

Displayed at the National Museum of Mexican Art in Pilsen neighborhood, the exhibition “Woven” shows art by five Mexican and Mexican American women.



P.E. teacher Dan Dyra says being a basketball referee is a hobby that pays. He’s been training junior Kennedy Coats for the past six weeks to become a ref.



To some students, astrology is a valued part of their daily or weekly routines. Through apps like Co-Star and the news, this once-niche art has become more mainstream.



University of Chicago Laboratory High School

# U-HIGH MIDWAY

1362 East 59th Street, Chicago, Illinois 60637

MARCH 12, 2020

Volume 96, Number 7

## School deals with effects of virus

### Administration drafts contingency plan in case of school closure

by **PETER PU**

ARTS CO-EDITOR

Originating in Wuhan, China, the coronavirus COVID-19 has impacted people all around the world and forced the University of Chicago and Laboratory Schools students, administration and faculty to respond.

#### Planning begins for possibility of extended school closure

Faculty and administrators have been meeting since Feb. 25 to plan for school operations and expectations for students and faculty in case of school closure. Learning management systems would play a significant role if classes could not meet in person.

According to an email sent by Laboratory Schools Director Charlie Abelman March 7, students from nursery to fifth grade will use SeeSaw to communicate with teachers while parents will use Schoology. Tools like Google Hangouts will facilitate teaching during school closure. Assignments will continue starting the third day of school closure after a two-day transition.

Families may seek access and assistance with technology and internet from Director of Innovation and Technology Brian Hewlett. Parents can find tutorials, tips and the Parent HelpDesk under the Parent webpage.

#### Lab prioritizes keeping surfaces clean

According to an email sent by Director of Operations Joe Wachowski March 5, more staff was added to the ABM cleaning program to keep surfaces clean and disinfected. Every classroom from nursery to fifth grade has access to cleaning spray and paper towels, and classrooms will be provided with spray and wipes upon request. In addition, tissues have been placed throughout

the schools, and signs have been placed to remind people about washing hands.

#### University takes precautions and imposes travel guidelines

The University of Chicago has also taken precautions and set guidelines against COVID-19. An email sent Jan. 24 from then-Provost Daniel Diermeier and Dean Kenneth Polonsky explained that Student Health Service and University of Chicago Medicine began screening patients for the coronavirus and asking whether they have recently traveled to Wuhan or are associated with anyone infected with COVID-19.

The university’s current outbound travel guidelines strongly discourage travel to any country with a Level 3 travel health notice from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The university return travel guidelines state travelers should not attend school or work for two weeks afterward.

In addition to travel, the university has changed programs in countries with a high risk for COVID-19, set up an informational website, and cleaning staff are disinfecting surfaces more frequently according to a Feb. 28 email from Provost Ka Yee Lee.

#### International trips canceled; seniors revise May Project plans

Selected for the Eliad Scholarship Program, a French exchange financed by Lab, juniors Izzy Kaufman-Sites and Andrada Nicolae were scheduled to leave for La Rochelle March 1 and return March 28 until the trip was postponed on Feb. 28 due concerns of the coronavirus.

U-High French teacher Catherine Collet-Jarard said, “The concern was that when they come back to the U.S., they might be confined for two weeks.”

According to Ms. Collet-Jarard, the students’ families made the decision to postpone the trip after learning about the risks and concerns. She added Lab can use the plane tickets within a year without penalty fees.

In addition to two weeks of school, the potential quarantine period would include



MIDWAY PHOTO BY MARIA SHAUGHNESSY

**SANITIZING SCHOOL.** Teachers, students and faculty alike wipe down tables and use hand sanitizer in hopes of not contracting and spreading the coronavirus.

the junior retreat scheduled for April 1-3.

“If we get quarantined in our houses, our parents would also have to be quarantined in our houses, which is too much of a sacrifice for us to go to France for four weeks,” Andrada said.

Similarly, on March 4 the French exchange trip to La Martinique scheduled for March 14-28 was postponed.

According to The New York Times coronavirus map, Italy has confirmed more than 3,000 cases.

As a result, the RoboMed competition at the American School of Milan was postponed, and the trip for 12 selected members of Lab’s middle school robotics team originally scheduled to depart Feb. 26 and return March 3 was canceled on Feb. 23.

According to middle school robotics team coach Jeremy Schwartz, parents will receive refunds, and similar to the Eliad Scholarship Program trip, Lab can use the plane tickets within a year without fees.

In addition, two mid-March faculty trips to China were canceled. Ten teachers and administrators were scheduled to leave for

China to learn about Chinese education and culture, and technology coordinator Louis Coronel and lower school assistant principal Uzma Panjwani prepared to present at a conference about design thinking and STEM education.

The coronavirus COVID-19 has also forced some seniors to change their May Projects. Senior Emily Zhang’s original proposal involved traveling to Changsha, China, to study how the relationship between people and technology differs between China and the United States. Although the original proposal deadline was Feb. 28, May project coordinator Mariah Bender granted Emily an extension for March 6. Her new proposal involves visiting gardens around Chicago and studying how artificial intelligence can recognize plants.

As the president of Prom Committee and a member of the Graduation Committee, Emily said if she continued her original May Project, she would risk missing both events.

“I think it’s just in my best interest to be as safe as possible and in the best interest of those around me,” Emily said.

## With dwindling numbers, JSA future uncertain

### After 26 years, club considers reorganization

by **LUCIA KOURI**

MIDWAY REPORTER

Ten students were nominated to the Jewish Students’ Association board March 6. However, low turnout originally raised the question as to whether the 20-year-old club still has the student drive it needs to continue running next year.

The JSA, known for running the biannual Holocaust Remembrance Assembly as well as yearly celebrations of Rosh Hashanah and Hannukah, recently hosted board nominations for the 2020-21 school year. According to adviser Susan Shapiro, 10 students showed up. Of those people, six were seniors and four were current board members.

In response to this low turn-

#### See Editorial on Page 10

out, Ms. Shapiro sent an email to all JSA-registered students detailing the risk of JSA not running next year and inviting members to a meeting Feb. 28.

“In a year when Jews have increasingly become targets of anti-Zionist and anti-Semitic violence, it is sad to think that our mission is no longer meaningful to the Jewish community at the Lab Schools,” Ms. Shapiro wrote in her email.

The JSA was created in 1994 by a group of seniors in the Class of ‘95 who came to Ms. Shapiro in hopes of creating a club that would celebrate Jewish culture. At the time, according to Ms. Shapiro, the Jewish population at Lab hovered at just under 20% of the student body, roughly twice as large.

Ms. Shapiro claims that even now, with the Jewish population at roughly 10% at U-High, many Jew-

**“In a year when Jews have increasingly become targets of anti-Zionist and anti-Semitic violence, it is sad to think that our mission is no longer meaningful to the Jewish community at the Lab Schools.”**

— SUSAN SHAPIRO

ish students don’t find the drive to show up to weekly meetings. While several Jewish and non-Jewish students claim they find support and comfort in the work and existence of the JSA, however, many lack an understanding of the student drive necessary to support the club, she said.

“Kids think ‘Oh, the JSA, they’re gonna be there. Every other year there’ll be our Holocaust assembly and we’ll do apples and honey and in September and you know’ —

but really it takes work and commitment to the basic purpose of the club,” Ms. Shapiro said.

The Feb. 28 meeting highlighted the fact that there are still at least a handful of students who feel the same passion about the existence of the club as the founding students.

“I could come here, and I was welcomed by all of you and the people sitting next to me and behind me,” junior Elena Stern said at the meeting. “It felt like it didn’t matter what everybody else thought — it just mattered that I had that connection.”

Sophomore Noa Appelbaum, the only non-senior board member, expressed similar appreciation and hope for the future of JSA in the Feb. 28 meeting.

“We really need people. I mean, obviously we can’t force you, but we would really love if people would step up and please help save this club,” Noa said.

With 15 non-board members



present on Feb. 28, numbers were more promising than prior meetings. However, given that the email was sent to 48 students, the question still exists as to whether the club can foster the consistent drive it needs to survive next year.

“It was the students who demanded it come into being, to begin with,” Ms. Shapiro said. “And it’s the students will decide whether or not it’s important enough to continue.”



# Experiential workshop aims to guide teachers

Advises teachers to accomodate student needs

by ELLA BEISER  
NEWS EDITOR

To simulate different disabilities and provide guidance for how adults can support students in and out of the classroom, the Students with Disabilities Association led experiential workshops for faculty, staff and administrators Feb. 6 and continues to work with adults to improve students' experience.



President Zach Sharp said club members held three workshops simulating disabilities.

"We had one where we visual simulated through a series of goggles," he said. "We would put on these goggles that put your vision at 20/80, 20/100, 20/200 and we gave them resources — papers, things that you would receive small — so that teachers could see the difficulty of trying to read small print."

According to Zach, club members also had stations where teachers could learn about dyslexia and auditory processing and simulate the in-class experience of

*"It creates a better understanding that leads to people being more cooperative or more on top of things. If they realize, here are some of the difficulties involved in having a disability, they will be more on top of things."*

— ZACH SHARP

a student with a disability. The goal was for teachers to understand the impact of their actions by experiencing what it is like to have a disability

"It creates a better understanding that leads to people being more cooperative or more on top of things," Zach said. "If they realize, here are some of the difficulties involved in having a disability, they will be more on top of things."

According to Learning Coordinator Laura Doto, the fact that the students could speak from personal experience was crucial to the success of the workshop.

"I think because the students were able to speak from the I perspective and give teachers a true sense of empathy around what it's like to be challenged by a learning difference every single day in the classroom," Laura Doto, Learning Coordinator, said, "that first person perspective was huge for the teachers and they responded really nicely."



MIDWAY PHOTO BY KATHY LUAN

**BUILDING COMMUNITY.** Juniors Zach Sharp and Sophia Woodruff discuss Students with Disabilities Association club business at a meeting March 9. The workshops the club led aimed to illustrate the experiences of certain students and stimulate discussion on how to best help each student.

According to Zach, a wide range of disabilities means that there is no formula for how to help a student with disabilities in class.

"For me, I like teachers to read everything they put on the board so that I can hear more of it rather than have to use my eyes," Zach said. "But I know a friend I have with auditory processing likes the exact opposite. They like more things on the board than saying things out loud. So it can vary, and there is a wide variance and some

overlap and some don't."

The club sent out one email to faculty, staff and administrators and filled all 24 available spots. Due to the interest, Zach said the club will run other similar workshops over the course of the year so their workshop can reach more people.

"There is a lot of demand for this," Zach said, adding that the club would prepare a presentation for the faculty professional development day in April.

Zach believes that their workshop is important not only for students with disabilities but also to inform teachers.

Zach said, "Many teachers may find it difficult or maybe challenging or even scary to have a student with a disability in their class like, 'What do I do?' 'Am I doing this right?' 'Am I educating them the best way possible?' And this is an easy, very simple way of showing them how they can easily accomodate us."

## BERNIE SANDERS RALLY



MIDWAY PHOTO BY MALCOLM TAYLOR

**SUPPORTING SANDERS.** Ahead of the Illinois Democratic Primary on March 17, U.S. Rep. Jesús "Chuy" García of Chicago stands with Sen. Bernie Sanders before thousands of supporters on March 7 at the Petrillo Music Shell in Grant Park. Sen. Sanders spoke about issues important to his campaign such as Medicare for All, racial injustice, income and gender in-

## Grant Park Sanders rally draws Chicagoans

by NICKY EDWARDS-LEVIN  
SPORTS EDITOR

Ahead of the Illinois Democratic Primary to be held March 17, Sen. Bernie Sanders held a rally in Grant Park on March 7, attracting many U-High students and thousands of supporters. The rally lasted almost three hours, with many supporters arriving as early as four hours in advance.

Speakers at the rally included U.S. Rep. Jesús "Chuy" García and State Senator Robert Peters.

Sen. Sanders spoke about issues important to his campaign such as Medicare for All, racial injustice, income and gender inequality.

Supporters affirmed their commitment to Sen. Sanders' policy proposals, the most popular of which was Medicare for All.

An organizer for Sen. Sanders, a canvasser who only gave his first name Kyle, struggled with kidney issues throughout high school, preventing him from at-

tending college. With the passage of the Affordable Care Act, also known as Obamacare, Kyle said he was able to turn his life around and get educated.

"Obamacare helped me make up everything in my life that got me behind, and I'm just excited to bring Medicare for All to more people, to help them out," Kyle said.

The crowd, which was predominantly young and white, cheered every time Medicare for All was mentioned.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Connections raises \$1.6 million for financial aid

Connections 2020, Lab's biennial fundraiser, raised \$1.6 million toward student financial aid and faculty professional development. The event was held at the Field Museum on Saturday evening, Feb. 29, and had 920 attendees.

"The most outstanding differentiating factor for the event this year was the fact that we had a record number of attendees," noted Karen Slimmon, one of the event's parent co-chairs.

The event was a sit-down dinner, a format which has not been used since 2014, according to organizers.

— KAJUS NAKAS

### Diversity conference encourages respect

Students who attended the Fostering Intercultural Respect and Engagement conference at Lake Forest Academy on Feb. 25 encourage other students to embrace the opportunity next year.

Freshman Téa Tamburo and juniors Sawyer Anderson and Zach Sharp attended the conference with Dean of Students Ana Campos and Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Priyanka Rupani.

Zach expressed his hope that more students will attend the conference in the future. He explained the value of the conference and highlighting the uniformity of Lab's student body. While Lab's unique environment fosters creativity and motivation that makes Lab a successful learning environment, Zach explained that Lab experience can separate students from reality.

"It's important to get out there and see the lives of people that are outside our community," Zach said. Zach further explained that the FIRE conference taught him about compassion through hearing stories that expanded his world view.

This year, the conference emphasized the power of under-

standing the importance of learning from examining other's life experiences.

— CLARE O'CONNOR

### Ryan Allen named middle school principal

Middle School Dean of Students Ryan Allen has been appointed the next Middle School Principal by a selection committee, effective July 1.

Mr. Allen has been the Dean of Students in the middle school since 2015. He said he is excited to be able to work with people across all levels of Lab.

"[Principal] is a complicated position because we have so many different levels of people that you interact with," Mr. Allen said. "I think that's one of the places where I thrive, in terms of being relational."



Ryan Allen

Mr. Allen's top priorities include social-emotional learning, diversity, equity and inclusion, as well as the middle school's sustainability.

"How we align in the bigger picture of all the schools to come together as one school is going to be particularly important," Mr. Allen said.

Mr. Allen said he looks forward to the opportunity to expand some of the initiatives he has worked on as Middle School Dean of Students to all of Lab.

"I'll be able to see from a broader scale how [those initiatives] play out and how they're connected across schools," Mr. Allen said.

Mr. Allen spent six years as Dean of College Guidance for Muchin College Prep.

"We've been talking about 'portrait of a graduate' and really trying to take on how that lives in the middle school in a way that's developmentally appropriate," Mr. Allen said.

— COLIN LESLIE



# New club focuses on engineering

## Growing interest in Makerspace causes shortage in advisers

by **MEENA LEE**  
MIDWAY REPORTER

With student interest in the Makerspace increasing, students look to form new clubs. However, due to a lack of faculty advisers and other issues, a few student activities in the Makerspace have yet to be approved as official clubs.

Clubs such as Imagined, the robotics team and LaunchX use the Makerspace frequently.

Nathan Aldredge works in both the clean and messy rooms as Makerspace coordinator, a non-faculty position. He is supporting students in activities that are not official clubs until they confirm a faculty adviser.

For example, some students work with him in the Makerspace to build and race drones. Much like a real club, students meet up Tuesday, Thursday and Friday after school to work on their drones with Mr. Aldredge.

Junior Rashne Hassan is working to create a new Makerspace club focused on engineering. Once established, Rashne hopes the club will participate in F1 in Schools, a global competition where students build small aerodynamic cars and race against students from schools around the world.

These new clubs will not replace existing Makerspace clubs. According to Rashne, her club will not be the same as the robotics club, an already established engineering club.

“This is different,” Rashne said. “It requires more direct applications of physics and aerodynamics, which you don’t really get in other clubs.”

The model car racing requires less coding and problem solving than robotics competitions, according to Rashne.



MIDWAY PHOTO BY MACY BEAL

**BUILDING COMMUNITY.** Junior Rashne Hassan works in the Makerspace. Rashne is working to create a Makerspace club focused on engineering. Rashne hopes that when her club is fully developed, they will compete in F1 in Schools, a global competition where students build small aerodynamic cars to race.

Rashne added that another aspect of this club is the use of marketing strategies to raise funds for club expenses.

Because of the expenses of the club and traveling that will be involved, Rashne and

Mr. Aldredge are still trying to get U-High to sponsor the team. If the team succeeds in competing in nationals in June, it is likely that it will become an official club for the next academic year Rashne said.

# Students call candidates to action

## Some want Student Council to address larger school issues

by **NICKY EDWARDS-LEVIN**  
SPORTS EDITOR

With the Student Council election in a few weeks, some students say they aren’t sure of the powers or effectiveness of the group though college admissions recognize the leadership role. Students will vote for current 9th, 10th and 11th graders May 1. Petitions to declare candidacy will be available April 9 and will be due on April 24 at 9 a.m.

Students in grades 9-11 will elect the All-School president and vice president, and the Cultural Union president and vice president. Each grade will also elect a president, vice president and two Cultural Union representatives.

Student Council candidates usually begin campaigning in the weeks leading up to the election, after submitting their petitions to Dean of Students Ana Campos. To have their campaigns approved, candidates must collect at least 20 signatures from their peers to run for a Cultural Union position, and at least 40 signatures to run for president or vice president.

While class leadership positions can be coveted among high-achieving students, many high schoolers do not regard Student Council with the importance it can be assumed to have. From 9th to 12th grade, students seem to think of Student Council not as an important governing body, but more as a party-planning committee.

“I guess their main job is planning dances,” sophomore Spencer McKula said, “but the main problems they should be dealing with are the local issues rather than the ones on a much larger scale that the administration can deal with. It just doesn’t seem like Student Council can get those big things done.”

Franzi Wild, a senior, thinks that Student Council should take on larger tasks, even if they only make some progress.

“I do expect them to be an advocate

**ELECTION SCHEDULE**

- May 1:** Current 9th, 10th and 11th graders will vote for class and all-school representatives
- April 9:** Petitions will be available to declare candidacy. To have campaigns approved, Cultural Union candidates must collect at least 20 signatures and President and Vice President candidates must collect 40
- April 24:** Petitions will be due at 9 a.m. to be eligible to run for office.

for the student voice,” Franzi said, “but it doesn’t feel as though StudCo is advocating for increased mental health services or finding ways to support students with mental health issues.”

Franzi also said that for Student Council to function at an effective level, members need to reach out to students actively.

“I wish StudCo spent more time reaching out to students and figuring out what and how they want to be represented in order for them to be a more powerful advocate for this voice,” Franzi said.

This year, Student Council has focused on representing student voice as well as they can, using digital suggestion boxes and student forums to collect information. But despite these efforts, student participation has remained low.

All-School President Ben Cifu said Student Council can take on larger changes if the student body is involved in the pro-

*“I do expect them to be an advocate for the student voice, but it doesn’t feel as though StudCo is advocating for increased mental health services or finding ways to support students with mental health issues.”*

— FRANZI WILD



**Franzi Wild**

cess. He said if the student body wants to see change, they have to meet Student Council half way.

“It’s up to people to voice concerns they have every once in a while. For a lot of things, you have to have students consider it, and that’s what we are trying to do with adjusting the climate at Lab

— working with BSA, reaching out with other people — and if people are buying in to that, then you have a good way forward,” Ben said.

While Student Council is regarded by many as simply a clause to add on a college application or job résumé, according to college counselor Melissa Warehall, the title of “Class President” is not as important to colleges as believed.

“From a college’s perspective, if it’s meaningful for you to be a class leader — joining student government, serving your classmates, makes sense. But, it’s not ever going to make or break a college application,” Ms. Warehall said. “When they look at your activities list, they are trying to get a sense of who you are in their community, so if you have some leadership that you’ve done in student government, that’s great, but it’s not like they’re looking for something like that in particular.”

*Nikhil Patel, co-editor-in-chief for the Midway, is involved in Student Council as Senior Class Vice President. He was not involved in the reporting or editing of this story.*

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### *\$4,000 bonus towards prom since 90% of students donated*

The Senior Class will receive a \$4,000 bonus toward the prom because 90% of students in the class donated to Lab’s scholarship fund. The initiative organized by the alumni relations and development office encouraged students to donate by setting participation benchmarks where the donations of the students would be met with donations toward their prom.

The donation is from an anonymous group of parents.

The Prom Committee has been heavily fundraising since the end of their junior year and has raised around \$3,000, making the \$4,000 donation significant.

“More than money, it’s getting people to start thinking about what their impact can be and how their money is in a way like their vote — it’s how they can choose to make a difference,” Emily Zhang, chair of the Prom Committee, said.

While the primary goal of the fundraising was for scholarships, school officials, as well as the Prom Committee, also wanted students to think about their philanthropy. The three donation benchmarks were measured by participation, not by the sum of donations. The benchmarks were at 30% to earn \$1,000, 60% to earn \$2,000, and 90% to earn \$4000.

The initiative ran Feb. 18-21 and met its second goal of 60% participation by Feb. 21. The committee received an extension to the end of the day Feb. 24.

Prom will be June 6.

— AN NGO

### *Dean of teaching and learning Noah Rachlin to leave U-High*

Dean of Teaching and Learning Noah Rachlin plans to leave Lab at the end of the year to continue his career as the Upper School Director at Moorestown Friends School in New Jersey.

Mr. Rachlin has been at Lab since the beginning of the 2018-19 school year, but he said he has felt immediately accepted into the close-knit Lab community.

“Lab is a place where the members of the community are deeply, deeply invested in the community,” Mr. Rachlin said, “and there are very few if any people, who I think, are just passing through.”

Mr. Rachlin said he enjoyed his time at Lab but is looking forward to teaching.

“I am most excited to teach again,” he said. “As part of my new role, I am going to be able to teach and be back in the classroom for a little bit. I didn’t have the opportunity to do that while I was here, and that was the hardest part of the job for me.”

Mr. Rachlin also looks forward to the flexibility the new position has allowed him to spend with his family.

He said, “I am really excited for my wife, my daughter, and I to be closer to our extended family, to have the opportunity to see them more regularly, and to have more time together.”

— ANATHEA CARRIGAN

### *Robotics continue success finishing third in state competition*

Beating out more than 190 other teams, the U-High Robotics Team placed third with its alliance partners in the state competition on the weekend of Feb. 21.

After going undefeated in all 16 invitational matches, U-High was the top seed heading into the regional competition. When the team got to state, they went 3-2 in qualifying matches. With their alliances — “The Incredibots” from Romeoville High School and “Derivation” from Naperville schools — U-High went 2-1 in the quarter final matches, then lost the two next division final matches, coming up short to “Unknown Element” and “Robotheosis” alliance.

“It’s been a pretty magical journey. When we started this club, I had no idea what was going to happen,” junior Nicholas Pietraszek said about the team that doubled membership to 40 people in its second year.

Along with competing, U-High Robotics members have reached out to four nearby middle schools. Through presentations and showing off their robot, team members hope to spread their love of robotics.

— GRACE HOLLEB



**Noah Rachlin**





MIDWAY ILLUSTRATION BY ACE ZHANG/PHOTOS FROM AMAZON

# Spring break: endless options

Attend a dance, theater or music performance for just \$5. Consider visiting the National Museum of Mexican Art, watching a movie or checking out a recommended book.

## Librarians suggest books for spring leisure

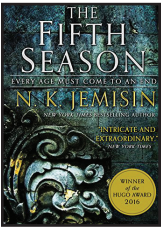
Free of school work, spring break is the prime time to crack open a book. High school librarians recommend books available in the Pritzker-Traubert Family Library.

by **LELAND CULVER**  
ASSISTANT MANAGING EDITOR

### Fantasy

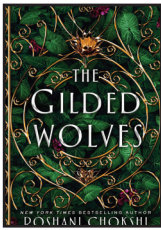
**“Call Down the Hawk”**  
by Maggie Stiefvater (2018)  
A spinoff from Stiefvater’s bestselling “Raven Cycle” series, “Call Down the Hawk” follows Ronan Lynch, a protagonist of that series who is a “dreamer,” someone with the power to make his dreams into reality, along with dreamer and art thief Jordan Hennessey and Carmen Farooq-Lane, a hunter of dreamers seeking to prevent an apocalypse catalyzed by their powers.

• **“The Fifth Season”**  
by N.K. Jemisin (2015)  
“The Fifth Season” is set in the continent of Stillness, a land periodically ravaged by massive tectonic disruptions known as Seasons. The story follows Essun, a woman searching for her kidnapped daughter who is an orogene, an individual with the power to quiet the earthquakes and volcanoes or set them off. This ability causes society to fear and brutally oppress orogenes, and Essun’s story is one of three connected ones that explore this society’s system of oppression as a new Season tears a red rift in the center of Stillness,



pouring ash into the sky.

• **“The Gilded Wolves”**  
by Roshani Chokshi (2019)  
Set in an alternate Paris in 1889, just before the Exposition Universelle, “The Gilded Wolves” follows Sæverin Montagnet-Alarie, a treasure-hunter who is contacted by the shady-yet-powerful Order of Babel, which is tasked with protecting a fragment of the Tower of Babel. Sæverin is actually the rejected heir of one of the houses of the Order of Babel, and he must join up with a colorful cast to help out the Order and reclaim his inheritance.



• **“Spin”**  
by Lamar Giles (2019)  
When young, up-and-coming DJ Paris Secord is murdered, her childhood friend Kya and her biggest fan Muse both suspect each other of her murder, until evidence comes to light that a third party may have been responsible, and the two must join forces to find the real killer.



• **“Two Can Keep a Secret”**  
by Karen M. McManus (2019)  
Twins Ellery and Ezra Corcoran are sent to live with their grandmother in a small town in Vermont

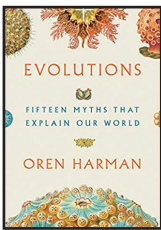
known for its many disappearances of teen girls. Ellery, a true-crime aficionado, knows the history of the town, including the murder of a homecoming queen five years prior to the events of the story. When Ellery is nominated for homecoming queen herself, she and the other nominees begin receiving threats, and the killer must be found before history repeats itself.



• **“My Sister, the Serial Killer”**  
by Oyinkan Braithwaite (2018)  
Korede lives in the shadow of her beautiful, talented sister Ayoola. She has also grown used to cleaning up her sister’s messes. Ayoola is likely a sociopath and has killed her last three boyfriends, and Korede is the one who keeps the world from finding out. When the handsome Dr. Tade Otumu, the only bright spot in Korede’s life, falls under her sister’s spell, she must reckon with what Ayoola has become.

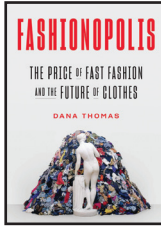


**Non-fiction**  
• **“Evolutions: Fifteen Myths that Explain Our World”**  
by Oren Harman (2018)  
Harman writes a technically accurate history of the world, from the Big Bang to modern day, in the style of folktales and myths, using unconventional narrators and florid prose for a hilarious and fun rendition of the story discovered by modern science.



• **“Fashionopolis: the Price of Fast Fashion and the Future of**

**Clothes”**  
by Dana Thomas (2019)  
Author of the New York Times bestseller “Deluxe,” Dana Thomas as guides readers through the unknown and hidden consequences of the global “fast fashion” industry, such as labor exploitation and environmental damage. She also examines the answers to the trend, from the emerging “slow fashion” movement to automation and technologies that reduce environmental impact.



• **“Hidden Figures: the American Dream and the Untold Story of the Black Women Mathematicians Who Helped Win the Space Race”**  
by Margot Lee Shetterley (2016)  
The book from which the Academy Award-winning film “Hidden Figures” was adapted details the stories of the black women hired as “computers” by NASA, with the job of making highly complex calculations very quickly to support the work of the space program. Shetterley tells their whole stories, both of the impact they made through their work and their lives outside of their work as leaders in their communities and actors in the civil rights movement.



### New releases

• **“Ninth House”**  
by Leigh Bardugo (2018)  
Galaxy “Alex” Stern is a dropout and the sole survivor of an unsolved multiple homicide when, from her hospital bed, she is offered a second chance at life: a full-ride scholarship to Yale. Her benefactors bring her to New Ha-

ven because of her ability to see ghosts, which makes her an invaluable asset to Yale’s notorious secret societies, where she is given the job of overseeing and ensuring the success of the various societies’ arcane rituals while maintaining the outside appearance of a normal student.

• **“The Nickel Boys”**  
by Colson Whitehead (2019)  
Elwood Curtis is a bright, idealistic African American teenager living at tail end of Jim Crow in Florida who, when hitchhiking to his first day of classes at a nearby black college, accepts a ride from what turns out to be a stolen car is instead sent to the Nickel Academy, a horribly racist reform school where he befriends the streetwise and cynical Turner. The two forge a strong friendship as they try to survive their abusers.



• **“The Resisters”**  
by Jen Gish (2020)  
In a dystopian AutoAmerica society is divided into the Netted, who live productive but heavily surveilled lives, and the Surplus, those whose jobs have been lost to automation, who are pushed into overcrowded Flotsam Towns, like the narrator, Grant, his wife Eleanor, and his teen daughter, Gwen. When Gwen discovers a gift as a baseball pitcher and Grant and Eleanor launch an underground baseball league, the family is thrust into confrontation with the AI-controlled state.





# Modern activism, historical art

## Contemporary artists connect to heritage through Mexican textiles

by **JULIAN INGERSOLL**  
MIDWAY REPORTER

On the far side of the gallery, a white textile with a pattern of black weaving dangles from two strands. On the other side, a video shows a woman weaving and pounding. She wraps black strands and white strands of cotton around hundreds of vertical white strings, which combine to make the beautiful textile. The viewer realizes that the textile in the video is hanging in the museum.

Seeing the woman's image projected onto her own artwork helps one appreciate the time and skill, demonstrating the thousands of years of history behind this art form.

At the National Museum of Mexican Art in the Pilsen neighborhood, the exhibition "Woven" impressively illustrates the Mexican-American border with small-but-beautiful traditional Mexican textiles by five contemporary Mexican and Mexican American women. While the exhibit effectively helps the viewer appreciate the work involved in ancient textile making, it does not convey how making textiles relates to modern issues facing people along the Mexican-American border.

Although textile weaving has been in Mexico since 6,500 BCE, contemporary artists continue to use the traditional style to make modern statements.

The artwork varies in material and color depending on the message or style. Traditionally, spinning and weaving were jobs given to women. The five artists included in the exhibit — Tanya Aguiñiga, Florencia Guillén, Consuelo Jimenez Underwood, Georgina Valverde, and Marta Palau — use their artwork as a type of activism for and representation of Mexican people.

The artwork, from beautiful garments to a wall of woven cloth — even shown dangling from metal structures about eight feet high — helps the viewer develop an appreciation for the craft. Among the main goals for some artists was creation of traditional pieces but with modern materials to relate their piece to modern society.

The informational text at the beginning of the exhibit explains these pieces are utilitarian but possess beauty and represent tradition.

"They pay tribute to cosmology, ethnic identity, social, cultural, economic and political existence/



MIDWAY PHOTO BY JULIAN INGERSOLL

**SUBTLE BEAUTY.** Each of the art pieces in "Woven" — at the National Museum of Mexican Art through April 19 — only has a biography for the artist but no description, forcing the viewer to interpret the work for themselves. The museum at 1852 West 19th St. is the only museum in the greater United States solely devoted to the display of Mexican art.

realities of the individuals who created them, as well as to the textile arts in general from the entire region known as Mexico," it reads.

Though the art is aesthetically pleasing and contains important meanings and stories, the exhibit is limited to a few pieces created by the five women artists. Despite the pieces being unique and meaningful, the space was too small to convey a real change in the forgotten Mexcian textile world.

The National Museum of Mexican Art is an institution that usually does not disappoint. The "Woven" Exhibit is another instance of the museum continuing to provide up-to-date art that everyone can enjoy, even without a connection to Mexican culture.

# Settle into spring break with a movie on any platform

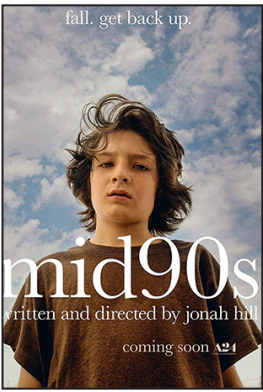
by **CALEDONIA ABBEY**  
MIDWAY REPORTER

Some may say that the classic '80s teen rom-coms are cliché or overdone. While I disagree, there's no denying that more recent films of the same genres are just as fun to watch and provide new, modern perspectives. So over spring break, expand your movie knowledge and check out these three underrated coming-of-age comedies from different streaming platforms.

**For the nostalgia**

- **"Mid90s" on Amazon Prime**

Written and Directed by Jonah Hill, "Mid90s" is perfectly nostalgic, beautiful, and heart-breaking all in one. With a more serious, though still comedic, tone than "Booksmart" or "Scott Pilgrim vs. the World," "Mid90s" captures the essence of, well, the mid-'90s skate culture of Los Angeles. Aesthetical-



ly, it's a joy to watch, and even if you aren't a skateboarding 13 year-old boy from California, "Mid90s" still speaks to the universal tribulations of growing up.

**For the relatability**

- **"Booksmart" on Hulu**

"Booksmart" is the Gen Z, high school movie you've been waiting for and is bound to be relatable for any Lab student.

When two graduating seniors (Kaitlyn Dever and Bean- ie Feldstein), who have avoided partying in favor of studying in order to get into their choice colleges, discover that their more wild classmates are also going to top schools, they decide to make up for four years of high school fun in one night. "Booksmart" turns the nerd-turned-cool trope up on its head, straying away from traditional stereotypes and instead



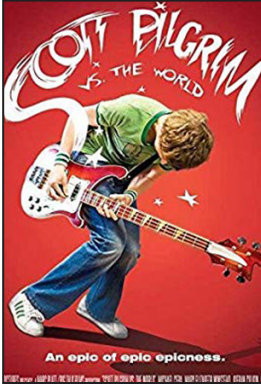
celebrating female friendship and nerd culture everywhere.

**For the comedy**

- **"Scott Pilgrim vs. the World" on Netflix**

This 2010 cult favorite, based on the "Scott Pilgrim" graphic novel series, is a live action comic book, where 22 year-old Scott Pilgrim (Michael Cera) must face off against love interest Ramona Flowers' seven evil exes before the two can date.

Superhero-level fight scenes, clever dialogue, a great soundtrack, editing and a unique sense of self-awareness makes this movie, even with its niche video game or music references, an exciting watch. In addition to Cera, the cast is comprised of many recognizable faces, including Chris Evans, Michael Cera, Brie Larson, Anna Kendrick and Aubrey Plaza.



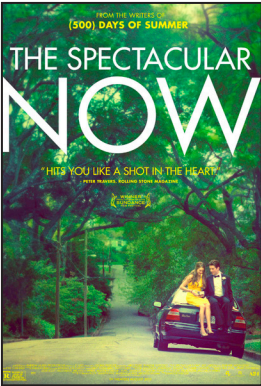
**For coming-of-age**

- **"The Spectacular Now" on Netflix**

I'm hesitant to recommend another film by A24, but they just do this type of movie so well (e.g. "Lady Bird," "The Farewell," "Eighth Grade" and "Moonlight").

After getting dumped by his girlfriend, Cassidy, who happens to be played by Brie Larson, the ex-girlfriend in "Scott Pilgrim vs. the World," party animal and cool-guy Sutter Teely (Miles Teller) meets shy, smart-girl Aimee (Shailean Woodley). Romance ensues.

A morally gray Sutter struggles with finding purpose beyond graduation and gets caught between trying to live in the now and planning for the future. As he and Aimee grow closer, their relationship is a means to examine the complex social and power dynamics of high school.



# Teen Arts Pass opens new, cheap entertainment avenues for students



MIDWAY PHOTO BY MARIA SHAUGHNESSY

**AFFORDABLE ART.** Teen Arts Pass is an initiative by Urban Gateways. The program is meant to bring young people ages 13-19 to professional performances at the 27 partner organizations. Tickets are typically \$5 for TAP members.

by **COLIN LESLIE**  
MIDWAY REPORTER

If you are looking for a live performance to keep you entertained over spring break, a local organization could get you a lot of options for not much money.

Teen Arts Pass allows teenagers to gain affordable access to theater productions, concerts, opera, dance and other performances of the arts in Chicago.

Teens can join TAP for free, and attend select events from its 27 partner organizations, including the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Joffrey Ballet and Lyric Opera of Chicago.

For any event to which TAP has



Mikaela Ewing

access that is not sold out, members are able to present proof of membership at the door and purchase a ticket for \$5 cash.

According to junior Mikaela Ewing, who got involved in TAP two years ago, the goal of the organization is to prevent the arts from dying out among teens by giving members access to certain events from its partners.

"Whichever shows that [our partners] allow to be open to us, we open that up to our members just to get teens more interested in the arts and keep them alive," Mikaela said.

Mikaela said she joined TAP because she wanted to experience more of the art that Chicago has.

"I thought it was an interesting program to broaden some of the things that I'm interested in," Mikaela said. "It's always an interesting experience to kind of get into

new things."

According to Mikaela, TAP offers an effective way for teens to explore a blossoming interest in the arts.

"A lot of times operas or theater productions sell for hundreds of dollars, so this is like a 'for a limited time only' opportunity," Mikaela said.

On their website, teenartspass.org, TAP outlines the events that are likely to sell out. They encourage members to check with the box office at the venue of the event they are interested in to make sure tickets are available.

TAP has access to numerous productions that are going on during spring break such as "Schoolgirls; Or, the African Mean Girls Play," "Dog Man: The Musical," "Her Honor Jane Byrne" and the American Ballet Theatre.



# BLACK AT LAB: SEEN... *not* HEARD

Two months ago, the Black Students' Association read an open letter at the annual Martin Luther King Jr. assembly. This helped to expose and spark discussion about the experiences of black students at Lab.

## Curriculum evolves amid BSA demands



Fine arts department chair Sunny Neater emphasized the importance of presenting diverse perspectives in her classroom. "We want to reflect our student body and make sure we are representing artists and people of color from a place of excellence rather than a place of deficit," Ms. Neater said.



History department chair Naadia Owens helped introduce two new courses and more extensive units on both indigenous peoples and West African studies. "As a department, we really hope to hear from students and student groups about where they'd like to see themselves and their own identities more in our curriculum," Ms. Owens said.

by AMANDA CASSEL  
MANAGING EDITOR

The Black Students' Association called for more diverse subject matter across the curriculum in their open letter, delivered at the Martin Luther King Jr. Assembly Jan. 16, placing a spotlight on departments to reflect these demands in their curriculum.

Along with a nudge from the letter, the Art, Music, History and English departments have been making large and small curricular changes to make way for diverse voices that reflect the identities and interests of the student body over the last several years.

"Curriculum should be constantly flowing and changing to meet the needs of the students who are here," history department chair Naadia Owens said.

Fine arts department chair Sunny Neater said she tries to present diverse perspectives in her classroom through the artists she showcases. Ms. Neater described how she showcases "straight, male, white artists" only as inspiration through the lens of deep social justice artistic practice or working allyship.

"In our courses, we want to be very mindful of the artists we share with students," Ms. Neater said. "We want to reflect our students

body and make sure we are representing artists and people of color from a place of excellence rather than a place of deficit."

The music department is also making changes in existing classes and in the construction of new courses to reflect the student body. According to chair Rozalyn Torto, in the last several years, throughout all grade levels, music classes have been adjusting the amount of music by "old white men." The music department also presented students the opportunity to register for a new course on the history of African-American music called Evolution of African-American Music Traditions along with a new symphony orchestra class.

"The goal is to help students feel as though music can be more than a requirement," Ms. Torto said. "In the end, though, it is up to the students to sign up for the courses they express interest in."

Similar to Ms. Torto's call for students to take advantage of the courses offered, Ms. Owens noted that in the early 1960s, U-High's African-American U.S. history course began due to student demand.

According to Ms. Owens, during sit-ins on the university's campus, black students called for a African-American history course in the curriculum.

"If that is the history of this de-

partment," Ms. Owens said, "we need to continue to push for that as students ask for, demand and deserve LGBTQ history and more of their identities."

In the last two years, the curriculum has two new classes: Comparative Politics and Global Relations and Modern World Religions. The history department has added more history on indigenous peoples to the Early World History course and a more extensive West African unit to AT African-American U.S.History. The history department also surveyed students about interests in elective topics to help fuel future courses.

"As a department, we really hope to hear from students and student groups about where they'd like to see themselves and their own identities more in our curriculum," Ms. Owens said.

Faculty in the English department have also been making curricular adjustments to reflect the identities of the student body.

English teacher Colin Rennert-May described a list from Peggy McIntosh of Wellesley College unpacking white privilege and how it applies to the English curriculum.

"The author says that one of the privileges as a white person was knowing that she or her children would read a book testifying to the existence of her race every year in

class," Mr. Rennert-May said, adding that some U-High students might go multiple years without reading a book that testified to the existence of their race."

The English department is working to change this. Last summer, English teachers decided to drop "I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings" from English 2, Literary Analysis, because pairing it with "The Bluest Eye" created a sequence of victimization of young, African-American girls.

A few years ago, the English 2 curriculum made space for a literary translation unit to allow students to explore their own identities, and added "Fortunes," a book exploring Asian-American identity.

"We are adding lots of complementary, supplementary materials that testify to the vibrancy of African-American life. Almost every week we're trying to add something into the class that the students have as a counterpoint to Pecola," department chair Mark Krewatch said, referring to a key character in "The Bluest Eye."

Speaking about the BSA open letter, Ms. Owens said, "I think that that kind of under-butt fire-lighting is not an accident, and I think that it really helps propel us into conversations about where we want to go and what we're doing to get there."

committees are thinking about what professional development needs to happen for employees around the connection between health and wellness and DEI. Others are seeking ways to engage with the South Side community in more deliberate ways.

"I hope that it helps to put in action what our stated commitment to diversity is," said Priyanka Rupani, the Laboratory Schools director of diversity, equity and inclusion. "I hope it engages every single member of our community in seeing that DEI work is an everyday part of school and that everyone sees themselves as someone who can advance this work."

about race and religion," Mayher said.

The plan is divided into four sections: infrastructure, teaching and learning, people and climate, and community.

In infrastructure highlights what needs to be in place for an inclusive and fair community.

This includes the question of having to revise the published diversity statement and the policies that need to be revisited in handbooks.



Mayher Kaur

## Three-year diversity action plan enters final stage

Diversity advisory committee puts action to school's stated mission

by ADRIANNA NEHME  
MIDWAY REPORTER

The Diversity Advisory Committee has developed a new diversity action plan and sent it to the University of Chicago for approval. The group of students and faculty members on campus implemented feedback from constituent groups toward the plan, which will be shared online with the entire community.

The three-year action plan is a

# Brought to the table

Students experience insensitivity, racist jokes, N-word

by ABIGAIL SLIMMON  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

With the goal of showing the range of experiences, the Midway sat down with five students from all four grades in the high school to hear from their perspective, what it is like to be a black student at Lab. The conversation has been lightly edited only for clarity to allow these students to share their stories and opinions in their own words.

**Midway:** How would you describe your own personal experience at Lab, both in class and out of class?

**Brent:** I mean, in general, for me, there hasn't been too many negative aspects about being black at Lab, specifically, because as a black person, the main thing that would annoy me in everyday life would be the aspect of racism. However, racism comes from ignorance. And at Lab, there's not that many truly ignorant people who wouldn't at least listen to your side of an argument. And because of that, there's very little of that, like, "Oh, I want to present something. Oh, that was accidentally racist."

There's a lot of accidental racism, but not directly saying, "Oh, I truly believe this." And or at least in my perspective, like I haven't seen, I mean, I've heard bad things but like, in general, in my world that's the experience.

**Cole:** I definitely agree. I think a lot of the even just delayed racism of any kind has come from a place of a good intention and they've just said something that they didn't quite mean. But outside of students I've had certain teachers who have absolutely said things that could not have been anything other than hurtful and meant to be hurtful.

**Sydney:** Yeah, I think a lot of the times things are said, like racist things are said, and I've seen a lot of black kids kind of like, excuse the fact that it's racist because we want to see the better thing. Some people are kind of just like, "oh, they didn't mean to say" especially... like, if it's our friend and they were joking, like said a racist joke. You don't want things to be awkward. So that's kind of what happens a lot here.

**Lauren:** One time, a student was, like, "Oh, you're black. So your life must suck." So that was an incident that I faced. Or like, the little things where you're talking about slavery, and then everyone looks at you or the teacher expects you to say something because you're black.

**Cole:** One of my biggest issues has been when, in a class when we're learning about slavery, if you're the only black in that class, you suddenly have the weight of all of the history on your back, right? Like, if you say something, then everyone will just assume that goes for all of the history you've been learning. And that's definitely a kind of dangerous spot to be in.

**Midway:** When that did happen to you, how did you react?

**Lauren:** I think I was like so shell-shocked because I hadn't re-



MIDWAY PHOTO BY MIRIAM BLOOM

**SPEAKING OUT.** Sophomore Brent Pennington and senior Lauren Smith participates in the round table discussion hosted by the Midway in the journalism suite March 3. Senior Sydney Rogers, junior Cole MacSwain and freshman Jordan Rogers joined Brent and Lauren in discussing their experiences as black students at Lab over the years.



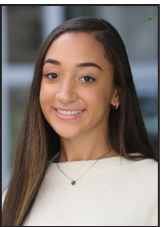
Cole MacSwain



Brent Pennington



Jordan Rogers



Sydney Rogers



Lauren Smith

**Midway:** Do you think it has gotten better or worse as your time at Lab has progressed?

**Lauren:** To be honest, I think it might have gotten worse based on the incidents that happened in high school.

**Cole:** Yeah, I think it's gotten worse because people in high school feel like they can be more open, more free about what they say. I don't think the actual level of racism has changed at all. I think people are just more willing to say things that are hurtful.

**Sydney:** Yeah, I think especially with the younger grades, like, I've heard my sister has gone through some things where people say racist jokes and kind of think they're OK because our school is very open about what we think. I think it might have gotten worse. There's been certain things I've heard. Even throughout the college process I've heard people say, like, they wish they were black, you know, so they can get into schools and stuff. And like people don't realize it's not really OK to say because there's things that come with being black, and you know, we kind of excuse people.

**Jordan:** At least in my grade, I think it's pretty bad. I feel like almost every day I hear a racist comment and it's because they are trying to joke or something. But it happens in class because they are so comfortable with it.

**Brent:** Lauren, I have a question for you. When that happened to you, what grade were you in?

**Lauren:** I was in seventh grade. He doesn't go here anymore.

**Midway:** When that did happen to you, how did you react?

**Lauren:** I think I was like so shell-shocked because I hadn't re-

ally experienced racism where like, they explicitly say it to your face, it's more like stuff that's kind of disguised. So I didn't really know what to say after he said that except just being disgusted with him.

**Sydney:** Also I think since there's not that many black people at the school, you know, like, if you say something against someone it makes it a little bit uncomfortable. I think it makes it harder to stand up for black people because there's not that many here.

**Jordan:** I've had a recent experience where somebody in my grade actually said the N-word with the hard

"e-r". And I was, like, why would you say that? And he kept saying it, and he was very comfortable with it, he had no shame. And he was like "Well I'm Mexican" and I was like, "I don't think that's OK."

**Brent:** Like he was saying it to you?

**Jordan:** To my face. It was at the lock-in.

**Sydney:** Was he taunting you or was he, like, calling you?

**Jordan:** In my grade, they bring it up out of context. Like they say it to get a reaction out of me.

**Midway:** Was that one of your friends?

**Jordan:** Well not my friend but someone I know and have talked to a lot. They just do it for a reaction and then I reacted and then he said I was overreacting and everyone else was saying I overreacted. He continued to say it. There wasn't anything to do.

**Sydney:** Yeah I think it's getting really bad like the younger grades because I think they're definitely more bold. I think the older grades, like, of course we're more mature and they kind of, like, know what's good or bad, but I think the younger grades kind of act out, trying to get attention.

**Midway:** When incidents like these happen do you feel comfortable reporting it to the administration?

**Jordan:** I would say no because I just feel like nothing really happens. Even the most recent incident (in December), nothing's on

his record or anything, he's perfectly fine.

**Cole:** And I know of instances where things have been brought to administrators and people in power and simply nothing has been done.

**Jordan:** In middle school people would report people to you?

**Lauren:** And then you can't talk about it if you do bring it to the administration like they say "Oh don't tell anyone else."

**Midway:** Because they don't want other people to find out that that's happening at this school?

**Lauren:** Yeah.

**Jordan:** Because their whole thing is diversity.

**Brent:** Oh yeah. In their diversity reports – they send these out to colleges – they just say that there are 59%, white, and then the rest

are people of color. 23% of that is Asian and then there was like 5% African-American and I was, like, we're just, like, underrepresented. They're just like small slivers. I'm just understanding the fact that people of color quote-unquote, and people who are disadvantaged in this, from a social standpoint, are two very different things. Just saying people of color is trying to, like, kind of emanate the same, like, feeling that disadvantages are, but at the same time this is not true. Understanding that certain people of color are going to have a bigger advantage in society than people of another certain color within that group. And just, like, understanding that, "Oh, we're technically more diverse than most schools are because we have a lot of people of color." Well, if you go in Lab school, you're gonna find maybe one black person or Mexican person per every 20 people you see.

**Lauren:** My friends and I just for fun counted the other day, and I think we stopped at 10 and we were just like, wait, no, there has to be more. But there wasn't any more, at least in our grade.

**Midway:** When you guys were talking about incidents that happen in the classroom and teachers say things that are inflammatory, do you feel comfortable responding then?

**Cole:** My freshman year I had a teacher who, one, said the N-word – like just said it. And two, who referred to black people as the "Negro race." And despite my email, despite my going to Campos, she was allowed to continue to teach that exact same lesson in the exact same way. So the issue isn't even whether or not you're comfortable, which I think in general would be no, but even if you feel comfortable, the result is the same.

**Midway:** What did Ms. Campos say when you emailed her?

**Cole:** She said, exactly, "We will watch out for it next year." And then when students came to her next year with the exact same issue, nothing was done.

Nikhil Patel participated in facilitating the roundtable.



# Relocated Revamped Reignited

Like a phoenix from the ashes, the Chicago Fire Football Club has rebranded itself with a new logo, new players and a new stadium

by **CHRISTIAN GLUTH**  
ASSISTANT EDITOR

Around the world, it is unlikely you will find anybody who hasn't heard of soccer. On Sunday afternoons around the world, fans gather, packing stadiums, pubs and homes to watch their local soccer teams play.

In 2019, on one of these early evenings, Bridgeview, Illinois had perfect game weather: clear weather, bright skies and fresh air. With a pretty display of passing, the home team finally executed a perfect outside-of-the-foot shot to the bottom corner of the net.

When the ball hit the back of the net, spectators would expect an eruption of noise. What they got was a mere gasp. With empty seats flourishing in the stands, this was a match day with the Chicago Fire Soccer Club.

With consistent poor attendance, home didn't feel like home. It was clear that the Chicago Fire needed a serious change. At last on March 21, 2020, the Chicago Fire are playing in downtown Chicago for the first time in nearly two decades, rebranded as Chicago Fire FC.

More than 15 years ago, when the Fire struck a deal with the Village of Bridgeview for a \$100 million soccer-specific stadium, the idea was to create a permanent home

for a club which jumped around from place to place for the majority of its existence but was gaining reasonable success for their relatively young lifetime. Bridgeview hoped to become a new popular leisure destination.

At the time, playing in a venue dedicated to soccer was uncommon. Only the Columbus Crew and LA Galaxy held matches in them, a relatively new standard in American soccer. What was unforeseen was the rapid growth that has made Major League Soccer as large as it is now.

Back in 2006, when SeatGeek Stadium broke ground in Bridgeview, the average attendance in the MLS was about 15,000 among 11 professional clubs, with the highest average attendance of any team peaking at just above 20,000. By 2019, an attendance of 20,000 was below average among the 26 professional clubs. The Chicago Fire definitively held the lowest average attendance of any team and also its lowest average attendance in club history at an unimpressive 12,324.

The club has undergone a drastic re-establishment, including a change in ownership, relocation and rebranding. The team's Bridgeview lease originally ran through 2036, but the club agreed to pay the Village of Bridgeview \$65.5 million to cut it 16 years short, and instead will put money towards a "multisport recreation and entertainment center" in Bridgeview, according to the Chicago Tribune.



MIDWAY PHOTO BY MARIA SHAUGHNESSY

**STAND FOR CHICAGO.** An 80-foot tall mural looms over the British International School soccer field in the South Loop on the back of the Roosevelt Collection. The artist, Max Sansing, sought to "represent Chicago youth" with his artwork. According to the Fire, the mural will stay up for at least three years.

The Chicago Fire have established a new club identity along with this move, branding themselves with a downtown mural, club imagery that stands for the "founding legend of Chicago" and a motto that reads, "Stand for Chicago."

The club has renamed themselves "Chicago Fire FC" from "Chicago Fire Soccer Club", changed their main crest and redesigned their uniforms, notably adding yellow as a new primary color.

Owner Joe Mansueto hired a new head coach and general manager, and traded away a majority of signature players for capacity to reload their roster.

The most impactful change of this relocation is the team's return to its roots in downtown Chicago. Soldier Field, a venue that stands out for looking like an alien spaceship landed on top of a Roman colosseum, plays host to Chicago's finest concerts, events and the heavily-followed Chicago Bears American football team.

The move to the urban area and rebranding is intended to revamp attendance numbers to establish themselves as part of the new era of Major League Soccer — an era in which higher quality talent, more clubs and more fans has defined as one of the fastest-growing sports leagues in the country.

## FACTS ON FIRE

## QUICK Q

**12** minutes from Lab to Soldier Field

**10** Seasons since the Fire has played at Soldier Field

**4**

U.S. Open Cups, the most of any team

**\$39**

Average price of tickets at SeatGeek Stadium in 2019

**17**

Home games at Soldier Field this season

**1998**

Last year the Chicago Fire won the MLS Cup

**26**

Ranking of average attendance in the last season — the league's lowest.

**12,324**

Average attendance at SeekGeek Stadium

**30,000+**

Number of tickets sold for the home opener at Soldier Field

*What are your opinions on the changes to the Chicago Fire soccer team?*



**COLIN CLAFFEY:**  
"Toyota Park was the original Chicago Fire stadium, so I must admit, I do feel a bit of nostalgia for the move. But at the same time this is probably the better thing to do, considering the fact that Soldier Field is close to the center of the city."



**OLIVIA POSTON:**  
"My family has season tickets — we are excited because we won't have to drive all the way to Bridgeview, and it will be fun to be in Soldier Field."



**AIDEN GRANT:**  
"I liked the old logo, but I also like the new location. Being at Soldier Field there are going to be far more people attending games and therefore a better fan environment. I get tickets because I play for the Chicago Fire Juniors. I get discounts and stuff, and we go as a team sometimes. It's fun."



# Refereeing done right

Student, teacher collaborate over calling signals

by **MADELINE WELCH**  
OPINION EDITOR

Students run up and down the court of Upper Kovler Gymnasium, dribbling and passing the basketball. Kennedy Coats runs alongside with a whistle in hand, carefully watching the game as the referee. Physical education teacher and long-time referee, Daniel Dyra, pulls Kennedy aside from time to time, gesturing the calls for her to make with his hands.

Mr. Dyra started teaching Kennedy refereeing in the beginning of February, at the start of the basketball unit in his class.

Mr. Dyra hopes to get students involved in refereeing to provide them with knowledge of the game of basketball as well as job opportunities.

“I wanted to give it a different approach for kids who might be interested in refereeing and also playing basketball because they kind of go hand-in-hand,” Mr. Dyra said.

Mr. Dyra, who has been a referee for 30 seasons, describes it as a hobby that pays. A basketball player all his life, he started refereeing as a sophomore in college to make some money.

“I enjoy the social aspect and the camaraderie of the fellow referees and being able to provide a really fair and fun game,” Mr. Dyra said. “I get some exercise out of it and I get some money out of it.”

Aside from the money, refereeing provides students with life skills that are applicable in many situations.

“I think students can gain confidence, leadership skills, people skills, negotiation skills, and also



MIDWAY PHOTO BY ISABELLA KELLERMEIER

**BLOW THE WHISTLE.** P.E. teacher Daniel Dyra coaches junior Kennedy Coats on specific refereeing signals. Mr. Dyra, who has been a basketball referee for 30 seasons, taught all of his basketball classes the basics on refereeing signals and commands.

an opportunity for a job in the future,” Mr. Dyra said.

Mr. Dyra mentioned that in Illinois, there is a lack of officials in every sport. This is why Mr. Dyra started teaching Kennedy how to referee — he wishes to get the next generation involved. In addition to helping Kennedy one-on-one, he also teaches his entire class the rules and signals to further their

knowledge of basketball and emphasize the importance of referees.

“I wanted to referee because it’s a different part of basketball you don’t usually get to learn,” Kennedy said. “When Mr. Dyra first mentioned it, he talked about how you could get reffing jobs in college, which seemed like a good way to make money. I like it because I get

to be in charge.”

Mr. Dyra teaches all of his students the calls for refereeing because it helps them learn the game of basketball. Kennedy in particular showed interest in refereeing, so Mr. Dyra gave her more instruction.

“He gave me a whistle, a referee shirt and a list of calls. He had me practice the calls, then we start-

ed reffing full court games for the class and some half court games,” Kennedy said.

Students interested in the opportunity to become a referee should reach out to Mr. Dyra to make a connection with the IHSA.

He said he would be happy to offer mentorship to help students interested in becoming officials and put a whistle in their hand.

## TRACK & FIELD



MIDWAY PHOTO BY ISABELLA KELLERMEIER

**RUN IT OFF.** Gideon Mitchell, junior, competes in the 3,200-meter run at Midway Miles #2 at Henry Crown Fieldhouse on March 6. Gideon ran a personal best of 11:04 for 2 miles, placing 6th out of 12. The boys indoor track and field team placed third of eight teams, and the girls team came in 6th of 10.

# Rockin’ Rollers: Roller derby celebrates strength

by **OLIVIA GRIFFIN**  
and **CALEDONIA ABBEY**

Bork Bork Bork, Killanois, Maulicious and Kidney Lauper may seem like vaguely familiar ‘90s punk bands, but these women don’t scream from the stage. Instead, they rock the rink as members of the Windy City Rollers, a top roller derby team based in Chicago.

“It’s having a tribe of women that have your back no matter what,” Sylvia Hutchinson, skater, said, describing what it’s like to be on a team.

Each game of roller derby is played on a roller rink with skaters circling around the track the entire time. Five players from each team are on the rink at a time, four blockers and a jammer. The jammers need to get around the rink, passing opposing players as many times as possible. The blockers help the jammers get around the rink by fending off the blockers from the opposing team.

At its core, roller derby is about owning your space, celebrating physicality and aggression that is rarely encouraged or seen in young women. With that comes the risk of potential injuries, and any potential skater is bound to get knocked around.

Stella Heon, junior, skated on a roller derby team a year ago but found it too violent to continue.

“You have to get people out of your way,

*“You have to get people out of your way, and if they get injured, that’s not your problem.”*

— STELLA HEON

and if they get injured, that’s not your problem,” Stella said.

Every roller derby skater has their own derby name, which typically tells opponents how aggressive they are. Stella’s teammates called her “Taming the Shrew” after how timid she was.

Before each game, the announcer introduces the players and reads aloud their descriptions as the skaters go around the rink showing off their outfits. Fish-net stockings, lingerie, make-up, and superhero costumes are all go-tos for derby players.

“Welcome Big Papa to the floor! She’ll put you out of your misery,” the announcer read.

During the season, which starts later this spring, roller derby games happen almost every weekend around the Chicago area. The Fleetwood Skating Rink, located just west of Midway Airport, hosts derby games for \$5 admission.

Sports and competition aside, “it’s women being empowered,” Erin Guinmor, skater, said

And it’s hard not to be after seeing these women skate — and rock.

*Find updated winter and spring sports scores at [uhighmidway.com](http://uhighmidway.com)*



# Identity clubs need our help to thrive

With declining student participation in some identity clubs and increased recognition that hateful events are not isolated, U-High is forced to confront that the “diversity” promised in its mission statement is not a reality for everyone.

With the future of the Jewish Students’ Association in doubt, it is important, now more than ever, to support identity clubs at U-High and to create as welcoming of an environment as possible.

The U-High community cannot afford for identity clubs to disappear, especially after the recent discussions regarding diversity, equity and inclusion issues.

For students in marginalized groups, identity clubs provide environments to find community. If any community is to be productive, whether a school, workplace or athletic team, all members of that community must feel they belong.

At U-High, where a white majority exists, it is not uncommon for there to be only a single person from a marginalized group in a classroom, leaving students potentially isolated. Identity clubs allow for each student to join a

community that is more welcoming and inclusive than most classrooms can be.

If we allow identity clubs to fade, we will not only lose inclusive spaces for students but also crucial representation by and for voices of marginalized communities. The collective community that identity clubs create do not just contribute on an individual, student-centered level, but also on a larger, almost administrative level.

In January, the Black Students’ Association-Collegiate School letter received attention from faculty, staff, administration and the greater Chicago community, with coverage from numerous local media outlets.

This letter, which represented an experience shared among many black students at U-High, sparked genuine conversations and actions that would not have been possible without the action of this identity club. Moreover, the JSA-led biannual Holocaust assembly has been so powerful that students have advocated for it to occur on a yearly basis.

It is also important to recognize that it is not a necessary require-

## As the Midway sees it ...

ment to identify with a club to support it. Catholic students can support the Muslim Students’ Association in the same ways that white students can support the BSA. Allyship is as important as participation in these clubs. For identity clubs to function, there must be a surrounding environment that endorses the clubs and listens to their perspectives on how to improve the surrounding community.

Because of the unique and important perspectives identity clubs bring to our community, we cannot sit by and allow these clubs to simply disappear.

If you identify with the values of these clubs, perhaps it is time to learn about them or consider joining. Students can also support identity clubs by interacting with the day-to-day events these clubs hold, from bake sales, to assemblies, to free potlucks.

With identity-related incidents becoming a greater issue, it is crucial for each student to do what is in their power to help identity clubs thrive.



MIDWAY ARTWORK BY RISA COHEN

# Remove standardized tests from college admissions

by GRACE HOLLEB  
MIDWAY REPORTER

As I settled into my seat for the February ACT, the fact that my score on this test could determine my next four years of college perplexed me. I have learned a lot throughout my time at Lab, and so much of it will not be shown on this subjective test. Hearing about people who “didn’t study” and effortlessly getting nearly perfect scores in contrast with others working tirelessly, unable to hit their goal, has made me frustrated with the standardized test system.



In 2019, an FBI investiga-

tion nicknamed “Varsity Blues” charged at least 53 parents who collectively paid \$25 million to help their children gain admittance into selective colleges. Many of these parents went to extreme efforts to dishonestly solidify one piece of the college admissions puzzle: standardized test scores.

Even if they did accurately and fairly measure intelligence, standardized tests should be taken out of the college admissions process entirely.

Many believe standardized tests are the only objective and reliable assessment to give to all students, but these tests are discriminatory against students with learning differences. Although there are accommodations, many students are unable to get these resources. According to the Washington Post,

*“Learning is more than a multiple-choice sheet and a pencil, but schools are turning into test centers.”*

In 2019, students with extended time on average scored 18.7 on the ACT, and students without accommodations averagely scored 21.1. There is no clear way to make these tests fair to all students because everybody learns differently.

Students with fewer financial resources are severely disadvantaged in the testing world. People with plentiful resources can pay for private tutors, and pay to take the test as many times as they want, as the high signup cost doesn’t affect them. Students are not required to tell colleges about preparation

and training, so schools can look at students’ scores with equivalent value, even though they may have been earned with varied ways of preparation. In 2015, Inside Higher Ed found that in every section of the SAT, students from families who made less than \$20,000 had the lowest average scores, while the highest averages stemmed from families who made more than \$200,000.

Furthermore, standardized tests measure only a small portion of what makes education purposeful. Learning is more than a multiple-choice sheet and a pencil, but schools are turning into test centers. 62% of school districts increased the amount of time spent in elementary schools on subjects that are included in standardized tests, while 44% of districts cut

time on those that are not, according to the Center on Education Policy in 2007. These tests promote the idea that human intelligence can be measured and condensed into a subjective multiple-choice test, which rewards students who are good test takers and penalizes those who think creatively.

As unfair measures of student success and intelligence, standardized tests must be taken out of the college admissions process. More than 700 colleges are “test optional,” where an applicant doesn’t need to submit test scores to be considered for admission. It is clear we are ready to move past these biased tests. I urge you to apply to these schools and no longer equate success to a two- or four-digit number one receives after a tiring Saturday morning.

# U. of C. shouldn’t use facial recognition tech on campus

by BERKOTO  
ASSISTANT EDITOR

Walking into class, they hear the subtle, yet intrusive hum of cameras turning, following their every footstep. Once they arrive to class, the cameras are hidden, but their phone continues to transmit their location to the attendance office. They pick up their phone to check a text. Immediately, a notification is sent to them, their classmates and their teacher that they are not paying attention. Every step is recorded. Every move is on camera.



While this horrifying fictional tale may seem like a segment from a distant Orwellian future, similar plans have been proposed or implemented in high-profile campuses like Syracuse University, the University of California, Los Angeles and the University of San Francisco. The University of Chicago, as a beacon of individual rights and freedoms, should commit to never using facial recognition software anywhere on its campuses, including at the Laboratory Schools, in order to preserve individual freedoms and the quality of its education. At the moment, they avoid making such a commitment even when asked directly.

In China, the implementation of facial recognition technology

is leading to the rapid erosion of personal freedoms such as assembly and religion. The University of Chicago has long recognized these tenets as core values, and a great way to honor this tradition is to lead the charge against the use of technologies that violate the privacy of students and faculty.

While Americans may have already surrendered most of our privacy to big social media companies like Facebook, it is important to draw the line where our inalienable freedoms are being transgressed. And that’s facial recognition.

The use of facial recognition technologies will inevitably make our students feel like prisoners in a place meant for learning and ex-

perimentation. The resulting violations of privacy will create an environment where students are too afraid of consequences to make mistakes and learn lifelong lessons. This is directly counter to Lab’s mission of learning experientially.

Facial recognition technology would inhibit our ability to build genuine relationships by conjuring the feeling that one is constantly being watched — even when engaging in everyday interactions. This violates Lab’s mission of exhibiting kindness.

Finally, according to a study by the National Institute of Standards and Technology, current facial recognition has difficulty individually identifying people of color and

transgender people. On a campus, this would lead to the constant false police stops of minority students — a far cry from honoring diversity.

Proponents of the implementation of facial recognition technology argue that if you have nothing to hide, there is no reason to be afraid. However, even if the software were to work flawlessly, what little security gains we might achieve are certainly not worth the rights to privacy and expression that we would inevitably surrender.

As Benjamin Franklin put it almost 200 years ago, “They who can give up essential liberty to obtain a little temporary safety deserve neither liberty nor safety.”

## U-HIGH MIDWAY

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

1362 East 59th Street  
Chicago, Illinois 60637  
Phone 773-702-0591 FAX 773-702-7455  
Email laimone@ucls.uchicago.edu

Copyright 2020, Journalism students, University High School  
Printed by Grace Printing, Chicago, Illinois

uhighmidway.com

EDITORS-IN-CHIEF\* Abigail Slimmon, Nikhil Patel

MANAGING EDITOR\* ..... Amanda Cassel

ASSISTANT MANAGING EDITOR,

ONLINE\* ..... Leland Culver

NEWS EDITOR\* ..... Ella Beiser

FEATURES EDITOR\* ..... Audrey Matzke

ARTS EDITORS\* ...Peter Pu, Olivia Griffin

SPORTS EDITOR\* Nicky Edwards-Levin

OPINION EDITOR\* .....Madeline Welch

\*Members of the Editorial Board  
BUSINESS MANAGER.....Max Garfinkel

ASSISTANT EDITORS ... Christian Gluth, Berk Oto

REPORTERS .....Caledonia Abbey, Noa Appelbaum, Grace Brady, Abe Callard, Anathea Carrigan, Ryan Clark, Kia Dutta, Amon Gray, Caroline Hohner, Grace Holleb, Julian Ingersoll, Lucia Kouri, Meena Lee, Colin Leslie, Chloe Ma, Gretchen Matzke, Kajus Nakas, Adrianna Nehme, An Ngo, Clare O’Connor, Ben Richardson, Ethan Swinger, Téa Tamburo

ARTISTS .....Risa Cohen, Jasmine Tan, Ace Zhang

PHOTO EDITORS ... Isabella Kellermeier, Maria Shaughnessy

PHOTOJOURNALISTS ..... Macy Beal, Miriam Bloom, Kathy Luan, Elliott Taylor, Malcolm Taylor

ADVISER .....Logan Aimone, MJE

PHOTO ADVISER ..... Jayna Rumble, CJE

EDITORIAL POLICY: In a time when the press is criticized, the U-High Midway seeks to inform, educate and serve the community of University High School. The Midway is created by students, for students.

CORRECTIONS  
ISSUE 6, Feb. 21, 2019:

- Page 2: Tomás Jagelka’s name was misspelled.
- Page 4: Sophie Raphael was talking about Pete Buttigieg, not Bernie Sanders.
- Page 7: Eleanor Skish’s name was misspelled.



# Written in the stars

Astrology provides regular guidance, spiritual community

by NIKHIL PATEL  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Retrograde. Opposition. Air signs. Houses. To many, these terms mean nothing or function neatly as the butt of a joke about the highly-commercialized forecasts of horoscopes.

For some students, however, horoscopes and the broader study of astrology are an invaluable source of guidance.

Sophomore Kira Sekhar, a Pisces sun sign, says she checks her daily horoscope daily and her weekly horoscope weekly using a popular app called Co-Star Astrology. She also follows various astrology-related Twitter and Instagram accounts.

“My horoscope has also given me pretty good advice when I’m dealing with stressful situations. It tells me what to expect from each day and week, so I pay attention to that too,” Kira said. “I don’t view my horoscope as something I have to follow or pay attention to all the time, but it’s a nice guide for my day to day life.” Senior Anjali Prachand also checks her horoscope daily through the Co-Star app. She doesn’t really look for any specifics but appreciates the guidance she receives from them.

“I guess I have confidence in astrology – not horoscopes as much, but astrology – because there’s no good reason not to,” Anjali said. “Like, there are so many things happening in the world and universe that it’s kind of cool to think that we’re somehow connected to our solar system in a spiritual way.”

To students who believe in astrology, criticism of it can appear to stem from a place of misunderstanding what astrology truly is.

“I want people to know that before they’re dismissive of their horoscope, they should check more than just their sun sign and also that their horoscope isn’t going to tell them exactly what’s going to happen in their life every day,” Kira said. “It’s more of a guide for what you should expect to come your way.”

For most horoscope users at U-High, there is one constant: Co-Star, an astrology app that brands itself like a social media platform, where sharing your information with friends is highly encouraged. Run partly through artificial intelligence, the app has obtained a large following over its brief two years — more than 5 million active users.

Kira uses the app for its social functionality and popularity but also for its organization and structure.

“In Co-Star they tell you which areas you have power, pressure, and trouble in each day according to your birth chart,” Kira said. “I like to see which parts of my life I should be putting more energy into.”

Astrology is an ancient practice with a lot of strong spiritual roots. More than 2,000 years old, astrology can be traced to the ancient Babylonians. The practice of astrology has become mainstream due to mass-media such as newspapers and online horoscopes.

“I probably check my horoscope once a month when my friends start talking about what’s on theirs,” senior Kepler Boonstra said. “The app usually un-downloads between times when I check. I don’t check my horoscope regularly because I don’t think it affects me. I think people tend to read their horoscope and interpret it to relate to themselves because they are written so generally.”

But Anjali believes everyone should check their horoscope.

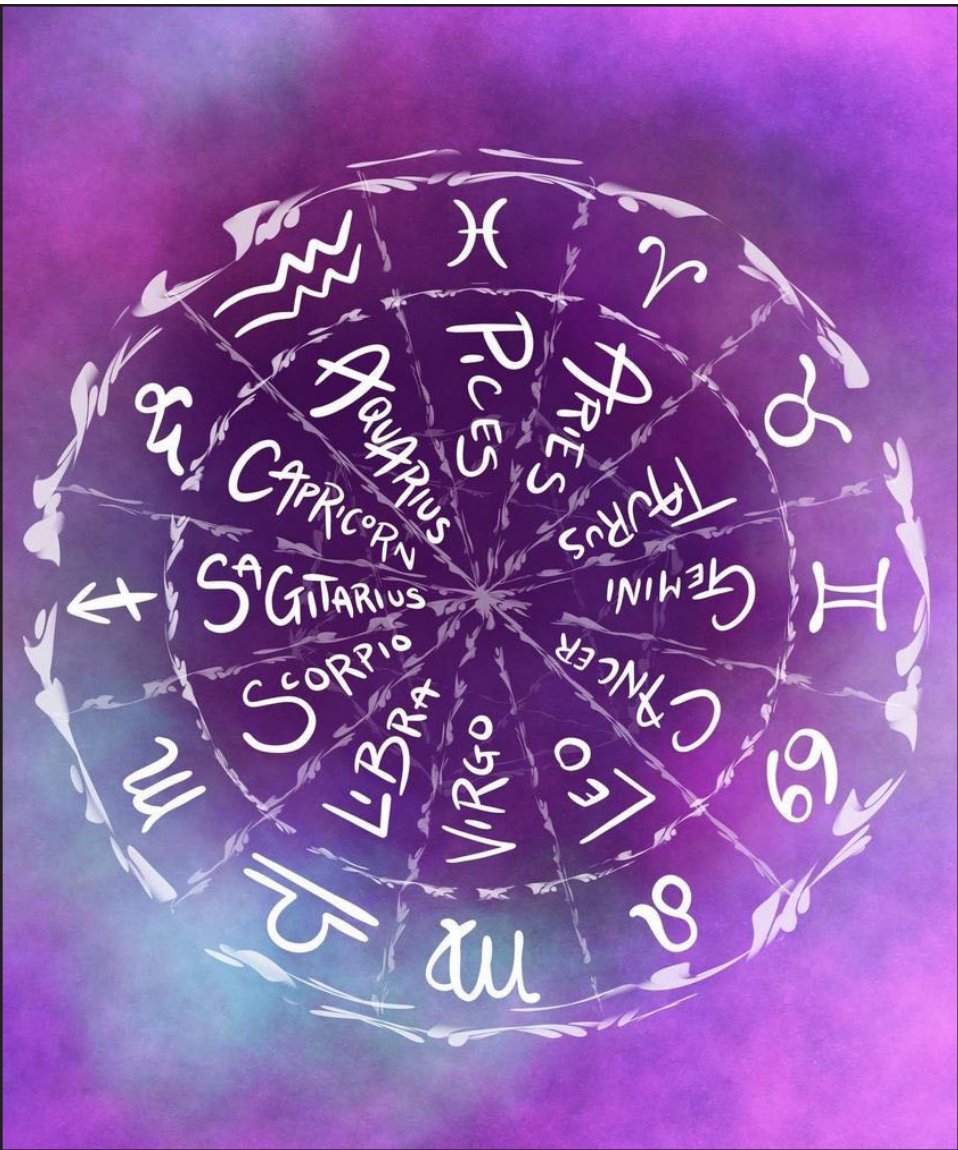
She said, “I’d just want people to know that any opinion on astrology is totally valid, whether you believe in it or not and that it can be super fun if you want to get into it!”



Kira Sekhar



Anjali Prachand



MIDWAY ILLUSTRATION BY JASMINE TAN

## A GUIDE TO YOUR SUN SIGN FROM REFINERY 29

**Pisces:** Feb. 19-March 20

Characteristically imaginative and compassionate, yet idealistic.

**Aries:** March 21-April 19

Characteristically adventurous and dynamic, yet impulsive.

**Taurus:** April 20-May 20

Characteristically imaginative and compassionate, yet idealistic.

**Gemini:** May 21-June 20

Characteristically communicative and adaptable, yet inconsistent.

**Cancer:** June 21-July 22

Characteristically intuitive and emotional, yet changeable.

**Leo:** July 23-Aug. 22

Characteristically faithful and enthusiastic, yet patronizing.

**Virgo:** Aug. 23-Sept. 22

Characteristically modest and reliable, yet overcritical.

**Libra:** Sept. 23-Oct. 22

Characteristically diplomatic and socialable, yet indecisive.

**Scorpio:** Oct. 23-Nov. 21

Characteristically determined and intuitive, yet compulsive.

**Sagittarius:** Nov. 22-Dec. 21

Characteristically optimistic and intellectual, yet superficial.

**Capricorn:** Dec. 22-Jan. 19

Characteristically practical and disciplined, yet pessimistic.

**Aquarius:** Jan. 20-Feb. 18

Characteristically friendly and inventive, yet unpredictable.

# Students learn heritage languages through university

by JULIAN INGERSOLL  
MIDWAY REPORTER

As Eliza Doss steps into her University of Chicago language course, she is welcomed into the classroom with a traditional Korean greeting and a bow. Taking her seat among university students, Eliza, a U-High junior, gets ready to learn her heritage language, Korean. For Eliza, who was adopted in Korea and brought to the United States, learning the Korean language is a way to connect with her heritage.

The University of Chicago and its diverse language offerings have inspired a small number of students at U-High to take courses resembling their heritage or culture, opening the eyes for students at U-High to explore languages they wouldn’t learn otherwise.

“I’m Korean, and I’ve always wanted to learn Korean and I thought it was really cool that there was even a chance for me to take it,” Eliza explained.

To take a class at the university, high school students must first complete the language requirement at U-High. In middle school and high school, Eliza took Spanish. As the years passed she felt she had come to a standstill in her Spanish career and was interested in the opportunities presented by the university.

Similarly to Eliza, junior Sanaa Imami also became interested in



MIDWAY PHOTO BY MACY BEAL

**LEARNING BY SPEAKING.** Eliza Doss works with 2019 U-High graduate Ryan Lee in a Korean class at the University of Chicago. Students attend the class five days a week to learn their heritage language.

learning her heritage language in high school.

“I was interested in the language and culture mainly because of my religious background but also because I’d like to study abroad or live in the Middle East in the coming years,” said Sanaa, who is taking the elementary/beginning Arabic at the University of Chicago.

She studied French at U-High and was very interested in the opportunities presented by the uni-

versity, but she was more interested in learning Arabic than continuing in French. Sanaa also had some rudimentary experience with the Arabic before, but she wanted to understand the mechanics of the language because she is thinking of using it in the future.

Much like Eliza, Sanaa knew she wanted to take a class on her heritage language for a long time, and started building the class into her

schedule sophomore year.

Although university language courses provide opportunities, Eliza pointed out they are a serious time commitment.

“It’s every day, five days a week for 50 minutes. The class is hard,” Eliza said. “It’s a lot more than when you come from Spanish at Lab to taking Korean at the University, but I was ready for the workload.”

Though the classes meet ev-

ery day, Sanaa said that since the classes are so small, she gets even more practice with the language and establishes a closer relationship with her professor.



Sanaa Imami

Sophomore Alina Susani is one of the students who speak foreign languages at home fluently but also inclined to better their understanding of their heritage language. She has grown up speaking Italian and Turkish at home but hasn’t yet taken a high school or university class in those languages.

“I feel it would be pretty helpful and cool because I’m fluent in speaking, but I struggle sometimes with grammar and spelling,” Alina said.

Her only concern was that if she took the class on a language she mostly already knew, she would find the class boring because the classes are tailored for those who have no connection to the culture.

Language is a way to connect with people all over the world, and with the help of the University of Chicago, students at U-High are able to seize the opportunity to learn a new language — regardless of their cultural background.



# He's a Rocket Man

## Senior builds rocket engine independently

by GRACE BRADY  
MIDWAY REPORTER

A humidifier, model rockets, and the Physics Machine Shop at University of Chicago — while they may not seem similar, these are all things one U-High senior has spent hours figuring out or, in his own words, “messaging with.”

Whether the project is as complex as a rocket engine or as simple as a power button, Paul Staley enjoys finding solutions to problems in ways that teach him more than just “simple fixes” but also lead to interesting, complex projects. His latest build, a rocket engine, is his most ambitious yet.

Paul spends his time building machines and trying to figure out how things work. For him, the fun comes in discovering new solutions, and his rocket engine is the perfect way to combine his love for building with his creative thought process. When discussing how he came across this idea, he said, “I had a bunch of model rockets, you know, from when I was younger. So I was looking at those and I thought, ‘Those are super cool. Why don't I, you know, see how difficult it is to actually make this something real?’”

While Paul has built multiple computers and a 3D printer, the construction of his rocket engine has proved to be the most challenging, time-consuming build. Paul said he has had to do extensive research due to the unique construction.

He said, “I'm used to, you know, you go online, you look it up, and there's someone who's probably done it and you can find it on YouTube.”



Paul Staley

*“You need to go into it understanding you literally know nothing about it and have no idea what the problems are going to be... the mindset is even different from just like building something where you've got instructions, like, you need to live with the fact that you're going to make massive mistakes.”*

— PAUL STALEY, SENIOR

Paul works on as much of the rocket as he can at his house, while the more complicated, hazardous pieces remain at the Physics Lab at the University of Chicago. After discussing it with his father, who works at the university, Paul visited the Physics Lab. Now, components of his rocket engine are being constructed by machines designed for projects like this.

In other projects, Paul has been able to find instructions online, the engine has taught Paul different methods of constructing.

“The only places where people are actually describing how to build a rocket engine are like declassified things from like 60 years ago and like random people who clearly don't know exactly what they're doing,” Paul said. “So that's been really interesting — actually having to, like, purchase books and spend, like, hours going through them.”

Paul not only felt inspired by his interest in finding out how things work, but also his plans for a possible future career as a test pilot.

“I think it definitely applies — especially if you're in a position where you're, you know, flying and, you know, making decisions about the airplane,” he said. “You need to have a really strong engineering background and this kind of thing, actually, like, kind of thinking outside of the box, designing new things... I can imagine it would be helpful for that.”

Mr. Saez, Paul's physics teacher from last year, said he thinks Paul's



MIDWAY PHOTO BY ELLIOT TAYLOR

**IT'S ROCKET SCIENCE.** Mixing solutions in his home, senior Paul Staley works on his ambitious new build, a rocket engine. For him, the process has been a perfect synthesis of everything he most enjoys: research, construction and finding new ways to solve difficult problems.

interest in experimentation and critical thinking makes for a great engineer.

“He could make sense of almost anything,” Mr. Saez said, “and, you know, he would always play with things that I had around just to make something happen. So he's a little bit unconventional in the way he thinks.”

Mr. Saez also expressed hope in Paul's rocket engine, saying he is sure it will be wonderful in the end.

Paul has advice for anyone looking to do something similar.

“You need to go into it understanding you literally know nothing about it and have no idea what the problems are going to be...,” he said. “The mindset is even different from just, like, building something where you've got instructions — like, you need to live with the fact that you're going to make massive mistakes.”

Ultimately, Paul hopes to finish

this rocket by the end of the school year.

Paul said even small things can consume his time, like a power button on his humidifier that he noticed did not work correctly.

“I could have put a piece of tape over it, it would have done — it'd probably work even better,” he said, “but, the point is I just start messing with things if I have them, and eventually, sometimes like this, it turns into something bigger.”

# GOING GREEN

## St. Patrick's Day is just around the corner, so get your green on and try some unique shamrock-colored drinks this March

by CAROLINE HOENHER  
MIDWAY REPORTER

For those who need both luck and a kick of caffeine: try **True North's matcha latte**.

The latte is the most aesthetically pleasing of the three drinks: pale green and topped with a cute foam heart. While I was originally hesitant to try this drink, it being an unusual color for a latte and me being unfamiliar with the taste of matcha, I was surprised to find myself enjoying it.

A sip of this latte is warm, but not scalding. The drink tastes sweet and earthy, and is made with lots of foam, which slightly overpowers the unique matcha taste. The matcha powder, which built up along the edges of my drink, gave the drink an unpleasant grainy aftertaste, but the overall texture was nice and smooth.

For those avoiding dairy, the drink can be customized to be made with soy or almond milk instead of whole.

Unlike the Real Good



True North:  
Matcha Latte

Juice Co. smoothie and McDonald's Shamrock Shake, the matcha latte sat light in my stomach, leaving me warm and content rather than cold and queasy.

I would recommend getting this drink “for here,” as True North has plenty of tables to study at and serves each of its lattes in cozy, blue ceramic mugs, which complement the already colorful matcha latte. If you don't have the time to sit down, True North's quick service and digital payment option make this drink a quick “to-go” option as well. With True North just blocks away from U-High, I recommend taking the short walk over to try this shamrock-toned tea.

For the past 50 years, the **McDonald's Shamrock Shake** has been a St. Patrick's day cult classic. The seasonal shake's continued popularity is no surprise; the drink is sweet enough to satisfy even the most raging sweet tooth, with the perfect creamy consistency that doesn't need to be forced up through a straw, and with its shocking green color and cool snap of mint, more exciting than a chocolate or vanilla milkshake.

Anyone interested in a Shamrock Shake should get it while they can; after March 24 you won't see them again until next year. Not that these shakes are difficult to get. The shamrock shake is the cheapest of the three green drinks, and easy to access given McDonald's almost scary high distribution of stores.

Toppings are key to a good milkshake, and while I received a hearty dollop of whipped cream on my shake, my inner child was disappointed by the lack



McDonald's:  
Shamrock Shake

of the cherry that has colored the Shamrock Shakes of years past. Though not quite as heavy as the green smoothie, the shamrock shake is dense enough to leave you feeling a bit queasy. In my opinion, that icky feeling is completely worth the feeling of accomplishment that comes with finishing off the whipped cream left at the bottom of the cup. I would recommend this shake alongside some of McDonald's saltier foods to create a balance of flavors, and enjoyed with some festive friends.

**Real Good Juice Co.'s “Kal E. Kopowski” smoothie** proves that looks can be deceiving. This clover green drink gets its color from kale (a food which I typically avoid like the plague), but you'd never know it from the taste, which is as sweet and nutty as a banana-nut milkshake. The smoothie shares the consistency of a milkshake as well, due to the additions of banana and almond butter.

The “Kal E. Kopowski” smoothie comes in a simple plastic cup donned with a minimalist logo and an environmentally friendly paper straw consistent with the juice store's hip and modern vibes. While many locations of Real Good Juice Co. are located inside grocery stores, others are cozy, well-lit spaces to study with friends, with comfy seating and even some fun card games to play like the late-night classic “Cards Against Humanity.”

While a smoothie packed with superfoods sounded



Real Good Juice Co.:

“Kal E. Kopowski” invigorating, I found that the reality of this smoothie is a drink so dense it fills you up before you finish even half of it. While I was slowly sipping on my smoothie, I was also disappointed to find that the drink, which had started off thick and frothy, begun to melt and now left my mouth feeling a bit like I had just drank chalk. Given its great taste and original consistency, I would only recommend this smoothie to people with the appetite to finish it, and finish it quickly before it melts.