Ninth grade is largest class yet

by NIKHIL PATEL
EDITORS-IN-CHIEF

Entering U-High, the Class of 2023 is the largest class yet, but only 18 students are new to Lab this year, which is largely due to increased enrollment when the current ninth graders were in middle school.

Four new juniors are also joining the high school this year. The size of the class does cause some concern about typical high school activities, such as ones meant to build community like advising. "We are trying to be conscientious with certain things like advisories, which are supposed to create smaller communities for our students," Asra Ahmed, assistant principal, said. "Our lead advisors to the ninth-grade class, Laura Doto and Fran Spaltro, are working with the ninth-grade cohort of advisors to build in lots of team building and group development activities because when you have a class that big, it's really a challenge for everyone to feel connected to the school.

Club shopping is another activity that will be affected by the large size of the class. According to Ms. Ahmed, faculty are working to make sure that every student knows about what is occurring and that they feel encouraged to get involved. Ms. Ahmed also expects the new students to benefit from U-High's peer-to-peer program, where sophomores work to help their ninth-grade classmates adjust to their new school.

Freshman retreat at Cedar Lake, Indiana, Aug. 29-30, served as a good way for new ninth graders to get acquainted with their immediate academic community before school started. Students who were invited to meet the new students were offered an opportunity to get to know them.

"We're doing everything that we usually do, we're just looking at it with a closer eye because of the size of the class," Mr. Ribbens said. "This is what pushes the date of the decision back: after receiving transcripts, one to two weeks after the arbitration dates, each side receives written arguments. The arbitrator makes a decision, and then the arbitrator makes a decision, and then the arbitrator makes a decision."

"I respect whatever that outcome is," he said. "Lab's a place with a lot of student voice, and I respect the student voice that's here. I think it's important for us to focus on having a great start of the school year and let the process unfold, and be focused on a new year and a new beginning."

Unisex locker room installed to meet ADA standards

by AMANDA CASCHEL
MANAGING EDITOR

As of Sept. 3, the gym building locker room since fall 2017 renovations are incomplete. Athletic Director David Ribbens estimates the lockers will be completed by the end of September.

The lockers were originally scheduled to be completed by the start of the 2019-2020 school year, but due to the spatial needs of Adventure Kids and other Summer Lab programs, the project was not completed.

According to Mr. Ribbens, the overall goals were to "expand the lockers so kids would have space for their backpacks" and "raise the locker rooms to A.D.A. standards."

The A.D.A., Americans with Disabilities Act, dictates the need for male, female and unisex facilities. Lacking a gender-neutral venue, the locker rooms were not up to standard prior to this renovation.

"Part of [the new unisex locker room] was the boys locker room, part of it was the ramp system," Mr. Ribbens said. "And this renovation is a great step in the right direction."

All of the locker rooms will have locks pre-attached to lockers. Students will be able to choose their lockers and will have combinations provided.

The locker rooms will also feature new paint, lighting and Lab logos. "We're looking to update the locker rooms to the point where the kids take some pride in it," Mr. Ribbens said.

Additionally, Mr. Ribbens explained that the building has undergone several adjustments over the past few years to create a "central hub" towards the entrance of the gym building.

To do this, the P.E. administrative offices, security guard and fitness center will be in the same location at the entrance.

New physical trainer Erin DeHoe will also be in the fitness center, rather than next to the P.E. classroom on the second floor. The fitness center was previously on the third floor and the gymnastics room on the first, but these two will switch by the beginning of October, according to Mr. Ribbens.

Bobo-Jones arbitration decision remains months off

Lengthy process delays verdict as school begins

by MIRA COSTELLO
NEWS EDITOR

The arbitration for the case of Daniel Bobo-Jones, a science teacher fired from Lab in January, will likely not have a verdict until December. The issue remains unresolved as a new school year begins.

According to Laboratory Schools Director Charlie Abelmann, the first day of the Bobo-Jones arbitration took place July 16 with an oral day of testimony held Aug. 30.

The arbitration will likely have its third and final day in early October, later than expected, according to Mr. Bobo-Jones. No new information is allowed, Mr. Bobo-Jones says, so the next date will only consist of rebuttals from each side.

This still doesn't mean the end of the case, though. "There's additional time for each side to share information, and then the arbitrator makes a decision," Mr. Abelmann said. Jim Catlett, a science teacher who is Faculty Association president, said that one to two weeks after the arbitration dates, each side receives transcripts.

This is what pushes the date of the decision back: after receiving final transcripts, both lawyers have one to two more weeks to submit written arguments. The arbitrator then has 30 days to provide a decision, a time frame commitment that was the arbitrator's choice, according to Mr. Bobo-Jones.

This means that the community may not receive answers right away, but there is a decision in the near future.

Mr. Bobo-Jones' case created tension and speculation among students, administration and faculty alike.

Dr. Abelmann hopes to keep students informed and focused in light of whatever decision is revealed. "It's a small group of people who know all the facts," Mr. Abelmann said. "I think it's important to educate people how to be careful around making judgments without necessarily knowing all the facts, about any issue."

Despite the emotional nature of the case, which saw strong support of Mr. Bobo-Jones continuing to be part of Lab staff this year, Dr. Abelmann said he is committed to supporting students.

"I'll respect whatever that outcome is," he said. "Lab's a place with a lot of student voice, and I respect the student voice that's here. I think it's important for us to focus on having a great start of the school year and let the process unfold, and be focused on a new year and a new beginning."
New additions look toward Lab’s community, flexibility

PAUL BEEMKRE

Paul Beemker assumes the role of principal. Mr. Beemker says he spent a lifetime as an administrator and a high school English teacher. He most recently worked as the assistant head of the upper school for academics at the Brooklyn Friends School in New York. Mr. Beemker has also worked at schools in Morocco, Turkey, Australia and Afghanistan. Mr. Beemker said he hopes to build a sense of trust with the students. “I hope to have an open door. I hope to be able to listen and facilitate conversation,” Mr. Beemker said. “Lab is a community. Lab stidents and teachers all have amazing experiences. My job is to foster a sense of belonging and respect.”

Mr. Beemker plans to bring more collaborative opportunities for students and teachers all with amazing experiences. My job is to foster a sense of belonging and respect.”

ABIGAIL SLIMMON

Abigail Slimmon, Nikhil Patel, and Amanda Casself are the newest additions to U-High’s faculty. Rich Beekmyer spends a lot of time with his new puppy, Walter.

KIMBERLY WILLIAMSON

Kimberly Williamson is the new di-rector of human resources. Prior to joining Lab, she has had jobs for both the Hyde Park Day School and the Sonia Shankman Or- thogenic School. “As a Chicagoan, specifically a South Sider, I am acutely aware of the rich history and reputation of the Laboratory Schools and the University of Chicago, which is why it was a great honor to be of- fered this position. I feel like I’m in the right place at the right time.”

Ms. Williamson explained that in ad- dition to teaching, by the book ex- perience with theatre and the “Poetry Out Loud” group into her English class. Additionally, she has expanded our media coverage, but are aware that there is a larger area for im- provement. By maximizing con- tent on different social media for- mats such as Instagram, Face- book and Snapchat while also continuing to improve and expand our website, we will strive to make the news as accessible as possible. Our community is full of di- verse interests, activities and opin- ions. As a community, we have a unique opportunity to push the boundaries of our cov- erage and include larger swaths of the community, rather than a se- lect few. We hope to increase en- gagement with the U-High com- munity to fully represent the inter- ests of our community.

Additionally, it is critical that as the school continues to grow, we push to include this larger and more diverse group of voices. We will do this not only through guest columns but also by expanding to a wider variety of sources for all kinds of stories. This expansion of our op- portunity to want to offer an ac- cessible platform for people to share their unique voice in the Lab community.
Junior kayaks around Superior over summer

Route covered over 310 miles in 25-day trip

by AUDREY MAYZKE

Cross-country open water is bad enough on a clear day. She could barely hold onto the yellow kayak, and the aching in her left arm was growing unbearable. Nonetheless, the next campsite was miles away, and she had to keep paddling.

Throughout their Advanced MarineYeah International Camp, Marmito-Wish draws upon an oft-repeated camp mantra: “No one builds character, especially when there’s no Wi-Fi. For Izzy Kaufman-Sites, a junior with two prior kayaking days kayaking Lake Superior, this sentiment rang true.

Izzy’s group consisted of two adult leaders and five other campers, all of whom were entering either their freshman or junior year of high school. Each day, the adults would “instruct two camps as ‘co-leaders,’ who made sure the group stayed together on trips and checked to see that everyone was drinking enough water. For Izzy, the experience was far more confident and self-assured communicator.

“I was really pushed to step out of my comfort zone and take on a leadership role,” Izzy said. While she accepted the role, she was collaborating with someone else.

In the days leading up to her trip, the thought of traveling 310 miles in Ontario from Agawa Bay to Silver Inlet, seemingly daunting. Though she participated in similar, less advanced Manito-Wish programs for the past seven years, this was, by far, her longest paddling challenge.

“Honestly, going into the trip I was pretty nervous,” Izzy said. “We were mapping it out beforehand and I was like, ‘Wow, this is a lot of miles. We didn’t do that many last year.’

Surrounded by nothing but water, the girls often turn to one another for fun and encouragement. When kayaking, they would sing camp songs (or pop songs, as long as everybody knew them) and tell funny stories to pass the time.

“We definitely had some tough days, and I very much relied on support from my other group members,” Izzy said.

For Izzy, the intimacy of shared experiences and mealtime chats formed somewhat of an unbreakable bond.

SPORTS • 3

Cross Country

The cross country team is poised to repeat as conference champions and continue to improve both individually and as a team. To start the season where they left off, athletes have been running all preseason to get in good shape.

This season, they will look to fill the gaps of two graduating seniors, who contributed greatly to their team’s success. Despite not having them this year, team captain Luke Skora is confident the team will be able to pick up their slack.

“I think I can see myself in another person,” Izzy said. “I think that’s something I’m working on.”

Luke is excited for invite only events such as the Fenister Trophy Invitational. With the addition of the two seniors, he is hoping to create a stronger team.

Izzy explained that he believes the team can rise to the occasion.

Both the boys and girls teams face Sept. 10 on the Syd- ney Marzec golf course in View. — CHRISTIAN GLUTH

Sailing

With the addition of 12 freshmen, the sailing team roster currently lists a record 27 sailors, compared to 10 the season prior.

Coach Kurt Thomsen said, “It will be a little bit challenging having some of the newer sailors sailing with the varsity kids, but the learning curve should be pretty quick.”

Many students sailed over the summer including sophomores Benjamin Wild, junior Philip Lengyel and senior Ava Wil- son. Due to this, Coach Thomsen believes the team is becoming a stronger contender each year.

Some of the most important competitions will be the Creggy Championship and Great Lakes Qualifier in October and the Great Lakes Championship in November.

— PETER PU

Boys Soccer

The soccer team features new coaches for both varsity and JV teams and a record 28 players on the varsity team, including two freshmen.

The relatively large number of players on the varsity team will be especially beneficial when players get injured during the season as according to senior Miles Rochester.

Former varsity soccer coach David Vadeboncoeur will be the new U-High var- sity assistant coach, former varsity girls coach Rannon Stroud will be the new boys junior varsity head coach, and Chris Birch will be the new junior varsity assistant coach.

“The new coaches have done a really good job of gradually getting used to us and how we play, and how we act as a team,” Miles said. “Instead of trying to change us, they became part of us.”

According to Miles, the loss of se- rious from last year, who brought a lot of energy to the team, changed the atmosphere of the team. Miles anticipates that this will be a challenge throughout the season.

Some of the most important games of the season according to Miles will be against Parker and the ISL championship game, Sept. 6, Ignatius on Oct. 10 and Whitney Young on Oct. 12. — PETER PU

Girls Swimming & Diving

The girls swim team dives back into the pool with new freshmen and new changes in the team. All of the girls are trying to get back into their best shape for the season.

The team is anticipating new freshmen for the season, and are continuing their skills for the first com- petition Sept. 13. The team makes great efforts to include incoming freshmen.

“We switch around practice lanes and we organize things outside of the pool to get to know the new girls,” Miles said. Junior Lea Rebollo-Baum said the team has also established locker buddies with the freshmen to facil- itate team-building for every- one on the team.

The captains have not been cho- sen yet.

— JULIAN INGERSOLL

Girls Tennis

Since Aug. 12, the girls tennis team has been practicing in prepara- tion for the school year. Major changes on the team include new captains, having separate varsity and JV practices, and incorporat- ing new freshmen into the U-High tennis community.

Varsity Captains Macy Beal and Isabella Kellermeyer and JV Cap- tain Kara Xu have been appoint- ed by the coaches. The first match- es of the season happened Aug. 22.

A large increase in team mem- bers motivated the coaches to have separate practice days for JV and varsity.

“Incorporating the freshmen in- to the team has been pretty easy,” Kara said. “But because the team is split up its harder to be a ‘team’.”

— JULIAN INGERSOLL

Volleyball

The volleyball team is up and running, winning the first two consecutive games of the season on Aug. 27 and 28 against Mansue to Charter High School in the Tim- owest Invitational.

With new additions to the team, creating a welcoming environ- ment will be a priority for the vari- ous team, according to junior Cin- dy.

“Most of this year’s team are re- turning varsity players, but we do have a few new players and, as a team, we’ve all been helping them integrate and not overthinking during games,” according to Cindy.

— JULIAN INGERSOLL
Students reconnect with family abroad

Summer visits help to shorten the distance

by AMANDA CASSEL and OLIVIA GRIFFIN
MIDWAY REPORTER

Gabby Gruszka: Zakopane, Poland is a small resort town to many but a second home to senior Gabby Gruszka. A destination for spectacular views, never-ending mountains, and national parks, Zakopane is also home to many of Gabby's friends and family.

Every summer, Gabby travels to Zakopane to visit her dad's side of the family, including her aunts, uncles, cousins, and grandma whom she takes care of while she's there. "I take her on walks in her wheelchair," Gabby said.

Her grandma is 89 years old and is living with Alzheimer's, a disease which requires her to be with someone at all times. Gabby said, "I feed her, take her to the bathroom, and just sit and talk to her, even though she can't speak."

Gabby's dad was born in Poland. He moved to the United States in his 20s, leaving his Polish family behind. "I always get really excited. I get this feeling of being home," Gabby said, describing what it's like to see her family after spending most of the year in Chicago.

Gabby has been visiting Poland since she was 6 years old and spends about 2 months with them every summer. "She said, 'Since I've been doing this for so long, I think about it more as just going home.'"

David Libes:
After a long flight to Azerbaijan, David Libes arrives in the suburbs of Baku very late at night. Tired and hungry, he, his mom, and his extended family all work into the night. However, no matter the time of their arrival, David's whole family always musters enough energy to greet one another with a small, late-night party before finally going to bed.

David's family owns a summer camp in Azerbaijan. This past summer, David spent 2 months with his family at the camp, spending the time chilling, eating, and speaking Arabic, David said.

With more than 30 people in this extended family, David says it meets new people every time, and gets closer with his family every time he sees them. His mother has 4 siblings, spread around Azerbaijan and Russia, each with several children. David says his uncle in Moscow is always planning activities such as their annual ski trip or even activities no one else in the family would've thought to do.

"At one point, he literally called up some people, got the police to roadblock parts of the highways, got a camera crew, got us in the press, and organized a bike ride for the family," he said.

Alexandra Nehme:
"When we first see each other there's always a lot of emotion and sometimes a little shock at all the change in a year," junior Alexandra Nehme said. "But then, we just click back into it."

After almost a year in Chicago, Alexandra traveled to Lebanon and Jordan each summer for a few weeks to visit both sides of her family. Alexandra explained how, once the family is back together, it’s as if they were never apart.

"We do normal things, like, go to the beach and eat together and go to the mall and really just enjoy each other and spend time together," Alexandra explained.

Both of Alexandra's parents left the middle-east and came to the United States pursuing higher education. They both settled down for their schooling, and, with busy schedules, and a family of their own, it isn’t always easy to reconnect.

Alexandra explained how it has always been a tradition in her family to try and shorten the distance by skipping routinely. "If you do have family nearby, and you do have a good relationship with them, really do reach out and try to take advantage of the fact that they’re here," Alexandra said. "Because when you don't really wish you could.”

Julia Antiescus:
Julia Antiescus travels each summer to Romania for a few weeks to visit her mom and dad's parents, otherwise, she doesn't see her extended family for almost a year.

"The holidays are when we really see the distance," Julia said. "Everyone talks about their family and holidays, and we can rarely spend time with our family, but we do have this wonderful community of other Romanian families who are experiencing the same thing and it’s like a second family.”

Outside of the holidays, Julia also feels the distance when her parents tell her stories. They both describe childhoods with less freedom and opportunity and give advice to Julia and her sister based on their experiences.

"To a certain extent, I feel like as much as my parents were teenagers once, it’s just a different experience for me and I need to figure it out on my own,” Julia said.

Former campers seek Summer Lab employment

by CALEDONIA ABBEY
MIDWAY REPORTER

For many, Summer Lab is nothing more than a time for little kids to run rampant through the halls of U-High. For others, it’s an opportunity to earn money as a camp counselor. For a select few, however, Summer Lab’s Adventure Kids Day Camp is more than just a summer job.

Gigi Reece and Cole MacSwain are part of this select few. Both have been involved with Adventure Kids for over a decade, this past summer being their 11th year. Spending eight years as campers and the last three as counselors.

"Since my dad works at the school, he wanted me to do a camp at Summer Lab and I signed up for Kids Camp because it had the most field trips so it seemed like the most fun,” Gigi said.

"For a long time, it was where I had these specific camp friends, friends who didn’t go to Lab, and that’s the only time I'd get to see them throughout the year."

Every Tuesday and Thursday, Gigi, Cole and the other counselors would take campers on “ad-ventures” like going to Navy Pier, arcades or rock climbing. On days when they’re not on trips, campers participate in art, movement, and sports classes led by teachers along with other special activities.

"Since I liked the camp so much and had done it my entire life, becoming a counselor just seemed like the next step," she said.

Gigi works with third grade campers, saying that it’s her favorite age because “they’re mature enough to joke around with and play more complicated games but are still at a stage where they’re down to be friends with everyone.”

Gigi works with third grade campers, saying that it’s her favorite age because “they’re mature enough to joke around with and play more complicated games but are still at a stage where they’re down to be friends with everyone.”

"I just keep coming back because ultimately I love the idea of a Summer Lab camp not centered around academic studies and more around making sure these kids have fun,” said — COLE MACSWAIN, JUNIOR

Former campers seek Summer Lab employment

READY FOR ADVENTURE. Arms outstretched, counselor Gigi Reece assists her Adventure Kids group on a water slide. Gigi says she enjoys playing with her campers and leading group activities.

“I just keep coming back because ultimately I love the idea of a Summer Lab camp not centered around academic studies and more around making sure these kids have fun,” he said.

As both a camper and a counselor, Cole describes “fort wars” as “the best activity by far.” The game follows the usual rules of dodgeball, but with the pants in the gymnastics rooms as forts.

Both Cole and Gigi love to work with kids and see being a counselor or as good experience for future jobs. Gigi said, “It’s work, but it also doesn’t always feel like work, because I’m playing along.”