing it.

Right now, we need an even bi-
gal approach. We need to open

the floor for discussion among stu-
dents and faculty to find out what health issues and concerns most

matter to students’ safety and under-

standing. The P.E. department teaches as much as they can in the time al-
lotted to them. With only one six-

week unit of health each year from

freshman through junior years, it’s difficult to touch on all topics with

in the wide and expanding field of health. How-

ever, the fact that this stu-
dent dialogue happens means some

substantial pieces are missed. Most of

sex educ-

ation for about two weeks in the sopho-

more year. That’s

hardly enough time to cover gay sex, much less to discuss other important topics such as healthy fac-

ing and钓鱼. It is important to me that education continues throughout high school.

What this means is that the health classes should expand their curriculum even more. Stu-
dents need information that is relevant to their experiences and circumstances in lives, which the

P.E. faculty should gauge, pref-

erably from discussion with the

student body. It’s as important to

know about the value of affirmat-

ive consent and how constant

communication leads to healthy relationships as it is to know the symptoms of STDs.

Most of the instruction is for sophomores, but as students ma-
ture and gain more experiences, they will have additional questions about sexual health. This is why the voluntary biology seminars

are helpful and important. These can fill in the gaps of time between health classes, and fill in the gaps of information some students may be missing. Whether in a classroom or at a seminar, it’s important that students are com-

fortable asking questions about their health to people qualified to answer. This is especially relevant to LGBTQ students, who have not

been as represented in discus-

sions.

Even from a distance, the dif-

ference between the Arab and

the Jewish towns is noticeable. Our Israeli tour guide wouldn’t take us into Arab villages and we never missed a chance to re-

ed us how dirty the Arabs were, since their towns were neither affiliate nor clean.

The problems between the Israelis and the Palestinians are so deeply rooted in history that there is no clear solution to the problem. Both sides possess an unwillingness to meet each other halfway and try and solve the problems at hand. Although

the issue is complex, I try not to choose one side over another and attempt to consider the other’s perspective.

However, since I’m Jewish and have family living in Israel, it is difficult to remain completely unbiased during my trip visiting. I realized that in Amer-

ica, the media allows the issue to appear polarized and presents both sides as unreleatable extremities.

I learned that this is not the case, and both sides have their issues. As Americans we should not allow ourselves to view the conflict as a two-dimensional problem, with good guys on one side and bad guys on the other. Rather, because it’s still under these conditions every day, we need to understand that we can’t grasp the complexity of the problem. During my time in Is-
rael I realized we all have to be better citizens of the world and not just see Israel’s problems through our own faith, politics, or biased viewpoint.
Students create their own definitions of success

by Micaiah Buchheim-Jurssen

Editor-in-Chief

When people are asked what success means to them, the responses vary. At University High School, students are encouraged to think about what success means to them. The Martin Luther King Day of Service event at University High School, a part of the Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service, provided an opportunity for students to come together and volunteer in their communities.

The event was held on January 18th, and the students were divided into groups. Each group was assigned a specific location to volunteer at. Some groups worked at local food banks, others at homeless shelters, and still others at parks and community centers. The event was organized by the Challenge Success program at University High, which aims to help students develop a strong sense of identity and purpose.

During the Martin Luther King Day of Service, students were encouraged to think about what success means to them. Some students defined success as achieving a personal goal, while others defined it as helping others or making a positive impact on their community. The event was a great opportunity for students to reflect on their own definition of success and to see how it can be realized in the community.

Students at University High are encouraged to think about their own definition of success, and the Martin Luther King Day of Service event provided a great opportunity for them to do so. By volunteering in their communities, students not only contribute to their local communities, but they also gain a deeper understanding of what success means to them.


ROW'D TO SUCCESS:
Senior Elizabeth Stolze's lightweight boat placed 7th at Nationals last spring. This season, she’s working even harder.

BY ARIEL GANS
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

"I was built to row at all. I was short and very lightweight, which is not the most ideal body structure for a rower," Elizabeth Stolze said about the sport she chose in winter of eighth grade. It turns out, she is a great rower, but getting there wasn't easy. Although Elizabeth committed to rowing, she didn't fall in love immediately.

"When I first joined, we were in the middle of winter season so every practice was inside on the erg machines. It wasn't the most fun thing ever but I had heard about it so much through my friends that I decided to stick with it and keep trying. When we got on the water that spring, it was amazing, and I realized I loved it. A lot," she said with emphasis. "Being on the water is very therapeutic. Everything is very fluid when you take stroke if you're in a good boat. It takes a lot of concentration, you have to stay in time with the rest of the boat, feel each stroke and adjust to it."

Now 5'6", Elizabeth, a senior, has earned 7th and 11th place at Nationals, won a Mid-west Regional Championship and placed at dozens of regattas across the Midwest rowing for the Chicago Rowing Foundation’s varsity lightweight team. She hasn't gone more than three weeks without rowing since beginning over four years ago.

As much as Elizabeth fell in love with rowing as a sport, she was also drawn to the people in her club. "The team that I joined was a great community of people," she said. "Everyone who was there wanted to be there, was really nice, really talented, focused, and wanted to work hard, and it was a very successful team. It made me want to be a better person. I liked how physical the sport was; it works everything. There's not a muscle that I'm aware of that wasn't used when you're rowing. It's very full-body and intense. I've done gymnastics, cross country, track, soccer, tennis — a lot of sports, but I feel like this one is a good combination of your whole entire body."

On a typical evening you can find Elizabeth at the Chicago Park District's Clark Park boathouse. She practices six days a week in the fall and winter, five days in the winter, for two hours a day along with a summer season.

"It's definitely not a sport for people who are unsure. You have to really want to do it to succeed and participate. You have to have that level of intensity to thrive. Missing practice affects how your teammates look at you," Elizabeth said. "If one or two people don't show up and work hard so much as you can't have any people flaking out."

"The key to doing well in rowing though is definitely to have eight people that you can rely on," she added. "That each old coach used to say is 80 percent mental and I definitely agree with that," Elizabeth said. "It's physical and it's a lot about finding that extra level, that new level of motivation and physical ability and pushing yourself through more levels even during a race — just to try to get that extra edge, that extra inch of water against someone else who is racing right next to you."

A lot of Elizabeth's motivation has been from her coaches. "I had one coach for two years and we just got a new coach this year," Elizabeth said. "The one that I had for two years definitely taught me a lot about working hard and pushing limits. She was a very driven, competitive woman and her talks were always very passionate and hard-core, so they set the tone for everyone to work that much harder. She also was not afraid to punish us. She built our mental toughness and physically whipped us out."

Surrounded by competitive teammates, Elizabeth also has found a competitive side. "I get pretty competitive when it comes to rowing," Elizabeth admitted. "I definitely like to be in the top in whatever I'm doing, it's not always the case, and I know that. I wouldn't say I'm the most emotional person there or the most competitive on the team, but I'm definitely not someone who sits back and lets things happen."

Even with so much experience, Elizabeth still feels the weight of a race before it begins. "It feels pretty intense especially at a race during the starting line," Elizabeth recalls. "Like there's this feeling of wanting to just slay the other team, it's like anger, determination and drive. When we get in the boat and actually launch off the dock it's totally serious; there's very little talking, everyone's looking ahead, we're all just focused in.

"When we got on the water that spring it was amazing, I realized I loved it. A LOT. Being on the water is very therapeutic to me." — Elizabeth Stolze
FOCUSING THE TEAM. Despite only being a sophomore, Roxanne Nesbitt has helped lead the team through a difficult season alongside co-captains Tia Polite and Autumn Espinosa.

"To me, losing doesn't really matter, or winning; it's about having fun. Everyone loses. I'm not worried about losing. If people don't show up, then I'm worried," - Sarah Gray, captain.
HISTORY, HOPE & RESPONSIBILITY

Celebrating Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Black Students Association hosts MLK Assembly in Lab’s new Gordon Parks Assembly Hall for first time

BY ELENA MAESTRIPERI

“We usually pick our theme based on things that have happened in the year, and this year we felt like history, hope and responsibility was a good fit,” Black Students Association President Kimya Johnson, senior, said about the preparation for the annual Martin Luther King Jr. Assembly, Jan. 14.

“There’s been a lot of tension in terms of African-American community, the black community in general, and police, there’s also been a lot of people trying to stress the fact that black live do matter,” Kimya explained. “I think that plays more into the responsibility vein of the theme. MLK himself was in the civil right movement and we talked about other black activists and leaders, and that’s the nod to history. And then, it’s important to have hope because when you look at what’s on the news and you hear about people dying, it’s easy to lose hope, but it’s really important to keep your hope. So, history, hope, responsibility.”

BSA Vice President Autumn Espinosa, senior, explained that she has been on the assembly’s planning committee for three years but looked forward to taking this year’s assembly in a different direction. “One of the board members brought up that it didn’t feel like the MLK assembly was actually about MLK so we wanted a theme that would incorporate that,” Autumn said. “I feel like MLK’s main focus wasn’t just on black people, it was also on every person, every minority group that’s oppressed. I think it’s important for others to have the opportunity to perform at MLK who audition, and we always enjoy having other ethnic groups there.”

Previously held in Rockefeller Chapel, this year’s MLK assembly was hosted in the new Gordon Parks Arts Hall.

“I think there’s also going to be definite limitations, for example the stage is so small. It’s also just the high school now,” Autumn said before the assembly.

“I also think that it’s significant that the MLK assembly is being held at the only building named after a black person on campus,” Kimya added. “Also I don’t think that we’re censoring ourselves anymore than we were when we were with the middle schools. It was just fifth through eighth graders and I feel like they’re mature enough to handle what we’re talking about because these are real issues that they’re going to face in the real world, and that they possibly are already facing in the world.”

Kimya explained the value of having performances that are both entertaining and enriching, because it allows the assembly to be an opportunity for students to hear about issues that different cultures face and commemorate the great things different cultures are doing.

“This isn’t just an opportunity to remember and celebrate MLK,” Autumn said. “It’s also an opportunity for minorities at Lab to have their voices heard.”

ACCOUNTABILITY AND INITIATIVE

Feminist Club members Nora Lin, Clara O’Muircheartaigh, seniors, and Miriam Cadareles, a sophomore, perform an original poem titled “What Are You Going To Do?” Feminist Club co-president Fikayo Walter-Johnson, senior, said, “Only last year we were discussing inclusion, especially in history classes, that’s when you can really honor these people and talk about the contributions they’ve made to history and you don’t have to wait every year to talk about these things.”

RESPONSIBILITY

“I CAN’T BREATHE.” U-High junior Alex du Buclet, right, sings “I Can’t Breathe” with Sophia Boyd from Whitney Young High School accompanied by Reed Williams of Northside College Prep High School, Alex and Sophia composed the piece over the summer. “We got the idea from the Black Lives Matter movements, and all the recent police brutality tragedies,” Alex said. “We wrote the song to help kids understand the issue from a peer perspective. We hope to spread awareness and have our song resonate beyond any single act of injustice.”

FOR THE FALLEN.

Senior Alex Soto from Latinos Unidos reads “Canto a Las Madres de los Milicianos Muertos,” a poem by Pablo Neruda, in its original Spanish. Senior Olivia Perozzo read it in English. “We focused more on the responsibility aspect of the theme,” Olivia said about selecting the poem. “It’s about telling a story of someone who may not necessarily be your minority group but that you still have respect for that. As people of color we need to hand together and show support for each other.”

STANDPOINT.

Reciting her original poem, “Standpoint,” junior Asha Futtermann extends a hand at the audience as a symbol of the numerous instances of Chicago gun violence this year.

OUR DREAMS.

Sophomore Sahar Siddiqui and freshman Mohammed Alauja read their lines in the piece Muslim Students Association wrote about hopes for the future. “Even though times may get difficult financially, culturally, or emotionally — we should all still believe that our dreams can possibility aspect of the theme,” Olivia said about selecting the poem. “It’s about telling a story of someone who may not necessarily be your minority group but that you still have respect for that. As people of color we need to hand together and show support for each other.”