

From the quiet nook at the end of the freshman hallway to the structure of weekly club meetings, students look for ways to escape the noise and crowds of the cafeteria.



As HBO show “Game of Thrones” finishes its run, U-High fans say suspense and character development made the show a cultural phenomenon.



Tired of prebuilt bikes and long, expensive shop visits, two juniors learned how to build and fix their own bikes. They say this process leads to a better, more custom ride.



University of Chicago Laboratory High School

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Administration reviews discrimination claim

by JACOB POSNER
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

After the administration declined a proposal from the varsity volleyball team to attend a Florida tournament in September 2019, Title IX Coordinator Betsy Noel is looking into potential conflicts with Title IX in how trips for sports teams are approved.

The administration rejected the proposal because of scheduling conflicts. The team of girls responded with a letter disputing the administration’s reasoning.

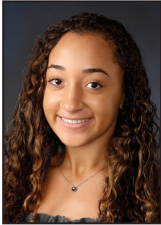
Along with questioning the claim that volleyball coach Lisa Miller couldn’t miss a couple days of the back-to-school planning week, the letter raised concerns about Title IX, which prohibits sex-based discrimination in educational programming.

“Additionally, we believe that this cancellation conflicts with Title IX, as there are increasingly more opportunities for boys’ athletic teams to experience trips, while girls’ teams must fight harder for similar opportunities,” the team wrote.

Volleyball team member Sydney Rogers, a junior, said the players were all disappointed when they heard the news.

“We had been talking to Ms. Miller a lot about it before we had sent it in, so we were already really excited about it before it had been sent in,” Sydney said.

In a message sent to team members and their families through Schoology, Athletics Director David Ribbens wrote, “the trip would have conflicted with planning week for teachers and the 9th



Sydney Rogers



Betsy Noel

grade retreat, two critical events during which we take great care to avoid scheduling conflicts.”

Ms. Noel added in an interview with the Midway that it “would be irresponsible of the school” to force students or teachers to choose between critical bonding activities and athletics.

Despite saying the administration’s claim was reasonable, Ms. Noel said she is working with Mr.

Ribbens and other members of the administration to review decisions about athletics with respect to team trips. She said she has identified so far that the administration’s policies with regard to scheduling conflicts should have been more transparent. If this had been the case, the volleyball team might not have been as disappointed when their proposal was denied.

Ms. Noel pointed out that that ensuring compliance with Title IX in the athletics department is a part of Mr. Ribbens’ day-to-day work. She also said she has reviewed the equity of the department for the over the past two years, addressing concerns when they were raised. One included gender bias in the spirit council, which the school has identified as an area of improvement.

The review is “a combination of following up on people who have raised concerns in the past, as well as collaborating with Mr. Ribbens to look through all the record keeping,” Ms. Noel said, adding that she has spoken with Brian Lipinski, Laboratory Schools director of finance, to learn more about how budgets are managed.

Ana Campos, dean of students, and Mr. Ribbens work together over the summer, so assemblies and grade activities don’t conflict with sports teams’ events, Ms. Noel said.

She added that the events Mr. Ribbens and Ms. Campos need to take into account include religious holidays, AP exams, pacing of schoolwork, finals and midterms.

She said it’s a “wildly underappreciated body of work.”

It’s Principal Paul Beekmeyer

Student voice, relationships will be top priorities in coming year

by ELLA BEISER
ASSISTANT EDITOR

Paul Beekmeyer will be the new U-High principal, and according to Laboratory Schools Director Charlie Abelmann, much of his first year will be spent forming bonds throughout the U-High community.

“As a new principal, he needs to focus on learning about and understanding Lab, and you do that by building relationships and doing a lot of listening,” Dr. Abelmann said in an interview with the Midway. “I think he needs to build relationships with the students. I think he needs to build relationships with the staff. He needs to build relationships with parents.”



Paul Beekmeyer

Mr. Beekmeyer was announced as principal-designate on May 13 in an email to the Lab Schools community.

Mr. Beekmeyer said in a visit April 26-27 that he is dedicated to working with the faculty to facilitate student-faculty relationships.

“Because that is the most important relationship. That is what a school is,” Mr. Beekmeyer said in a meeting with parents during his visit. “It’s what happens in the classroom and halls, it’s not what happens in the principal’s office. So, the focus has to be there.”

Dr. Abelmann and Mr. Beekmeyer also agree that University of Chicago relationships are very important to Lab’s success.

“Lab has a very close relationship with the university, which is what makes it great,” Dr. Abelmann said. “He needs to build relationship with the university and



MIDWAY PHOTO BY MICHELLE HUSAIN

IN DIALOGUE. Senior Jasmine Wang, holding lemonade, asks principal finalist Paul Beekmeyer a question at a student meeting in Judd C116 during the campus visit for Paul Beekmeyer from April 26-27.

“It’s what happens in the classroom and halls, it’s not what happens in the principal’s office. So, the focus has to be there.”

— PAUL BEEKMEYER,
PRINCIPAL-DESIGNATE

think about how to leverage, as best we can, this relationship to benefit students and faculty.”

During his April visit, where he met with groups of students, faculty, parents and other stakeholders, Mr. Beekmeyer said he would like to build a relationship like this with the University of Chicago and plans to share resources with the University of Chicago Charter School Woodlawn to foster a relationship with them.

Dr. Abelmann explained that Mr. Beekmeyer’s experience working at schools around the world would fit well with Lab’s values.

“I think his international experience is great,” Dr. Abelmann said. “The fact that he’s worked in dif-

ferent countries, that he’s from a different country, adds to what it means to be preparing students to be global citizens.”

Mr. Beekmeyer is Sri Lankan-Australian. He grew up and went to school in Australia and has worked in schools in Morocco, Turkey and Afghanistan. Currently, he works as assistant head of the upper school for academics at the Brooklyn Friends School in New York.

While he has a lot of experience working at different schools, U-High would be the largest school he has ever worked at and the first school he has worked at with a faculty union. He said that he would approach the experience openly.

Mr. Beekmeyer said he is dedicated to hearing student voice. At his previous school, students were involved in the school’s principal search and given an equal say in the decision as everyone else in the room.

He said, “It’s not ‘When do you bring students to the table?’ It’s ‘When don’t you?’”

Students elect Cifu, amend constitution

by AUDREY MATZKE
ASSISTANT EDITOR

In an election May 3, students elected all-school officers in contested elections: Constantin Carrigan, vice president; Gershon Stein, secretary and Jeremy Ng, treasurer.



Ben Cifu

Cultural Union president and Ava Kucera, CU vice president.

In addition to officers, 81% of students voted to approve Student Council’s proposed constitutional amendments. Though the proposal was finalized early spring quarter, the amendments were not shared with the student body until 12:15 a.m. on election day via Schoology, along with linking a summary on the digital ballots.

Ben has been president of the Class of 2020 during both his sophomore and junior years.

“I’m really excited to have won and to have the opportunity to serve the student body,” Ben said. “I hope that students will feel comfortable coming to me with any issues and that I will be able to successfully resolve them and improve the school for everyone.”

According to 2018-18 All-School President Shiva Menta, Student Council did not anticipate a controversy with any of the proposed amendments, and he said therefore he thought sharing further in advance would be unnecessary.

“With our amendments, there wasn’t much that was controversial,” Shiva said. “It was pretty simple things that I think most people can get on board with.”

Additionally, the delay was deliberate, as members hoped it would ensure changes stayed fresh on students’ minds, Shiva said.

“If we introduced it earlier, it would be hard for students to as-

Election Winners:

- All-School President:** Ben Cifu
- All-School Vice President:** Constantin Carrigan
- All-School Treasurer:** Jeremy Ng
- All-School Secretary:** Gershon Stein
- All-School Cultural Union President:** Kepler Boonstra
- All-School Cultural Union Vice President:** Ava Kucera
- Senior Class President:** Donna Tong
- Senior Class Vice President:** Nikhil Patel
- Senior Class Cultural Union:** Eleanor Skish and Emily Zhang
- Junior Class President:** Omar Siddiqui
- Junior Class Vice President:** Eliza Doss
- Junior Class Cultural Union:** Noor Asad and Destiney Williamson
- Sophomore Class President:** Asha Bahroos
- Sophomore Class Vice President:** Zachary Gin
- Sophomore Class Cultural Union:** Hein An Ngo and Saul Arnow

sociate what was shared earlier in the week with the ‘Yes’ or ‘No’ vote,” Shiva said. “But this way, we had it so students could quickly read over it, understand what was happening and vote based on the information they received.”

While most of the amendments only directly affect Student Council members, several, Shiva said, pertain specifically to the student body. One such amendment institutes an open meeting policy, while another permits all students to introduce bills, an opportunity previously limited to Student Council members.

The school-wide turnout was 92.5%, according to information released by the Student Council. Percentages of each grade voting are: freshmen, 87.5%; sophomores, 93.6%; and juniors, 96.7%.

University reviews Lab tuition benefits

by **LELAND CULVER**
MIDWAY REPORTER

The University of Chicago is promising changes over the next two years to its faculty benefits programs in response to concerns raised by faculty, many of whom are parents of Laboratory Schools students.

The changes are to address the areas of Lab tuition, the university's relationship with public schools, the cost of housing and services available to students with learning differences.

Provost Daniel Diermeier announced these changes in an email sent to all benefits-eligible faculty on April 16, acting on the recommendation of a working group comprised of faculty and administration members.

The Provost said that revision plans for the Lab tuition benefit would be announced later this year, to be implemented for the 2020-21 school year.

In the email, he said that the changes were in response to a 2017 faculty petition. It stated that the current benefits system does not make it viable for families to send multiple children to Lab or to enroll in extended day. Employees with lower-paying academic positions also found the tuition difficult even with the benefit. The petition stated that many faculty were leaving or considering leaving for these reasons.

"We worry about this exodus harming the cultural identity of Lab and the rich intellectual life cultivated by the University, and we are concerned that future tuition increases will further exacerbate this problem," the petition

"We worry about this exodus harming the cultural identity of Lab and the rich intellectual life cultivated by the University, and we are concerned that future tuition increases will further exacerbate this problem."

— 2017 FACULTY PETITION

stated.

To address the needs of diverse learners, most benefits-eligible families will be allocated a substantial portion of the tuition to either City Elementary or Hyde Park Day School in a three-year pilot program. The allocation will be based on household income.

"[The program is] to kind of understand the environment...because right now it's very very unclear how high the demand will be, where the pressure points are for which schools, et cetera," said Christine Mehring, chair of the university's art history department, who served on the working group and who has two kids enrolled at the Lab Schools.

While the Lab tuition remission changes are still being designed, the university stated it is implementing a K-12 resource guide, and the Provost encouraged families to apply for financial aid, stating that the traditional \$35 application fee would be waived.

Ms. Mehring said, "My personal understanding is that the Provost is very eager and very committed to trying to address the tuition problems that we laid out."



MIDWAY PHOTO BY MACY BEAL

BLAST OFF. Freshman Will Maharry, junior Ioannis Nikas and senior Derek de Jong work together to prepare their rocket for launch across from the school on the Midway Plaisance after school May 3. It was part of a spring activity organized by the Linnean Society.

Faculty prepares for semesters

by **CHRISTIAN GLUTH**
MIDWAY REPORTER

A semesters implementation group is actively working in order to ensure that the transition from quarters to semesters this fall is a smooth one.

Once a week, the faculty members discuss questions and challenges that need to be addressed and work out as many details as possible to be able to take everything into account.

Parent-teacher conferences, midterm comments, and homework over break have been some of the more prominent and urgent subjects that the group must ad-

dress by the end of the year.

Noah Rachlin, dean of teaching and learning, is involved with the implementation group and is aiming to address and consider as much as he can in order to upgrade the overall experience for those attending the school.

"If the transition is full of a whole bunch of little details that we missed or that we haven't thought about... that's going to impact their experience in making the transition and their way of thinking about semesters," he said.

In order to put their scheduling priorities together, the group has

put out a call to faculty to ask for feedback and topics that they need to be aware of when the schedule is transitioning. After they work through these topics, they are preparing to put out a similar call to students.

Mr. Rachlin was also specific about the process of generating ideas and being able to work through each one accordingly.

"We don't wrap something up in a single meeting. It sort of continues along the way," he said. "What we are trying to think about now is what we absolutely answer by the end of the year and what we need to think about moving forward."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Graduation committee selects performers, speakers

The Class of 2019 graduation will feature three speakers, three performances and various faculty honors on June 13 at Rockefeller Chapel.

Senior Class President Saige Porter said that one of the overarching themes will be maintaining the grade's strong diverse community.

The featured speaker is 1999 U-High alumnus Chesa Boudin, and the student speakers are Saige Porter and Jordyn Mahome.

Mr. Boudin is currently a lawyer running for San Francisco District Attorney. According to Saige, Mr. Boudin was chosen because his values align with the theme, and he is familiar with the U-High perspective.

The student speeches will reflect the grade's experiences and lay out hopes for the future.

The three musical performances will be "Landslide" performed by singers Sofia Kouri, Roma Nayak, Isha Singh and Anna Schloerb with pianist Alexis Tyndall; "Vienna" performed by singer Dania Baig; and "Under Pressure" performed by "Rooftop Parking," including Sam DuBose, Henry Cassel, Grant Fishman and Michael Harper.

The speakers and performers were selected by the graduation committee, which included the senior Student Council representatives plus Ruth Weaver and Sophia Stamatakos, who were both chosen by the Senior Class.

— PETER PU

Faculty selects new steering committee members

The faculty elected three members to the Faculty Steering Committee May 1. They are Zachary Hund, science; Joseph Scroll, math; and Theodore Stripling, counselor.

The steering committee is responsible for setting the agenda of monthly faculty meetings, and conducting and facilitating the meetings.

The committee is comprised of six individuals on alternating terms of two years

each. Brad Brickner, music; Sari Hernandez, English; and Sharon Housinger, science remain on the steering committee, and one will be elected chair.

Outgoing members include Christopher Janus and co-chairs Patty Kovacs and Jean-Franklin Magrou.

"This year, there was an additional level facilitated from Dialogos, and having conversations about that, and setting some agendas that seemed to be of some importance for the faculty like diversity, equity and inclusion," Ms. Kovacs said.

— CALEDONIA ABBEY

Labstock June 1 provides final chance to hang out

On Kenwood Mall, June 1 from 3:30-6 p.m., the new Student Council will host Labstock, a concert and barbecue event to close out the school year for the high school students.

Outgoing Cultural Union President Aly Latherow explained Labstock gives students a last chance to get together with friends before the school year ends.

Labstock will consist of live performances and a barbecue cookout, where all high school students are allowed to come and perform.

The signup process will be posted later as a google doc or talking to a student council member and questions should be directed to incoming Cultural Union President Kepler Boonstra and Vice President Ava Kucera.

"I think Labstock is one of the only times of the year where U-high is able to come together and share our talents in a way that doesn't seem super academically focused. The free food and music, along with cheering on your friends, fosters a really chill vibe where people can wind down after the last Friday of the year," Kepler said.

— JULIAN INGERSOLL

Students, faculty to attend U of C free speech conference

Three U-High students will be chosen to participate in the University of Chicago

conference on free expression and open discourse Sept. 12-14.

The conference will involve students, faculty and administrators from independent schools nationwide.

Joining high school students from around the country, the U-High students will participate in discussions about how to best address issues of free expression as well as creating confidence in students to actively engage in these conversations.

"Students will have the opportunity to interact with students as well as faculty and administrators to think about questions regarding free expression," Noah Rachlin, dean of teaching and learning, said. "It will be a dedicated space to think about something considered a timely and important topic. Students will think about how to bring valuable aspects of this experience to Lab."

The chosen students will be announced shortly. Logan Aimone, Christy Gerst and Sari Hernandez and are the U-High faculty members attending.

— KATERINA LOPEZ

Midway editors for next school year selected

Two juniors have been selected to the lead the 2019-20 U-High Midway staff. Nikhil Patel and Abigail Slimmon were named editors-in-chief.

Other leaders include Amanda Cassel, managing editor; Mira Costello, news editor; Audrey Matzke, features editor; Ella Beiser, sports editor; Nicky Edwards-Levin, arts editor; and Max Garfinkel, continuing in his role as business manager.

— EMMA TRONE

Prom to be held June 8 in Navy Pier's Crystal Gardens

Prom will be held June 8 at Navy Pier's Crystal Gardens from 6:30-10:30 p.m.

Tickets are \$118 per person, and sales began May 6 and will be available until seniors go on May Project.

As U-High doesn't typically use themes for Prom, this year's Prom Committee decided on a creative way to make the night

memorable.

"We are doing a thing where people will be able to submit photos of their friends throughout high school to a folder and then we will display them on the tables at people's seats," committee member Alyssa Hannah said.

— MADDIE WELCH

Lab community members to review outdoor space plans

Members of the Lab Community will have the opportunity to review initial plans for the Laboratory Schools' outdoor spaces during two meetings this month.

Lab administrators will hold the meetings to gather and share ideas, as well as go through existing proposals, about how to utilize outdoor spaces May 9 at 8 a.m. in Blaine S201 and May 22 at 5 p.m. in Judd C116.

The University of Chicago Campus Environment team and Site Design Group have worked for months to create a Historic Campus landscape master plan.

All who are interested in transforming Lab's outdoor spaces are welcome to go to the event as no RSVP is required.

After these sessions, the Site Design Group will simplify the ideas from the meetings into a single set of designs that will ultimately turn into the Historic Campus landscape masterplan.

— BERK OTO

Math team ends season placing fourth at state

The math team ended its season by placing fourth at the Illinois Council of Teachers of Mathematics State Competition held May 4 at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

U-High's Algebra I team placed first, while the freshman/sophomore eight-person team placed second. U-High also placed third in geometry, freshman-sophomore two-person and orals.

"I think we did really well, and I'm really proud of the team's accomplishments this year," Neha Ramani, team captain, said.

— NICKY EDWARDS-LEVIN

Meatless made mainstream

Can't Believe It's Not Meat on 53rd Street offers delicious substitutes to common meat dishes

by MIRA COSTELLO
OPINION EDITOR

Patrons chatter over fresh R&B. Afternoon sunlight flows in on the wind, glinting on sleek counters and light fixtures. Fifty-third Street pedestrians stop to consider the wall-mounted menu through large front windows. In fading light, the gold-painted proclamation of Hyde Park restaurant Can't Believe It's Not Meat glistens: "Our mission is to shift the culture around being vegan and vegetarian by cultivating healthier and flavorful versions of your favorite comfort food dishes."

Can't Believe It's Not Meat is owned by Laricia Chandler and her brother Erik "Rico" Nance. Nance also owns LiteHouse Whole Food Grill, Mikkey's Retro Grill and Soul Shack, situated next to Can't Believe It's Not Meat. Their mission statement says it all: this new restaurant sells itself as the go-to for "flexitarian" cuisine, good food for those in the process of becoming vegan or vegetarian.

In an interview with Block Club Chicago, Nance said he hopes to make plant-based diets more familiar to the everyday American.

"We wanted to encourage transitioning into healthy eating by creating healthier versions of your favorite comfort foods and providing knowledge about plant-based alternatives," he said.

The space is small and has only a few tables and counter seats, making it more popular for take-out orders or quick lunches. Al-

Meat Alternatives:

A continuing change:
Nearly 80% of millennials eat meat alternatives.

Global meat alternatives market is set to surpass \$6.5 billion by 2026.

33% of consumers in the United States plan to buy more vegetarian/plant-based food in the next year

SOURCES: COHERENT MARKET INSIGHTS, MINTEL

though not the best place for a sit-down dining experience, Can't Believe It's Not Meat has a lively, laid-back atmosphere and ample plant decor that make it great for the transition to warmer weather.

The restaurant offers a wide array of southern and midwestern comfort foods with meat substitutes. One of the most popular is the "Who Betta" burger, a vegan patty topped with vegetables, cheese and a Cajun-inspired "Epitome sauce."

The "Can't Believe it's a Pizza Puff" is also a crowd favorite, a wrap filled with taco-style vegan beef, cheese and herbs.

Despite having the heartiness of regular meat, the food is light and complex, and can satisfy vegetarians and carnivores alike.

Each item down to the french fries is crisp and thoroughly seasoned. This strength keeps with



MIDWAY PHOTO BY IVAN BECK

LOOKS CAN DECEIVE. While this might look like standard fried chicken, everything in this photo is completely vegan. Can't Believe it's not Meat, a restaurant that recently opened on 53rd street, serves alternatives to meat dishes, offering meatless nuggets, burgers and a wide array of other meals. Although the restaurant itself is small, people constantly enter and exit the space, seeking a supplement to meat dishes that does not stray to far from what they are used to.

The wait time for each meal order is 15 to 20 minutes, but can reach about 45 minutes depending on the item.

Prices range from \$7-16, but for a few extra some orders can be doubled. At 1368 1/2 E. 53rd Street,

Can't Believe It's Not Meat is open from 11 a.m. to 8:45 p.m. on weekdays.

If you're looking to challenge your ideas about food, check it out — you might find it unbelievably good.

More students eat throughout the school's hallways

by NICKY EDWARDS-LEVIN
MIDWAY REPORTER

Every day from 12:20 to almost 1 p.m. math rooms will fill with students taking tests and history rooms will be crowded with clubs. Even the library will be occupied by crafty students who take bites of their lunch when nobody is looking.

Other students lounge at their lockers, hoping to avoid the cafeteria's loud, crowded spaces, forcing club-goers to dodge an obstacle course of books and legs along the floor.

The cafeteria is still a hub for lunchtime eating and socializing. Nevertheless, many students spend these 40 minutes elsewhere.

Lots of the empty seats in the cafeteria are because of students attending club meetings. One of these students is freshman Zach Gin, who has a packed lunch schedule each week: Student Council, Science Olympiad, math team and Code@Lab. To him, clubs provide a way to hang out with friends as well as engage in academics.

"They're a really fun and enjoyable way to spend time with friends during lunch," Zach said, "and, since I tend to go to academic-based clubs, in the process I can learn something."



MIDWAY PHOTO BY ELENA LIAO

CONNECTING WITH FRIENDS. A group of ninth-grade students laugh between bits of their lunch in the freshman hallway earlier this year. This is only one of the many groups you can see if you walk through any hallway of the school during the lunch period. It has been increasingly clear that the cafeteria is not always the desired location to eat for many students through all of the grades.

On those days when Zach is done early, he goes to what he calls the "nook at the end of the freshman hallway."

"Sometimes, in the caf, all the

tables are taken by people you don't really know well, so it's kinda awkward to just sit there," Zach said.

Willow Young, a sophomore,

spends lunch outside the cafeteria with a group of juniors in the third-floor hallway just off the edge of the western, or "back," stairway. She said she really likes sitting in

"As for the cafeteria, I will sit there every once in a while with some friends, and I sat there in the beginning of the year, but it is just too crowded, I didn't like it — there are so many people and it gets very loud and hectic."

— WILLOW YOUNG, SOPHOMORE

that spot.

She said, "It's really nice when it's sunny because it makes everything warm."

But Willow also appreciates the quietness of her lunch location — something the cafeteria lacks.

"As for the cafeteria, I will sit there every once in a while with some friends, and I sat there in the beginning of the year, but it is just too crowded," Willow said. "I didn't like it — there are so many people and it gets very loud and hectic."

During lunch, students can be found swinging their feet in the stairways of Gordon Parks Arts Hall or working together near the third-floor benches or gaming outside the library. One thing is for sure: the cafeteria isn't the only place to eat.

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Teacher creates unique historic composition

Students from digital music ensemble present a composition using sounds from the Illinois Holocaust Museum

by OTTO BROWN
MIDWAY REPORTER

Zipper. Boots. Menorah. These are just some of the artifacts from the Illinois Holocaust Museum in Skokie used to create a unique piece of music performed at the Holocaust Remembrance assembly May 2.

U-High music teacher Francisco Dean worked with his students in the electronic music ensemble to develop pieces using the sounds of Holocaust-era artifacts. Each sound was digitally arranged using a technique called sound design to create “Frilingdik, Umbazigt” or “As the Spring, Unconquered.”

Many of the artifacts used came from Jerry Glass, who was born in 1926 to a Yiddish-speaking, Jewish family in Chicago. He joined the U.S. Army at 17 and helped liberate the Mauthausen concentration camp and served as a Yiddish translator for Jewish prisoners. The sound of the zipper on his army jacket, his boots hitting a table and his pants rubbing together are all sounds captured for this project, which was presented at the assembly organized by the Jewish Students’ Association every other year.

Mr. Dean said the arrangement is divided into three movements, each derived from a poem. The first movement comes from “Bird-song,” an anonymous poem, and



Francisco Dean

“The poems themselves are the narrative of the story.”
— FRANCISCO DEAN,
MUSIC TEACHER

illustrates the time before the Holocaust. The second, based on “Fear,” captures the time during the Holocaust. The final movement comes from “I am a Jew” and depicts life after the Holocaust.

“We tried to find creative ways to take these articles and these words and bring them to life musically,” Mr. Dean said while sharing samples of the work.

Members of the Lab community, including members of JSA, read each of these poems aloud. Mr. Dean then resculpted the frequencies, turning each recording into a unique frequency. Together, these resculpted sounds create different notes, as one would hear on a piano.

“That’s Nathan Appelbaum saying the word fear slowed down about 600% with some degrading of the signal,” Mr. Dean said of an eerie sound used in the second movement.

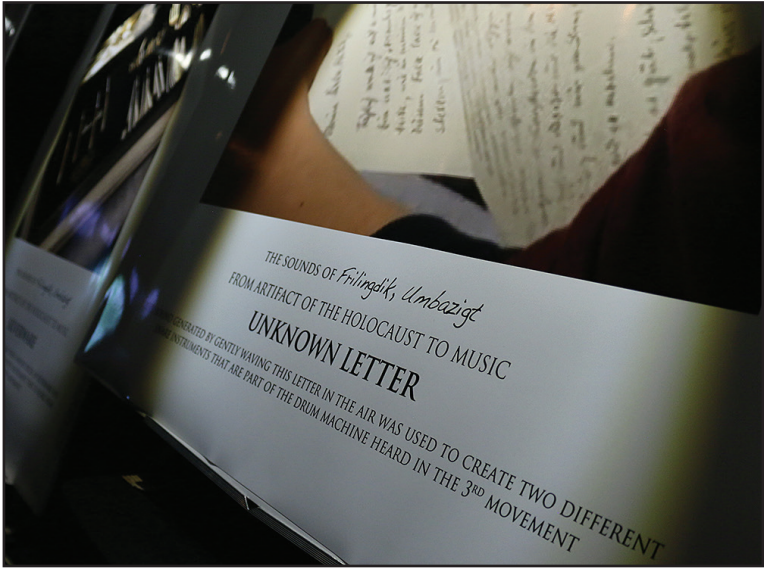
In addition to words being digitally altered, other poems were read aloud and incorporated into the performance. World language teacher Marianne Zemil read aloud a letter written in German as well as its English translation.

“The poems themselves are the narrative of the story,” Mr. Dean added. “While a poem is being read aloud, you’ll also hear different words in the background, forming a verbal tapestry.”



MIDWAY PHOTO BY ODYSSEAS NIKAS

SOUNDS OF THE PAST. Her finger on a touchboard, senior Neena Dhanoa, above, taps her while reading the music for the special three-movement piece her class and music teacher Francisco Dean composed for the Holocaust Remembrance Assembly May 2. The composition featured voices of students and teachers reading the poems on which the piece was based, and sounds effects created from artifacts recorded at the Illinois Holocaust Museum, including a letter, left. Other artifacts included boots and pants from a soldier.



‘MAMMA MIA!’



MIDWAY PHOTO BY LILY VAG-URMINSKY

DANCING KING. Holding a pose, junior Eli Hinerfeld dances for his role as Sky Rymand in the spring production of “Mamma Mia!” The show runs May 16–18, starting at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are sold out for all three nights, with people on waiting lists.

Artists-in-residence chosen for next year

South Siders bring diversity, experience

by BERK OTO
MIDWAY REPORTER

The Kistenbroker Family Artist-in-Residence program will continue in the 2019-20 school year with a focus on mixed media.

A committee has chosen two artists and is waiting for them to provide a contract to finalize plans for their upcoming residency.

The program will consist of shows in fall and winter quarters as well as the continued presence of the artists throughout the school.

“We wanted to bring artists to our community that have a connection with young people, and feel empathetic to the struggle of young people today today,” Sunny Neater, co-chair of the fine arts department, said regarding the goal of the program. “It was really essential to us that both artists were excited about working with kids and have brought ideas of what they can do with young people in our community.”

The first artist, Faheem Majeed, is a South Shore Chicago-based mixed media artist who looks at the material makeup of his neighborhood as an entry point into larger questions about community activism and institutional critique.

He transforms things that may otherwise be overlooked, like

scrap metal or discarded billboards, into art.

Mr. Majeed has led a multitude of educational workshops for a variety of ages as well as being an inaugural artist-in-residence for the University of Chicago’s Arts and Public Life Initiative in 2012. He is currently a full-time artist that works out of his South Shore studio. Mr. Majeed will likely visit Lab during the Fall.

Shani Crowe, the second artist-in-residence, is another South Shore native best known for her work with hair arranged in intricate corn-rowed styles captured by photographic portraits.

Ms. Crowe also taught at the Summer Lab program from 2014–15.

Ms. Crowe expressed interest in having her own studio within the school where students could check in on her work, as well as seek advice about their own artwork.

“I used to take my students to artist’s studios, so they could have conversations with working artists,” Ms. Neater said, “and now we have the opportunity to bring artists to us and welcome them into a really creative community, where not just one class gets to experience them, but everyone will have an opportunity to interact with them.”

The theme of the artist-in-residence program for 2020-21 will be dance, which will focus on the artistic aspects of the activity.

According to Ms. Neater, plans for the dance residency are at a preliminary phase.

OVERTHRONE

As the hit show wraps up, students and fans react to the final twists

by **MAX GARFINKEL**
BUSINESS MANAGER

Armies, leaders and dragons. These have been on the minds of fans of the cultural phenomenon that is “Game of Thrones” during its final season, which premiered April 14. According to CNBC, 17.4 million people tuned in.

The HBO show has been applauded by its fans for satisfying character development, intense drama and intricate storylines. Viewers started the season anticipating who would prevail in the “Game of Thrones” — Cersei Lannister, who started the season on the throne; Jon Snow, king in the North; or Daenerys Targaryen, the dragon queen.

However, with the show’s reputation for throwing the audience curveballs, someone completely unexpected could end up winning. After all, even after years of character development, you never know when a main character will be killed off. The first episodes of Season 8 addressed some of the show’s main plot lines, building tension for the finale.

In the penultimate episode May 12, the capital city, King’s Landing, was burnt to the ground by Daenerys’ forces. Fans are now more perplexed. By the May 19 finale, viewers will know who ends up on the Iron Throne and wins the “Game of Thrones.”

Perspectives from fans

Junior Eve Grobman got reeled into the show when it started gain-

ing a lot of hype. She has been watching the show since its fifth season, but binge-watched Seasons 1-4 before beginning.

Before she started watching the show, she had read the first three books of the “A Song of Ice and Fire” series by George R.R. Martin, on which “Game of Thrones” is based.

Although Eve usually watches each new episode by herself, she enjoys discussing it with her friends the next day to debrief.

“As it comes into its final season, all of us are on the edge of our seats,” she said. “All these things could happen, and after we have been following it for so long we are so anxious to see how it will end. And, while all these big things keep happening this season, one of the first things you want to do is tell someone about how crazy it was or your reactions.”

She explained that this season each episode is important, so discussing the “OMG moments” helps process the show.



Eve Grobman



Stanley Shapiro



SOURCE: HBO

FINAL MOMENTS. Ser Davos Seaworth (Liam Cunningham) and Jon Snow (Kit Harrington) look upon the battlefield with their army at their back. Both characters have been in the “Game of Thrones” series since its first season. The cultural phenomenon’s eighth and final season concludes May 19.

Stanley Shapiro has also watched the show since Season 5. He watches and debriefs with his dad.

“It’s always fun to talk with him after something major happens in an episode,” Stanley said. “After the episode we will predict what we think is going to happen. We are usually totally wrong about what’s actually going happen, but it’s always fun to discuss what you think.”

Stanley, a junior, started watching “Game of Thrones” at the beginning of his freshman year of high school. He initially started watching after hearing about it on the internet and in news articles.

He said “I didn’t know much

about it and actually thought it was kinda weird, but as I got older I started seeing more references and that got me into the show.”

Eve is not surprised that the show’s following has grown as big as it has. She said it’s gained such a large following since it has something for everyone.

“It includes everything we want to see. It has really interesting characters, it’s got gore, and you never know what’s going to happen,” she said. “I think the broadness of the world as a whole attracts a lot of people who like fantasy or like seeing big battles or like seeing real characters and deep character dramas and development.”

Even though there will not be any new episodes of “Game of Thrones” coming out, that doesn’t mean Eve is done with the show.

“Once I finish it, immediately after I’m going to take a break just to process it,” she said, “but after a few years I see myself coming back and rewatching the whole show in its entirety.”

Although Eve is excited to see the last episode, it is bittersweet for her.

“It’ll be nice to see the end since it’s the end of such a big story and everyone wants to know what happens,” she said, “and I think at some point there is a right time for everything to end.”

More than just a movie theater

From games to dining to shopping, these theaters turn a typical movie-going experience from just a showing into an outing that could fill up a whole afternoon

Story and photos by **ABIGAIL SLIMMON**, SPORTS EDITOR



AMC River East 21
322 E. Illinois St.



Landmark Theaters
2828 N. Clark St.



AMC Dine-In Block 37
108 N. State St.

Fill a whole day downtown with movies, bowling, games

Looking for a fun date night or afternoon with friends or family? AMC River East 21 has it all. From Pac-Man to bowling to movie theater popcorn, a visit to 322 E. Illinois St. could last all night.

This AMC location has 21 theatres varying in size but all with standard stadium seating. They show every new, notable movie with tons of screenings throughout the day so finding a time that works isn’t hard, and seats are not reserved.

Classic movie theatre food and candy are for sale, as well bar and comfort food such as chicken wings or a burger, in Lucky Strike.

Lucky Strike also has 18 bowling lanes, ping pong and billiards. To bowl, Lucky Strike charges \$6 per person per lane but after 5 p.m., it’s \$8 per person. Shoe rental costs \$4.20.

Across from Lucky Strike is For The Win, a huge arcade. The arcade is dark with bright neon lights and loud machines.

With more than 130 game including a mini golf course, hours can easily be spent inserting tokens and winning tickets. After 9 p.m. the arcade is 21+ and before 9 p.m. every minor must be accompanied by an adult.

North Side cinema provides break from blockbusters

Landmark Century Cinemas is a movie theater known for showing a variety of different movies, from independent films to huge hollywood productions. Located at 2828 N. Clark St., Landmark is a hidden Lake View gem.

The movie theaters are on the top floor of a building right in the middle of one of the busiest streets on the North Side. Despite its prime North Side location, the theater is relatively quiet and calm.

The theaters themselves are big with leather semi-recliner chairs but are rarely as busy as the larger downtown movie theaters.

Landmark Century is a good alternative to going to one of the big corporation theaters such as AMC or Regal and at \$12.50, tickets are on the cheaper side.

Rather than spending money on overpriced theater snacks, movie-goers can take their pick from the many sit-down dining spots all less than 5 minutes from the theater. From Japanese barbecue to crepes, Lake View has it all.

If you are in a rush, there’s also a Jimmy John’s, Wow Bao and Stan’s Donuts less than 200 feet from the theater. Additionally, movie-goers can also shop at stores like Urban Outfitters, Target and Akira.

Eat more than just popcorn, candy at Loop’s comfy AMC

This downtown dine-in theater is the perfect package deal. Movie-goers enjoy large, comfy seats, personal tables and ready to take their order after just one push of a button.

Danny Han, who said he frequently sees movies at Block 37, explained that theater is shaped differently than most theaters and the seats are spread out which gives everyone more room to relax and enjoy their food.

Visitors will experience large menu with classic movie theater snacks such as popcorn and candy, but the theater also offers a large menu including things like burgers and salads. Food can be ordered before the movie starts or at any time during the film.

“I like it because it’s a good way to do two things at once,” Danny said. “You get to see a movie and eat lunch or dinner, it’s good if you don’t have time to do both separately.”

Tickets cost \$17.91, which is pricey compared to \$12.50 at Landmark Century Cinemas.

Kennedy Coats, who also sees movies at Block 37, said that she doesn’t mind the price.

“You’re paying for an experience, not just a movie,” Kennedy said.

Student Council: the chance for change is now

As new officers rise, student interest and outreach are crucial for success

As the Midway sees it ...

2019-20 Student Council, this is your chance. It's your chance to do something, to reach as far as you can, to prove that Student Council is an effective and integral contingent.

So, take that chance, and make the student body care about Student Council.

In the May 3 election, Ben Cifu, Kepler Boonstra and Ava Kucera ran unopposed, and we wonder if that is because potential candidates didn't think they could win or because not many students saw the value of joining Student Council.

What we've seen in past years is Student Council being defined by throwing a few dances and maybe a lock-in or two. Yet, according to the position descriptions, all of that and more can be taken care of by the Cultural Union. So, while Cultural Union members plan grade and school-wide events, what are our presidents and vice presidents doing?

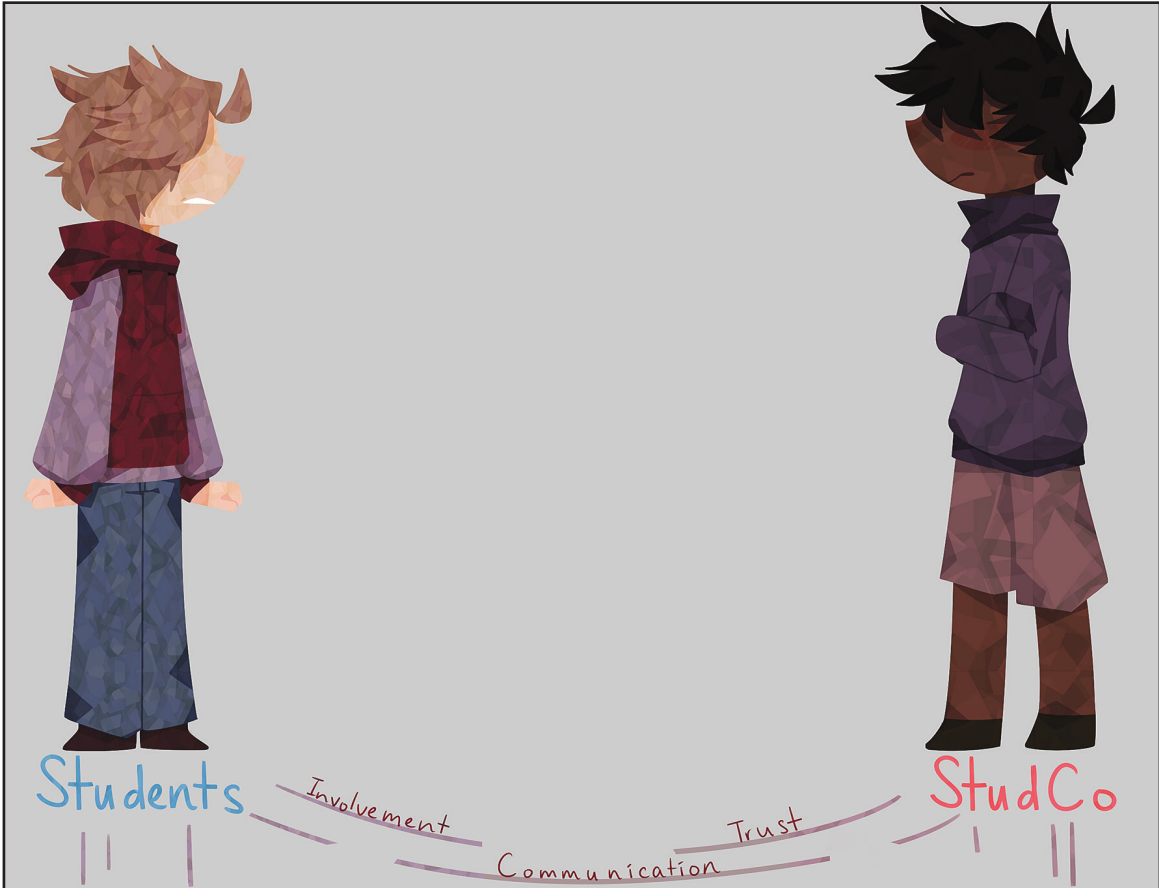
We seldom hear of Student Council members working directly with members of the student body to address their concerns. We don't see Student Council members in action except for the few Facebook and Schoology posts re-

“Open channels of conversation with students. Create public opportunities for discussion between student council. Let the student body know that there's a space for them to work with you.”

mindings us of school events. Beyond these events, we don't always see the tangible results of the weekly meetings.

But we'd like to. Open more channels of conversation with students and publicize them. Rather than reacting only to major proposals, create regular public opportunities for discussion between Student Council members and other students. Let the student body know that there's a space for them to work with you, and then foster that space. A good place to start is the newly amended constitution that allows any student to suggest bills in the Student Council with a sponsor.

Make sure you're hearing all students, because your student body has opinions and ideas for developments. They just need you to let them know that sharing those ideas is an accessible option. They need to know there's someone lis-



MIDWAY ARTWORK BY ACE ZHANG

tening.

Essentially, Student Council should let students in, and make sure that students know how they can be involved. If the all-school secretary is already taking minutes of meetings which are open to the student body, they could easily be published on Facebook and

Schoology.

Now is your time to truly take charge of the school. Student Council should be more involved in school events, like Social Justice Week and Artsfest. Furthermore, they should create more of their own, original programming.

This clean slate that you start

with is immensely exciting. You have a full year to change the nature of the Student Council-student body relationship. So go forth, and do it. Make students understand that Student Council can be a really useful tool. Make students care about the role you have by taking that role seriously.

Education offers growth, not just preparation for jobs

by IVÁN BECK
FEATURES EDITOR

John Dewey famously said that “education is not preparation for life; education is life itself.” This concept is one of the founding principles of the Laboratory Schools. However, recent student culture does not reflect this ideal.



Students must change their mindset and consider education a means to person-

ally advance their knowledge and capabilities, not just a chance to build up a résumé.

Throughout my experience in high school, I have met many individuals who take challenging classes, engage in rigorous extracurricular activities and utilize their free time only because they think these activities would look good on a college application. For many, this way of thinking is validated as they or their peers are admitted into colleges that they consider prestigious. However, this outlook is flawed.

When a student's only motiva-

tion for learning is getting into a top college, they lose investment in class material. This causes a lack of true engagement and interest in the material, and students lose out on opportunities to enrich themselves.

Part of this issue lies in the style of learning Lab promotes. The accelerated, race-through courses, paired with the extremely competitive atmosphere that is pervasive among all grades, is extremely detrimental to true learning.

These pressures create a social environment in which students feel obliged to take as ma-

ny accelerated courses as possible, not necessarily due to interest but for the way that an AT or AP class reads on their college applications. It is impossible for students to truly absorb material with this in mind, because their end goal is society's definition of success rather than purely personal growth.

Another part of this problem lies in the hands of students. When we race through course after course, we cannot truly develop an understanding of what we want out of life academically and personally.

At U-High, students tend to think that education is the only

way anyone obtains their dream job. Many individuals see high school and college as mere stepping stones to get them to the job they want. By doing this, students effectively isolate themselves from the learning process, and from gaining the life experiences that come from these stepping stones.

To honor our school's founder, we must honor high school, college and other levels of education as more than stepping stones. They are valuable stages of life that much be explored to their fullest, not rushed through in endless pursuit.

Sexist images in video game communities harm players

by KATERINA LOPEZ
ASSISTANT EDITOR

In 2014, gamer Zoe Quinn received comments like these after she tried to change a gaming culture she deemed toxic. This is not the only time comments like these have been aimed at video game players.



Five years later, some gamers still have this attitude. When I spent time playing “Fortnite” as recently as this month, I received similar degrading comments criticizing me with comments like, “Bitches can't play games.”

These comments only further prove Ms. Quinn's point: gaming culture must move on from its deep-seated sexism.

Although approximately an equal amount of men and women play video games, according to a 2012 study published in the Journal of Interpersonal Violence, the games use violent content and sexualization of female characters to target men.

In fact, this study has found evidence that the depiction of violence and the sexualization of women increases the likelihood that the men will accept or tolerate violence such as rape through rape-supportive attitudes. The repeated exposure men have to women's bodies as depicted in vid-

“When woman gamers stand up for their dignity and ask for woman characters to be shown in less revealing clothing, the gamers face horrible backlash, including threats of death and rape, and doxxing.”

eo games transfers to their everyday lives. Some male gamers demand access to women and feel entitled to do what they wish. I'm afraid that the over sexualization of the female characters, which leads to acceptance of rape culture, will lead these men to com-

mit these horrible crimes.

Despite awareness of this objectification, the gaming community as a whole has shown little change. When woman gamers stand up for their dignity and ask for woman characters to be shown in less revealing clothing, the gamers face horrible backlash, including threats of death and rape, and doxxing — publishing someone's personal information online.

In 2013, Ms. Quinn came out with a text-based game about her struggles with depression. This game received major backlash such as death and bomb threats, resulting in her fleeing her home. The aftermath created the Gamergate movement, a campaign demanding fair representation and

ethical video game practices

Soon afterward many gamers gave this campaign a backlash, complaining about the inclusion of feminist ideals in their games.

Unfortunately, this is still common behavior in video game culture. The chat sections of some video games are filled with slurs and offensive language. The sexualization of women in the games are reinforced by the comments of players, which may affect how those players think about and treat women in their real lives.

It's up to video game creators and to the gamers themselves to resist these offensive norms video games have held and to not stand for an environment that perpetuates gender stereotypes.

U-HIGH MIDWAY

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CORRECTIONS
ISSUE 8, APRIL 25, 2019:

- Page 1: “Break the Stigma” workshop focused on providing menstrual hygiene products.
- Page 2: The Labapalooza brief was written by Nicky Edwards-Levin
- Page 10: Nick Beach is not a starter on varsity. Ismael Figueroa's name was misspelled.

Personalized Pedaling

Students build, repair their bikes to avoid expenses of bike shops

by **TEDDY NEER**
MIDWAY REPORTER

While some students enjoy extracurriculars, playing video games or grinding out their schoolwork, two juniors have spent the past year investing their time and sweat in a new passion. Luke Sikora and Aden Chon didn't buy bikes that were ready to ride. Instead, they each built a custom ride from the frame up

Over the past year Luke and Aden have each worked on their bikes. Building a bike appealed to them for different reasons. Ad-

en was tired of spending lots of money at bike shops and wanted to save money by building his own bike.

"Taking your bike to shops for basic services and repairs can get really expensive, so I decided to spend that money on getting a good tool kit and teaching myself how to do repairs and build bikes," Aden said. "It's really fun. Once you get really in the zone with it, you can work on your bike for a whole day and not even notice to time go by."

Aden was initially motivated by saving money but eventually be-

Luke and Aden's Bike Costs:

Frame: **\$500**

Wheels: **\$200**

Pedals: **\$20**

Tools: **\$100**

gan to enjoy the work. However, Luke began working on bikes because it gave him freedom.

"I started out modifying my bike mostly because I just wanted to make it the best bike possible," Luke said. "I just really wanted to build something that was really easy and smooth to ride."

To Luke and Aden, building a bike is not just saving money and making an ideal bike. Both felt that riding on a bike they had built themselves made for a stronger connection.

"When you learn how to do repairs yourself, you feel more connected to your bike. That's something that you built — all your own effort, all your own money, all your



MIDWAY PHOTO BY MARIA SHAUGHNESSY

BUILD IT, RIDE IT, LOVE IT. Junior Aden Chon kneels down to tighten the axle nuts on the front wheel of his custom made bike. Aden has assembled his bike throughout the past year, first getting into it after realizing just how much money he was spending on repairs at local bike shops.

own parts," Aden said. "You can also make it ride exactly how you want it to, unlike when you buy a prebuilt bike from a shop."

While building and repairing a bike has some clear advantages, it can seem daunting. Those who want to build their own bikes have many resources, ranging from YouTube videos to books, to help learn about working on bikes. There is also no right or wrong way to learn. Neither Luke nor Aden took classes but were still able to

build bikes.

"I learned about all this stuff in sort of an unorthodox way, which was pretty much just doing it by myself. I never took any classes or anything. I was gifted a 300-page book that has everything you could think of," Luke said. "I would just read and study that book like it was a bible. And with that knowledge, along with just knowing a lot of people who I rode with that were bike mechanics, I just picked things up as I went along,"

Working on bikes may be difficult work. If one is willing to put in the time, money and effort, it can become a fun pastime that yields many rewards. Luke said his best advice for those who want to work on bikes is to just give it a shot.

"My only advice is that you should definitely fix up your bike," Luke said. "Even if you don't care much about having the latest and most aesthetic parts, being able to fix up a bike and have it to ride is awesome."

TEAM RESULTS

U-High scores are listed first.

Baseball, Varsity

Notable: After winning the May 7 game against UCCS-Woodlawn 18-0, the team honored Nate Westneat for senior night. Nate pitched four shutout innings and struck out 10 players. The team spent Saturday afternoon May 11 volunteering for I Grow Chicago in Englewood by picking up trash, clearing vacant lots and even planting a garden.

Northridge	May 9	11-0
Woodlawn	May 7	18-0
Grayslake	May 6	9-6
Latin	May 4	9-0
Depaul College Prep	April 29	4-5
Chicago Christian	April 27	1-13
North Shore	April 26	6-1
Crystal Lake	April 24	6-2

Girls Soccer, Varsity

Notable: The team honored its two seniors, Sammy Rodman and Grace Watson

on senior night May 1 after their win against Woodlands. There were speeches, food and the juniors performed a song and dance for the graduating seniors.

Wheaton	May 9	0-1
IC College prep	May 6	0-1
Parker	May 4	2-1
Latin	May 2	0-2
Woodlands	May 1	1-0
Jones	April 26	1-3
NSCD	April 17	0-1

Girls Soccer, JV

Wheaton	May 9	2-1
Morgan Park	May 6	1-0
Morgan Park	May 3	7-0
Latin	May 2	2-1
Woodlands	May 1	5-0
Latin	April 29	2-0

Boys Tennis, Varsity

Notable: Senior Robert Coats placed 10th in 1st singles and Junior Marcus Chang placed ninth in second

singles at the University High-Normal Invitational May 3.
U-High Normal Inv. May 3 2nd
Latin April 30 0-5
Tom Pitchford Inv. April 26 12th

Track and Field

Notable: Six runners on the girls team will advance to the IHSA 2A State Championship after competing at the Sectional Championship May 10. The 4x800 relay team of Hannah Herrera, Abigael Thinakaran, Franzi Wild and Sophia Park placed first with a time of 11:07. Freshman Amanda O'Donnell finished first in the 3200m running a 11:33. Franzi took first in the 1600m with Sophia in second.

Jim Kwastenet Inv.	April 26	1st
Girls Sectional Champs	May 10	4th

—COMPILED BY ABIGAIL SLIMMON
ILLUSTRATIONS BY NEENA DHANOA



MIDWAY PHOTO BY MARIA SHAUGHNESSY

PLAY HARD. Sophomore Willow Young shields the ball during a home game against Wheaton Academy May 9. The team lost 0-1 during the last three minutes of their final regular season game.



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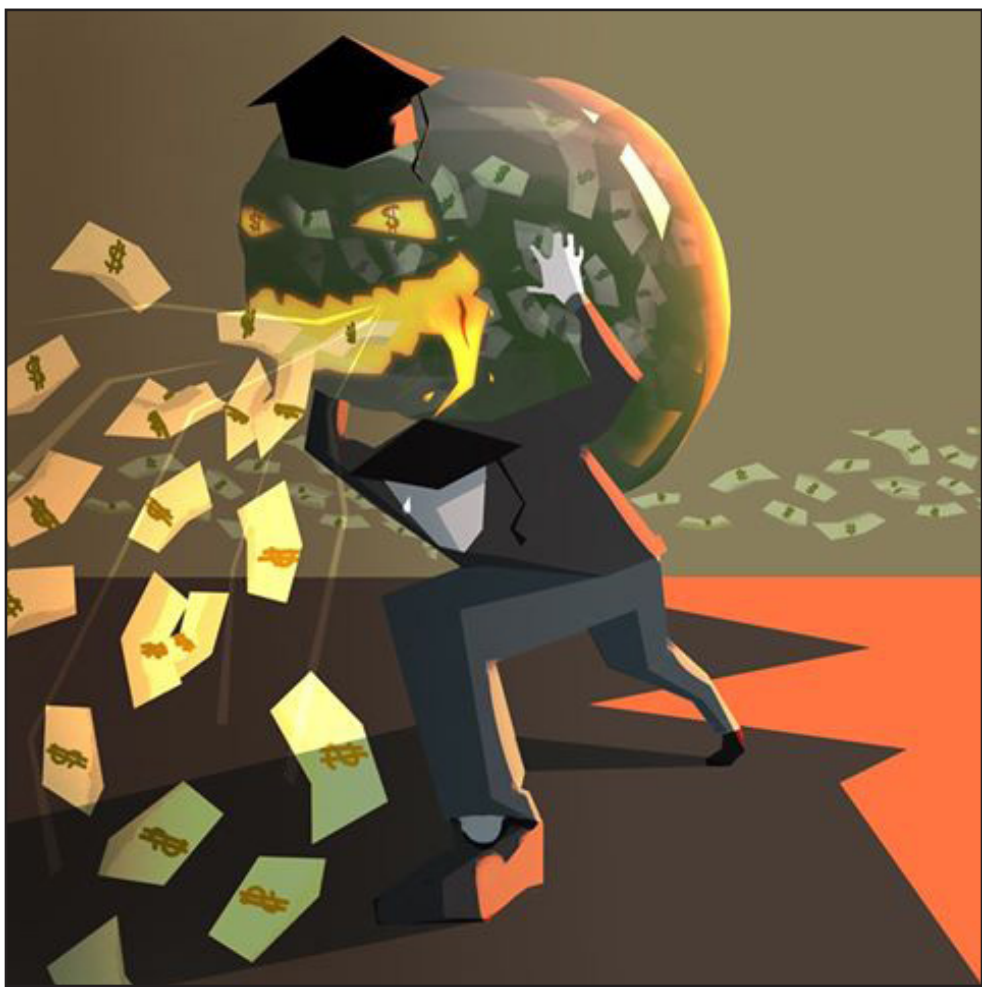


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CRUSHING COST OF COLLEGE

Students seeking financial aid for college must begin to consider the long-term costs to credit and other opportunities. The burden is so damaging that presidential candidate Elizabeth Warren has now called for student debt relief, hoping it will boost her campaign.



MIDWAY ILLUSTRATION BY RISA COHEN

Undergraduate debt affects students long-term

by **PRIYANKA SHRIJAY**
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Saving for retirement. Buying a car. Having children. As high school students contemplate taking out loans to pay for the ever-increasing cost of attending college, they may not consider these potential major facets of their future lives, but life milestones can be directly impacted by the debt students incur throughout their higher education. High school students think about prestige or the ideal of college life. Few consider cost a priority, and many take out loans. Yet, the decision to take out loans is one of immense importance, as it has significant long-term impacts. According to college counselor Patty Kovacs, most statistics regarding student loan debt are of aggregate debt. This means that the majority of those dollars are from graduate school loans. Students still often take out hefty loans for their undergraduate education, but colleges try

to keep them from taking on too much debt. “For undergraduate student loan debt, most colleges are going to cap that,” she said. While colleges may stop students from taking out colossal loans, they put no such restrictions on parents. Any parent with a good credit record, regardless of financial profile, could qualify for a government loan to aid in paying their child’s tuition. The question then, is whether or not families are willing to go into debt to pay for their child’s college education. Students must consider how much debt responsibility they will take and how much will fall to their parents, and in addition to that, families should consider long-term financial aid plans, according to Ms. Kovacs. “You might say, ‘I want to go to college, and I want to be a doctor, and I want to open a practice,’” she said. “How long do families want to be contributing to the overall educational costs? Does it end totally

at the bachelor’s degree, or can we say, ‘We’ve put this money aside and we’ll extend it if you look at financial options that are different.’” While students should be mindful of the long-term impact of their student debt, according to Ms. Kovacs, undergraduate student loans shouldn’t affect a student’s ability to attend graduate school as students will not have to begin payments until after graduate school. “I don’t think it affects the ability to go to graduate school,” she said. “It kicks that undergraduate loan repayment off until you’re finished with that grad school. And then it gets folded into the aggregate.” Undergraduate debt may not affect a student’s ability to attend graduate school, but it does affect a student’s ability to take out



Patty Kovacs
COLLEGE COUNSELOR

“In many ways, that’s like buying a car. If you haven’t budgeted for that, then it can come as a surprise. It does delay in some cases, students buying a home, getting married, those kinds of things.”
— PATTY KOVACS,
COLLEGE COUNSELOR

loans for other major components of adult life. “In many ways that’s like buying a car. If you haven’t budgeted for that, then it can come as a shock,” Ms. Kovacs said. “It does delay in some cases, students buying a home, getting married, those kinds of things.” From Oct. 9 to Oct. 24, 2018, 7,095 adults with student loan debt from all 50 U.S. states were surveyed by Student Debt Crisis, a non-profit organization dedicated to student debt reform. More

than half — 56% of those surveyed — said their student debt prevented them from buying a home, and 19% delayed getting married. While some may look toward loan forgiveness to tackle debt, qualifications are strict. According to the Department of Education, to qualify for loan forgiveness, one must work at a non-profit organization for 10 years, work for the federal, state or local government, and make 120 monthly payments. In 2017, 28,000 people applied for loan forgiveness, and only 96 were approved according to the New York Times. As students consider financial aid, it is essential that they consider the impact and understand what their future will look like financially. Ms. Kovacs said, “I think one of the best things to do is for parents and students to have an honest and open conversation early in high school, like sophomore year — what we’re really talking about in terms of college affordability.”

Five things you need to know about financial aid

by **EMMA TRONE**
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

In 2019, student loan debt in the United States reached a whopping total of \$1.5 trillion, with an average of \$29,000 owed per student. It takes student debt holders an average of 19.7 years to pay off their debt, with an average monthly payment of \$393 per month, according to the New York Times. While politicians like U.S. Sen. Elizabeth Warren have proposed plans to help alleviate student debt burdens and perhaps even forgive up to \$50,000 in debt for families making under \$100,000 a year, the student loan situation shows no sign of going away any time soon. Here are some answers to questions you might have about student debt and loans.

The difference between a grant, scholarship and loan?
Grants and scholarships are considered “free money;” they don’t need to be repaid. Grants tend to be need-based and provided by the government. The largest source of grants in the United States is the Federal Pell Grant, which awards a maximum of just over \$6,000 to each qualifying student each year. Scholarships can be need-based or merit-based, with anything from high grades and scores to a particular talent qualifying a student. A loan is money that needs to be paid back. The most common federal loans are Stafford Loans and Perkins Loans, which are low-interest. Students can also choose to borrow from private loan companies like Navient or Sallie Mae, which often have higher interest rates.

How much debt is too much debt?
According to college counselor Melissa Warehall, students should borrow within a reasonable amount. “My opinion is that a reasonable amount is in between \$20,000 and \$25,000 over four years, not per year,” Ms. Warehall said. “Right now, the way that both the Stafford subsidized and unsubsidized loans work, if you’re awarded both a subsidized and unsubsidized loan, that’s about \$5,500 a year. So that works out to be about \$22,000 over four years. Once your loan debt gets above around \$25,000, it becomes a burden.”

What happens if you borrow too much?
Ms. Warehall said that borrowing an unreasonable amount can

create a years-long burden. “There are two ways it could come into play. One, when you’re making your first career choice out of college, there might be a great opportunity where you want to work for an NGO or a not-for-profit. But if you need to make a \$400-500 loan payment each month, that might affect the type of position you are able to take when you first graduate from college,” Ms. Warehall said. “The other concern is that the way the government has structured bankruptcy laws, loans can never be forgiven. So even if you declare bankruptcy, your loan debt gets deferred, but not discharged.”

What are some benefits to borrowing?
“The upside to taking out student loans and borrowing during the time you’re in college is you

start having a credit record,” Ms. Warehall said. “If you start paying those loan payments back as you should, you end up having a really nice credit score to start out with. You can’t get a credit score until you start accruing credit, so it’s a safe way to start building credit, as long as it’s a reasonable amount of debt.”

What are some resources I can look at to start?
The Federal Student Aid website is home to endless information about financing a college education. The website’s FAFSA4Caster can help estimate eligibility for federal aid with a few bits of information. To search for scholarship opportunities, the Department of Labor’s CareerOneStop section features over 7,000 scholarships and other financial aid opportunities.

**Survey:
Loan debt
resulted in...**

18%
defaulting on at
least one loan

80%
not saving for
retirement

58%
reporting credit
score decline

26%
delaying having
children

SOURCE: STUDENT DEBT CRISIS