

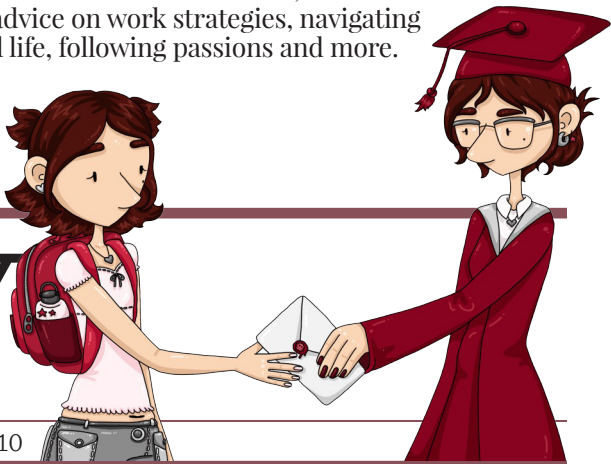
Since transitioning from middle school to high school, senior Sammy Fackenthal has been part of the theater community and gained confidence through acting.



To create a successful relay team, track athletes credit strong bonds between runners and a sense of motivation to perform well for their teammates.



As the Class of 2022 leaves Lab, seniors give advice on work strategies, navigating social life, following passions and more.



University of Chicago Laboratory High School

U-HIGH MIDWAY

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Boonstra to lead Student Council

Student Council officers plan mental health days, accountability

by CAROLINE HOHNER
FEATURES EDITOR

After a week of campaigning, a day of voting and hours of anticipation, the student body elected a new student government April 29 for the coming school year headed by Fermi Boonstra as all-school president and Graham Robbins as all-school vice president. The Midway interviewed members of the newly elected student government about their visions for the year to come.

PRESIDENT Q&A

Fermi Boonstra

What are some things that you've accomplished in your Student Council career that you are proud of?

"I led this bill called the Temperature Check Bill. And it was initially about getting faculty to send out a survey to their students in the middle of the year to see how everyone was doing, and from there, adjust their courses or adjust their workload. And basically, what happened was, I was told that you can't make teachers put out that forum, but you can highly encourage it. And so I talked at a faculty meeting and proposed giving those temperature checks, hence the name. And I think a lot of teachers took it to heart. And I heard a lot about how teachers were doing it [...] Some of them didn't, but it mattered to me that at least some teachers were doing it and some students were getting that say in their course."

What kind of a Student Council do you hope to lead?

"I really want to have a good relationship with the student body, which I know has been a struggle in the past, because a lot of people see Student Council as this, like, high-off place where we're untouchable and maybe like, we're

not so in tune with what's happening in the school and we never get anything done. But I think if people are more aware of what we're doing, then they'll see that no, we can actually do things. We can help little things. We can't get teachers to not give us homework, but we can make little initiatives that make everyday life a little bit easier."

What are some lessons you've picked up during your time on student council that you plan to make use of next year?

"There are things that a leader can do to make a community feel more bonded. I think, as a leader, it's important to be an example for students. No one is going to want to dress up for spirit week if their own class president isn't going crazy for it. As a leader, you learn to like what people see and what they receive from your actions. Through my years, I've figured out what is good and what's bad."

What are some of your initial goals for the next year?

"I was actually just talking to Ms. Campos about getting the five mental health days separated from the absence cap we can have per semester. So right now, you can have seven absences per semester before you have to have a conversation with the dean and your parents. And no one wants that. [...] So for example, field trips don't count toward the absences you can have per semester, but sick days do. And so what I want is to get a set aside amount of days for mental health, being put into that column of days that don't count for the absences."

VICE PRESIDENT Q&A

Graham Robbins

What are some of your initial goals for the next year?

"I think that really what needs



2022-23 Student Council

All-school:
President: Fermi Boonstra
Vice President: Graham Robbins
Secretary: James McCullen
Treasurer: Lucas Caldentey
Cultural Union President: Akshay Badlani
Cultural Union Vice President: William Meyer

Class of 2023:
President: Sydney Tyler
Vice President: Maya Herron
Cultural Union Representatives: William Montague, Lena Stole

Class of 2024:
President: Zoe Nathwani
Vice President: Brandon Chang
Cultural Union Representatives: Adam Cheema, Maurice Neuman

Class of 2025:
President: Krish Khanna
Vice President: Lisa Tao
Cultural Union Representatives: Ben O'Donnell, Olin Nafziger

MIDWAY PHOTO ANDREW BURKE-STEVENSON

NEW BEGINNINGS. Fermi Boonstra, newly elected all-school president, leads a Student Council meeting May 2. "I think if people are more aware of what we're doing, then they'll see that no, we can actually do things," Fermi said. Next year, Fermi hopes to have a set amount of days for mental health separate from the cap of seven absences per semester.

to change is not really doing

the traditional things like Schoology posts, and, you know, written statements, because those have always been done. I think it's really about, like, getting into the community where it's already effective."



Graham Robbins

Why did you want to become vice president?

"I think it's a role that's kind of really, like, you can do a lot of things with it [...] I think anyone can do Student Council. It's

not that it takes this special skill set, or you need these sort of special powers to be able to do something. It's really about connecting with your peers and listening, and then bringing up concerns to the relevant student body or student groups or administration."

Your election guide blurb mentions that you were trying to advocate for an anonymous faculty reporting system. Could you elaborate on that?

"What a lot of students have mentioned and brought up to administration and Student Council is that you do have to put in an email address [into the bias reporting form] [...] Having that does not really make for always

an accessible experience because there are times when students just want to get something off their mind or say something without their name being attached to it. And that's something that I think the school needs to respect. [...] Sometimes what people really need is just to say something, put something out there, and feel that an adult is hearing them and not necessarily having them be responsible for going through that process."

Visit uhighmidway.com for responses from Akshay Badlani, Cultural Union president, and Zoe Nathwani, Junior Class president.

Middle, high school to start later in 2023-24



MIDWAY PHOTO BY CARTER CHANG

LATE START. Junior Amelia Zheng walks into school on May 5. The middle and high school start time will be at 8:30 a.m. daily.

by RYAN CLARK
OPINION EDITOR

Middle and high school students will begin class at 8:30 a.m. starting in the 2023-24 school year, Laboratory Schools Director Tori Jueds stated in a May 4 email that she had accepted the recommendation of the Healthy Start Committee.

"This important task will inevitably involve difficult choices and tradeoffs, and I'm grateful to the educators leading this work for their appreciation of its complexity and their support of our students," Ms. Jueds wrote in the email to the Lab community.

The committee, which formed in June 2021, recommends that the school day end no later than 3:30 p.m. to prevent conflicts with after-school activities. The committee also published a report of the recommendations, which is avail-

able online.

"I feel positive about the result of the work that the committee completed," said counselor Camille Baughn-Cunningham, who was a member of the Healthy Start Committee. "I think we have known, and research has told us for quite some time actually, that starting school as little as a half hour later could have a meaningful impact on particularly our high school students."

Committee member Laura Doto, a high school learning coordinator, expressed similar support for the recommendation.

"The 8:30 start is actually better aligned to adolescents' circadian rhythms and changing bodies and biochemistry, and so I think it's going to make a significant difference in terms of alertness and attention in the earlier part of the day," Ms. Doto said, while qualify-

ing that students must also have healthy evening routines to benefit from the later start time.

Ninth grader Isabella Alvarez will still be at U-High when the change is implemented and said that she believes a 30-minute change is the right amount.

"I think we'll get a bit more sleep, and even the 8:20 start time is helpful, so I'd imagine this 8:30 start time would be helpful," Isabella said.

On the contrary, ninth grader Leon Bordelon, who goes by Asa, opposes the new start time.

"I don't like it because I think it would just make the whole day get pushed back, and it would be basically the same, just a bit later," Asa said.

In her email, Ms. Jueds also stated that future topics of inquiry into student wellness will include sleep and homework.

SJW disruption hinders progress

Students express discouragement from expressing their identities

by **BERKOTO**
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Despite reminders from teachers and workshop leaders, U-High community norms for sensitive discussions were violated several times across at least two Social Justice Week workshops on April 21, and the events left organizers and some other attendees frustrated and expecting more accountability.

A group of students laughed throughout the “Coming Out and Identity” workshop, which was organized by Spectrum and led by sophomore Alex Fogel and junior Martin Oliver. The discussion-based workshop was about the challenges of coming out as LGBTQ+ to family and friends.

“As soon as they walked in, they were very loud and on the verge of being disruptive,” Martin said, referring to the disruptive ninth grade students. “During the workshop, they were laughing a lot during inappropriate moments. They were being disruptive to the point where it affected the rest of the group, but we didn’t feel like we could do anything about it.”

After the workshop, Martin and Alex received an apology email from at least one student. The student apologized for his disruptive behavior but claimed that he and his friends were talking about an unrelated funny subject and he couldn’t help himself from laughing. Martin thought the apology was not enough to address the issue.

“It’s treating the problem as if it’s surface level, when in actuality it seems like the case is that you and your friends came here to cause disruption and see if you could figure out who was gay,” Martin said.

Both Martin and Alex said they heard later from multiple workshop attendees that the ongoing disruptions created a hostile environment where people didn’t feel safe to speak openly about their identities and experiences. Margaux Einhorn, a senior who attended the workshop, echoed this sentiment.

“Their laughter at the beginning when one of the presenters said their chosen name and pronouns set a bad precedent for the rest of the workshop that discouraged



MIDWAY PHOTO BY ANDREW BURKE-STEVENSON

ROADBLOCKS TO DISCUSSION. Sophomore Alex Fogel, one of the hosts of the workshop, speaks at the “Coming Out and Identity” Social Justice Week workshop on April 21. Organizers said the workshop was negatively affected by the poor behavior of several attendants of the event, most of them ninth grade boys.

“In the future I’d want more time to plan, touch base multiple times with students running workshops as well as talk to faculty about what they can do to help in tricky situations.”

— MAHI SHAH

people from speaking up,” Margaux said. “The thing that broke my heart the most was the kids who might’ve been in this workshop to look for a community or positive reinforcement on their identity.”

At the “Misogyny in Rap” workshop, a calm discussion turned into chaos, resulting in similar consequences for facilitator Anika Gupta, a junior. Although the first half of the workshop was calm,

community norms were quickly ignored as students began yelling their opinions about hip-hop at each other.

“One second it was quiet and I was trying to get people to speak, and the next it just devolved into... chaos,” Anika said. “No one was listening to each other, and I didn’t know how to regain control of the room.”

Anika is frustrated by the people who ignore community norms, because it makes it impossible to engage in civil discourse about what she feels is an important topic. She hopes that in the future, faculty or DEI peer facilitators can teach workshop organizers how to enforce community norms and regain control of their workshops.

Social Justice Week co-chair Mahi Shah, a junior who is also a DEI peer facilitator, agrees with this idea.

“In the future I’d want more time

to plan, touch base multiple times with students running workshops as well as talk to faculty about what they can do to help in tricky situations,” Mahi said. “Probably my favorite thing about Social Justice Week is that it’s student run, but that doesn’t mean that adults can’t help in certain contexts.”

Anika, Martin and Alex believe that they would have benefited from this training as well as stronger enforcement of community norms.

“I think the community norms should be talked about because usually they’re just said. I feel like they’re never really discussed outside of a surface level thing during the workshops,” Martin said. “What does it mean to be respectful to others? What does it mean to lean into discomfort? I feel like we need to have discussions about this led by teachers instead of the norms just being pushed at us be-

cause people just don’t take them seriously.”

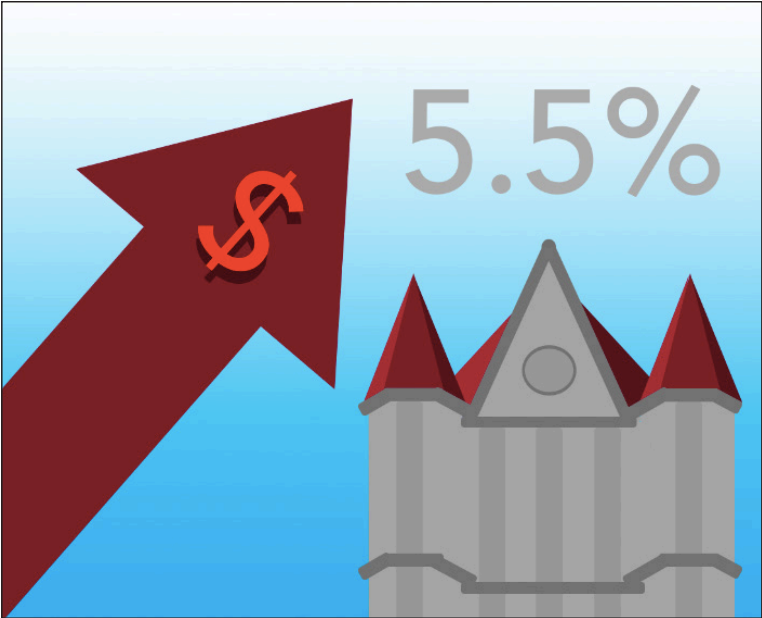
For those who continually and seriously violate community norms in and outside of school workshops, Martin hopes that there can be a greater level of accountability than what currently exists.

“It’s surface level to just have an apology and move on,” he said. “What we need is for the school to demand actual progress from these students over time.”

Although some students may feel that their disruptions do not matter, the environment that they create may affect other students in ways that are contradictory to the purpose of the Social Justice Week workshops and the mission of Lab.

Margaux said, “In situations like this where I start to feel a homophobic vibe, I start to feel the feelings I felt when I wasn’t out, like shame.”

School increases tuition rate due to rising inflation



MIDWAY ILLUSTRATION BY AMON GRAY

RISING PRICES. The school administration announced that next year tuition will be increased by 5.5% to a total of \$40,488.

by **SAHANA UNNI**
CONTENT MANAGER

The tuition for the 2022-23 school year will increase by 5.5% to \$40,488.

On March 7, Laboratory Schools Director Tori Jueds emailed parents of rising Laboratory Schools students, announcing the change. The school will continue to offer tuition remission for eligible families.

Tuition serves as the school’s major source of revenue, Ms. Jueds said.

“We have other sources of revenue which are needed, but if you look at the way our model is put together, tuition is our major source, but it does not meet all of our expenses,” she said.

Ms. Jueds explained that the remaining expenses are met through fundraising such as Connections, an endowment fund, Summer Lab and the Extended Day program.

Approximately 70% of U-High families receive some tuition discount, including employee benefits, need-based financial aid and outside scholarships.

“We are being very sensitive and thoughtful about all of this,” said Irene Reed, director of admissions and financial aid. “We are beginning the process of reviewing financial aid applications for returning students for fall of 2022 and are very much keeping in mind both inflation and the tuition increase.”

Although tuition remission benefits are not changing for the next school year, eligibility forms must now be submitted through Workday.

“University-affiliated families are recipients of an employee benefit, called tuition remission,” Ms. Jueds said. “None of that is changing. What is changing is there is a form to fill out, it’s a procedural thing, but it doesn’t change the

“We have other sources of revenue which are needed, but if you look at the way our model is put together, tuition is our major source, but it does not meet all of our expenses.”

— TORI JUEDS, DIRECTOR

substance of how people experience it.”

Eligible families of University of Chicago employees will continue to receive a standard 50% tuition remission, and households with a Total Adjusted Gross Income of less than \$250,000 can still apply for an enhanced tuition remission benefit.

As inflation rises, Ms. Jueds says the tuition increase is needed to support Lab’s expenses and keep the school accessible.

Gut instinct: Do foods heal our insides?

A new trend says that guts need to be healed by food

by **NOA APPELBAUM**
HEALTH & WELLNESS EDITOR
“I’m back with another gut health elixir,” a TikTok user promises. Her video, which has amassed almost 830,000 views, shows her pouring fruit and aloe vera juice into a Mason jar, a recipe she says she uses to heal her inner gastrointestinal tract.

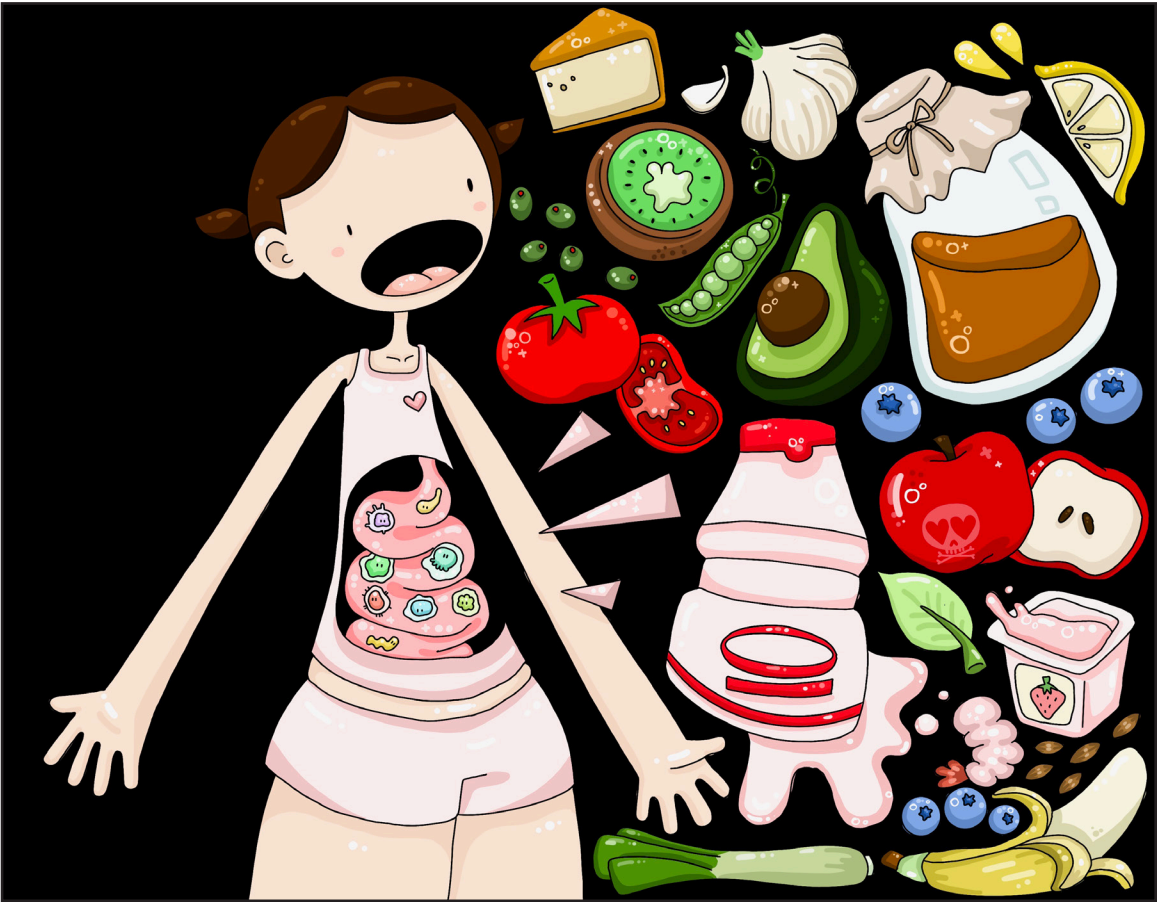
Similar videos have popped up recently, claiming that the gut is a delicate organ that, when unbalanced, can cause bloating, fatigue and weight gain, and must be treated holistically. However, it appears this is an oversimplification of an extremely complex organ system.

Despite the recent claims of social media users, Eugene Chang, associate director of gastroenterology at UChicago Medicine, said the gastrointestinal tract cannot necessarily be “healed” by specific foods. Rather, general diet and exercise is enough to sustain gut health.

According to Dr. Chang, the “gut” usually refers to several components of the gastrointestinal tract.

“So there’s the luminal part, where your food enters, and it’s digested and absorbed, and then you excrete what you can’t digest,” Dr. Chang said. “But then there’s other organs of the digestive system, like the liver, gallbladder and pancreas. These are also included in this catch-all term of gastrointestinal tract.”

According to Dr. Chang, a multitude of problems can arise in the gastrointestinal tract and could cause it to be unhealthy. However, due to the tract’s nature, certain damaged parts can affect the en-



MIDWAY GRAPHIC BY DALIN DOHRN

GO WITH YOUR GUT. Many people believe that they need to aid the liver in “detoxifying” their body by eating certain foods and probiotics. According to Eugene Chang, associate director of gastroenterology at UChicago Medicine, this is not needed; the liver usually “detoxifies” fine on its own.

tirety of the tract as a whole.

“Your gastrointestinal tract is like a number of organs that are connected in a series, and each part is processing nutrients, digesting them and absorbing them, kind of like an assembly line,” Dr. Chang said. “So if any part of the assembly line goes bad or doesn’t work correctly, the whole thing doesn’t work well.”

Dr. Chang said when components of the gastrointestinal tract go awry, it can lead to symptoms such as bloating, cramping, abdominal pain and vomiting. Damage to the liver in particular, he

said, can produce these symptoms and can wreak major havoc on the digestive system.

“Your liver is your major metabolic organ — it determines how you’re going to spend your energy,” Dr. Chang said. “When you take drugs, for example, the liver converts it into a non-toxic substance and filters it for the rest of the body. It’s like a detoxifier.”

People sometimes believe this “detoxification” the liver induces means that they should drink or eat “detoxifying” foods to help the process, but, according to Dr. Chang, the gastrointestinal tract

is quite adept at its job on its own.

“It’s amazing how well it works, considering that every part of the tract has to be perfectly integrated,” Dr. Chang said. “The gastrointestinal tract even has its own separate nervous system. So there’s not exactly one thing that you can do to maintain a healthy gut — just follow general principles.”

These principles, according to Dr. Chang, include following a balanced diet, exercising and not smoking.

Dr. Chang also talked about the microbiome, which is the complex collection of bacteria naturally liv-

“It’s amazing how well it works, considering that every part of the tract has to be perfectly integrated. The gastrointestinal tract even has its own separate nervous system. So there’s not exactly one thing that you can do to maintain a healthy gut — just follow general principles.”

— EUGENE CHANG,
ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR OF
GASTROENTEROLOGY

ing inside everyone that helps digest food, protect against diseases and produce essential vitamins. Much of Dr. Chang’s research has to do with studying the microbiome as a whole.

Despite the popular belief that ingesting probiotics (such as yogurt or kombucha) can help to regulate or expand the microbiome, Dr. Chang said these foods usually do little to add to human bodies’ natural bacteria collection. Everyone’s body has a natural microbiome that is unique to them, and, according to Dr. Chang, that the body essentially curates and picks itself.

“Your body selects these combinations of microbes; it’s not random,” Dr. Chang said. “To say that probiotic cultures are going to become part of your microbiome — honestly, I think that’s ridiculous. Most studies show that probiotics just pass right through you.”

General diet and exercise, then, seems to be the key to maintaining gut health. Despite what some social media users suggest, it would appear that there’s no magical cure or probiotic that will keep them healthy.

Dr. Chang said, “Again, I go back to the fact that if you eat healthy, your gut will probably be healthy.”

Teen screen use skyrockets in 2021, survey says

Entertainment media screen use rises past 8 hours

by **AMON GRAY**
ARTS EDITOR

Could you live without social media? A recent national survey of teen media use shows that screen use among teens has drastically increased in the past three years. Nearly one in three teens say they would not want to live without YouTube, one in five would not want to live without Snapchat and more than one in eight would not want to live without TikTok.

The 2021 survey, Common Sense Census: Media Use by Tweens and Teens, examined changes in screen media use among young people during the coronavirus pandemic, showing that screen time for entertainment grew by 17% during the pandemic years to more than 8 1/2 hours daily.

The accounts of U-High students have aligned with this data, but they have also had their share of unique experiences with screens during the pandemic.

The Common Sense Census, a probability-based online survey of 1,306 8- to 18-year-olds in the United States, was conducted from Sept. 29 to Oct. 25, 2021. The survey compared the 2021 results to a baseline survey conducted in spring 2019.

Survey data showed that from 2015 to 2019, screen media use for teens increased by 11%, but from

32%

The number of teens in a nationwide survey who said they could not live without YouTube.

20%

The number of teens who said they could not live without Snapchat.

13%

The number of teens who said they could not live without TikTok.

OTHER FAST FACTS:

From 2019 to 2021, media use has grown by 17% for teens.

In 2021, teens were shown to spend a total of 8 hours and 39 minutes a day using screens for entertainment.

Screen use is the highest amount middle class (\$35,000 to \$99,000 per year households).

2019 to 2021 alone, media use grew by 17% for teens. Furthermore, the report stated that in 2015, teens were shown to spend a total of 6 hours and 40 minutes a day using screens for entertainment. That number increased to 7 hours and 22 minutes in 2019 and 8 hours and 39 minutes in 2021. Between 2019 and 2021, the biggest increas-

es were in time spent watching online videos (up 23 minutes a day), using social media (up 17 minutes a day), and browsing websites (up 14 minutes a day).

Sophomore Aditya Gupta says he spends at least three hours on a screen at school and when he gets home he spends most of his time on a screen, making his daily average total about 11 hours.

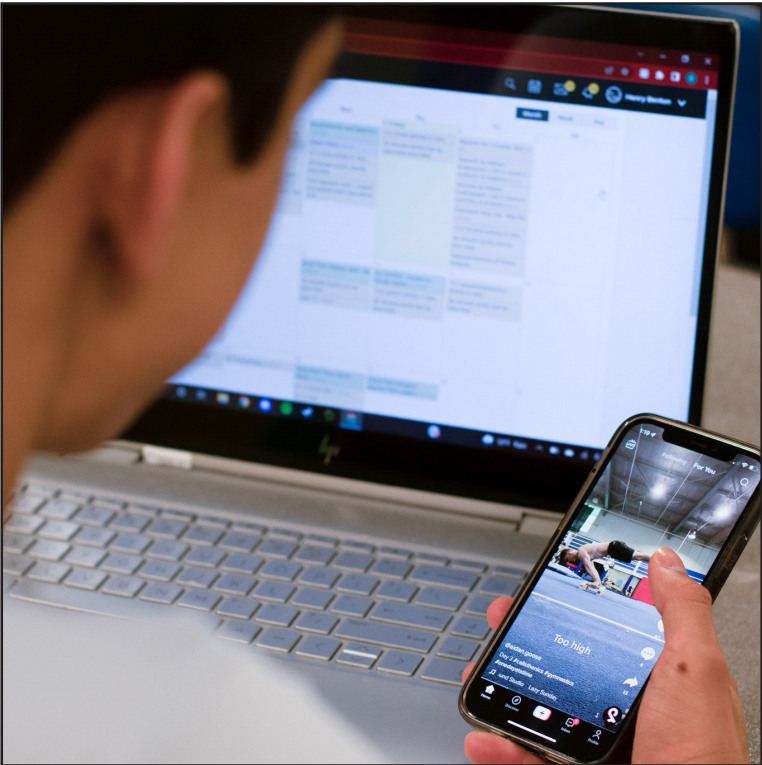
“I did very little extracurriculars during the pandemic because none were really available, so I was just on a screen the entire day, whether it was homework or playing games,” Aditya said. “Also, during school I was on a screen the entire day because of e-learning.”

Frederick Pytel, junior, said that his experience in the pandemic also increased his screen use, but he has been able to monitor it more since then.

“During the beginning of COVID I was doing worse with screens, but right now I’m pretty happy with the way I’m doing it now,” Frederick said. “With sports, I feel like I don’t have too much time to be on my screens messing around and still get my homework done.”

William Montague, junior, said he tracks his screen time in the settings of his phone and is satisfied with how much time he spends on it. However, he said he wanted to spend less time on his computer, which is more difficult to monitor.

The survey also noted differences in data along racial, economic, and gender divides. It states that screen use is the highest among middle class (\$35,000 to \$99,000



MIDWAY PHOTO BY HENRY BENTON

TEEN SCREENS. Many U-High students say that they take some measures to limit screen time, like by checking iPhone settings.

per year households). It was also higher among boys by about an hour, and proportionally higher among Hispanic/Latino teens that were surveyed compared to other groups.

The survey also showed that, while more media was consumed overall, the type of media that did not increase in usage was reading.

Junior Amelia Cifu said her screen time use did not increase

very much during the pandemic.

“I do wish I could moderate my screen use a bit more,” Amelia said, “but I don’t think I spend way too much time on screens.”

Among other survey findings, while 62% of teens engage with social media every day, only 34% say they enjoy it a lot. Nearly half (46%) of all 13- to 18-year-olds have listened to podcasts, and one in five say they do so at least once a week.

Social Justice Week needs norms

As the Midway sees it ...

During Social Justice Week, each workshop begins with a cursory reminder of the U-High community norms, a list of 12 discussion standards which include values such as remaining open to new ideas and expressing disagreement respectfully. Because the norms are not discussed throughout the school year, some norms are unfamiliar to most students, such as speaking from the “I” perspective or honoring confidentiality.

This unfamiliarity can sometimes lead to occasional disregard, or blatant violation of the community norms, creating a hostile environment, where students feel uncomfortable. This is what happened during two of the Social Justice Week workshops on April 21.

These violations of community norms at Social Justice Week workshops reveal how the U-High community norms must be continually discussed throughout the school year so that they are reinforced to and upheld by students.

At the beginning of each workshop, the community norms were briskly read through without much background, giving the assumption that people already understood and accepted the norms. To be effective, norms need to be commonly accepted by all attendees, something that cannot hap-



pen when the norms are quickly read without much discussion. Furthermore, the purpose of establishing norms is to design a safe space where conversations are constructive, but it is difficult for attendees to accept the norms

when they are imposed at the beginning of the workshop. Conversations surrounding workshop expectations need to not only introduce pre-established norms, which can come across as rules, but allow for students with-

in workshops to discuss and implement standards of their own. Greater transparency and awareness among conversation facilitators and attendees during the workshops would ensure that these norms are mutually agreed

upon. For norms to exist, participants must have a communal buy-in to a set of agreed values rather than having norms imposed on them.

If the norms were continually applied and reinforced to the student body, then they would be less likely to violate the norms. The norm violations in the workshop could stem from a lack of knowledge and ownership of these norms, which could be prevented if norms were reinforced periodically to students throughout the year in advisory or assemblies.

Going forward, advisers, faculty, school administrators, Student Council and student body all need to engage in larger discussions about the content of the community norms and how to use them more throughout the school year.

The norms must be integrated better into the school curriculum and ethos, so they are discussed earlier, not only by teachers or students during Social Justice Week. If the right training is provided, teachers and students facilitating Social Justice Week workshops in 2023 will be ready to deal with any problems regarding norms, or even better, the communally-agreed norms will be followed, and constructive and safe conversations can take place in all workshop spaces.

This editorial reflects the opinion of the U-High Midway Editorial Board.

Ranked choice voting counters polarization in democracy

by **SOPHIE BAKER**
REPORTER

In this increasingly partisan political environment, a plurality of the popular vote is all that is required to win an election, and is sometimes not even necessary. This means the representative government of the United States doesn't actually represent the preferences of the entire population.

The root of this issue is the way general elections are decided. Candidates only need to appeal to a select group of voters, and, according to a study conducted by the Washington Post, this encourages Republicans, who tend

to have more uniform views, to adopt more extreme policies. This has the opposite effect on Democrats, who have a broader spectrum of views and thus become more moderate to appeal to all Democratic voters.

Voters follow similar trends to the parties that they align with, meaning many more radical Democrats compromise their values to vote for someone who is more

likely to win. To address this, more states, including Illinois, must pass laws facilitating ranked choice voting in elections.

In this system, voters rank candidates in order of their preference. First-choice votes are counted first. If a candidate receives a majority, they win. If this doesn't happen, the candidate with the fewest votes is removed from contention. The second-choice votes from those voters are transferred to the remaining candidates. This continues until a candidate receives a majority.

While some people argue that RCV violates the “equality princi-

ple,” which states that each voter is only entitled to one vote, RCV serves to clarify a voter's preference for whom the voter's one vote should be cast.

The most evident benefit to an RCV system is that the legislators would actually represent the majority. Until Maine adopted RCV in 2016, 9 of the 11 gubernatorial elections between 1994 and 2014 were won with under half the vote.

In standard elections, candidates benefit from attacking their opponents, leading to polarizing campaigns. RCV encourages positive campaigning, because candidates must appeal to as many vot-

ers as possible.

Many local officeholders, including Chicago's mayor and city council, are chosen in two rounds: a general election and a runoff. RCV can save the jurisdiction a significant amount of money — the entire cost of the second election.

Many states and cities have already begun adopting RCV, which has served to reach across the partisan divide while helping to build a more representative government. It is of the utmost importance that more states follow suit, and students can encourage such action by petitioning officials in Illinois' local government.

Don't punish Russian musicians for Putin's war in Ukraine

by **WILLIAM TAN**
ASSISTANT EDITOR

In a recent tweet, Russian violinist Galiya Zharova expressed disappointment at being barred from the 2022 Sibelius International Violin Competition after months of intense preparation because of her status as a Russian citizen.

“Month[s] ago me and Ravi Islyamov were chosen to participate [in the] Sibelius violin competition,” Zharova wrote. “[The] competition emphasized that competitor's citizenship has no effect on their decisions. But today we've received a mail with the opposite information.”

Russian cellist Anastasia Ko-

bekina faced similar cancellations of performance engagements, even after openly protesting against her country's actions in Ukraine.

While Ms. Zharova and Ms. Kobekina are individual cases, even competitions such as the International Tchaikovsky Competition in Russia, one of the world's oldest and most revered music competitions, have been banned from the World Fed-

eration of International Music Competitions, thereby adversely affecting all the musicians who compete in them.

With economic and cultural sanctions tightened around Russian citizens in an effort to benefit Ukraine, Russian musicians have had their artistic voices silenced. Yet classical music should not be viewed as inherently politicized propaganda and restricted as such. Most musicians are solely interested in spreading joy, not idealism, and the restrictions placed upon them have negative consequences for an art form with a primary purpose to connect people from all walks of life, not to drive

them apart.

While it is understandable that a worldwide sanction against Russia should extend beyond the economic sphere, it seems contradictory to impose regulations on an industry whose goal is to promote the freedom of artistic expression. Art can be used politically, but these Russian artists aren't playing Soviet anthems or rousing anti-Ukrainian propaganda in performances. Rather, they're trying to build meaningful professional careers, showcase lesser-known composers and, most of all, bring some vestige of life to those facing adversity in the darkest parts of their lives.

Moreover, musicians like Zharova and the Russian composers being showcased in these events — Tchaikovsky, Shostakovich, Stravinsky and others — demonstrate a profound side of Russian culture that deserves to be heard, especially now more than ever as Russia's inhumane onslaught in Ukraine continues.

There is artistic benefit and political goodwill to be gained for all sides of the current Russia-Ukraine conflict by allowing Russian musicians to share their abilities through music. Music is a language of unification, and when used correctly, it can bring about real healing.

U-HIGH MIDWAY

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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 developed and managed by students, for students.

In every story we write, the Midway should give a voice to the experiences of people at U-High. We will report on the people, activities and thoughts that make our school unique, striving to include the voices we haven't heard yet.

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From seats to stage

Senior finds community, safe space within theater

by **ADRIANNA NEHME**
NEWS EDITOR

With delicate and intricately made costumes around him, young Sammy Fackenthal would act in front of the crowd, hoping to make at least one person smile. This is what he envisioned as he sat in the audience to watch his first play, “Romeo and Juliet,” at age 7. However, his lack of self-confidence and shyness always pulled him back to the chairs where he could only watch.

Since then, Sammy has transitioned out of the audience and onto the stage, and now as a confident and experienced senior is part of the theater community and has a role in the ensemble for U-High’s spring musical, “Seussical.”

His first part was in the “Schoolhouse Rock Live!” play in eighth grade.

“I think I enjoyed ‘Schoolhouse Rock Live!’” Sammy said. “I think I felt OK on stage, but I don’t think I actually felt confident being on stage until sophomore year when acting in ‘Mamma Mia.’”

As a part of the ensemble in “Mamma Mia,” Sammy did work offstage, which helped him gain more confidence. Before this play, Sammy’s lack of confidence in his acting ability dissuaded him from participating in the fall and winter performances.

Theater teacher Lucija Ambrosini witnessed Sammy’s growth during his four years participating in high school theater.

“He used to be very, not exactly shy, but really questionable about trying things and always questioning himself about whether he was doing it right,” Ms. Ambrosini said. “Now, he’s out there, and he does everything I ask. He, like, throws himself into it.”

“You’re on stage, so it’s scary, but you’re always with the people you know and trust.”

— SAMMY FACKENTHAL

Sammy attributes his transition from middle school to high school to his lack of certainty regarding acting.

“I was really anxious about going into high school theater because everything is so different,” Sammy said, “but after a few weeks, I felt pretty comfortable with a lot of the people.”

An aspect of Sammy’s love for theater stems from the theater community and individuals’ willingness to be helpful.

“The people in theater didn’t make me feel like an outsider even though I didn’t have the biggest roles in the shows,” Sammy said. “I was still considered a member of theater, and they noticed me.”

Ms. Ambrosini highlights how within the theater community, everyone is always accepting.

“Every contribution inside the theater is highly valued by the rest of the theater community,” Ms. Ambrosini said. “They see how everything interlocks and how dependent everyone is on everyone doing their job to make a success.”

The theater community has also been a primary factor in helping Sammy build confidence.

“Sometimes during intermission, when music is playing, people just stand in the wings of the stage and do the Macarena,” Sammy said. “You’re on stage, so it’s scary, but you’re always with the people you know and trust.”

When it’s not the theater community, it is the audience that keeps Sammy wanting to act. He



MIDWAY PHOTO BY MATTHEW MCGEHEE

BUILDING COMMUNITY. Senior Sammy Fackenthal, left, rehearses a scene with his castmates for their upcoming performance of “Seussical: The Musical.” According to Sammy, the theater provides him with a space in which he can creatively express himself with a community he trusts. “Seussical” performances will be May 19, 20 and 21. Tickets, available in the high school lobby, are \$10.

enjoys making and witnessing each member smile.

“At the end of each show, we talk to the audience. It is such a great feeling to hear people state how great the show was,” Sammy said. “I don’t care if you are skeptical coming in or don’t think it will be

good, but it is great at the end to feel like you left an impact on people.”

While Sammy’s time taking part in high school theater is ending, he values all the memories he has made and looks forward to his final production.

“It’s difficult because I just met some people this year and still feel so close to them,” Sammy said. “It’s going to be difficult to say goodbye. I plan on coming to see their shows during my breaks from college, and I want to continue to support them however I can.”

‘Bridgerton’ effectively represents Indian culture

Second season defies stereotypical representation

by **SAHANA UNNI**
CONTENT MANAGER

In a popular TV show, Kate Sharma sits in a candle-lit room with her younger sister, Edwina, and mother, Mary, spreading haldi on their arms in anticipation of a wedding taking place the following day. Although the show is set in England, haldi is a North Indian ceremony that takes place the night before a wedding, where a paste of turmeric, oil and water is spread on the bride and groom, in order to bless their marriage.

Season 2 of Netflix’s “Bridgerton” was released March 25, and while the plot may reflect many period pieces before it, the accurate representation of Indian culture sets it apart from the masses and has attracted strong interest and praise from Indian teens.

Indian traditions are immersed through the season, from Kate lathering melted coconut oil in her younger sister’s hair, to Edwina referring to Kate as Didi, translating to older sister in Hindi.

Western television is becoming more ethnically inclusive, and “Bridgerton” is the latest example, allowing Indian American teenagers to see their culture represented in an accurate and respectful manner.



SOURCE: NETFLIX

BALL DANCING. Kate Sharma (played by Simone Ashley) and Anthony Bridgerton (played by Jonathan Bailey) dance during a extravagant ball in Season 2, Episode 4 of “Bridgerton.”

“I think that how it incorporated brown culture was very good and very seamless,” junior Ishani Hariprasad, who identifies as Indian American, said. “I think that in a lot of media representation they always almost fetishize brown

people, or a large part of any brown character in a show is that they are brown. I really like that in this season they acknowledge that Kate was brown, but that wasn’t her purpose in the show, like just to be Indian.”

Sophomore Lena Valenti, who identifies as Indian American, enjoyed the first season and appreciated the way the second season incorporated Indian characters and culture.

“I loved the Indian representation because it breaks away from the stereotypes that you usually see in movies, and it gave the Indian protagonists more individual personalities, while showcasing Indian culture at the same time,” Lena said.

Throughout much of Gen Z’s childhood, Indian representation was scarce, with many television shows featuring characters whose personalities were solely comprised of Indian stereotypes.

Having grown up watching shows that portray Indian culture inaccurately, junior Akshay Badlani, who identifies as Indian American, especially liked the omission of comically heavy Indian accents depicted in many shows and movies.

“The first show that comes to mind is ‘Jessie.’ Ravi was just a complete stereotype. Like his accent was fake, and he was always the smart one, so I feel like straying away from those stereotypes is something amazing that ‘Bridgerton’ did,” Akshay said. “Another show that comes to mind is ‘Phineas and Ferb.’ Disney does a really bad job with South Asian representation. Like, Baljeet’s entire personality was super stereotypical.”

Where many prior shows characterized Indian teenagers as socially awkward and hyper-fixated on academics, junior Kriti Sarav, who identifies as Indian American, enjoyed how multidimensional Kate and Edwina Sharma are.

“I didn’t watch the first season, and the only reason I watched the second season was because I knew there was an Indian lead,” Kriti said. “I liked that the characters would wear a lot of Indian-influenced jewelry and clothes and that the fabrics were all Indian-influenced.”

Although Kriti enjoyed seeing an Indian love interest in Western television, there were aspects of Indian culture she hoped were more prominent in the new season.

“I remember that at the end Anthony Bridgerton calls Kate her traditional name, Kathani, and I was like, ‘Wait, what — she has an Indian name?’ I wished that they maybe used that throughout and not just at the end,” Kriti said.

With accurate Indian representation becoming more common in Western media, many Indian-American teenagers are excited to see what’s next.

“I feel like in so many shows they just continue stereotypes that already exist about Indian women,” Lena said, “but this show kind of broke away from that and made the Indian women into strong women that you never really see on TV.”

Staying safe in the SUN

The negative health effects of tanning came to the forefront of public concern in the 1980s, as studies were published correlating the use of indoor tanning beds with higher risk of melanoma. Although the frequency of tanning bed use may have faded over time, different forms of tanning remain integral to teens' lives today. As teens prepare for the summer and spending more time in the sun, they must also consider their safety.

Starting from youth, take sun precautions

by ANATHEA CARRIGAN
MANAGING EDITOR

As summer break approaches, concerns about sun exposure and its associated risks are returning. Excessive sun exposure is a cumulative issue; even minimal amounts of sun exposure can cause health issues over time. Whether students spend their summers swimming off the rocks at the Point, or sunbathing on the ledge, sun safety is a consideration that needs to be taken now to prevent health issues later. Students at U-High find it difficult to avoid spending extended periods of time in the sun over the summer, but they take precautions because they are aware of the associated risks. "The biggest concern with tanning is skin cancer," Sarah Stein, a dermatologist at University of Chicago Medicine. "There's a variety of different types of skin cancer, the most common is a basal cell carcinoma, and those are strongly linked to sun exposure." Basal cell carcinomas are the least invasive and least dangerous form of skin cancer. "Usually basal cell carcinomas are a local problem. They usually just eat away at the skin where they arise, causing deformity and scarring," Dr. Stein said. "They are usually not a risk for overall health, but in rare situations they can be even more complicated." Sun exposure can also lead to more serious cases of skin cancer. "Melanoma, the most deadly type of skin cancer, is also strongly linked to sun exposure but can also arise without sun exposure," Dr. Stein said. These skin cancers, which are often associated with tanning beds after the 1980s, occur just as commonly with natural sun tanning.

"Natural sun exposure and ultraviolet exposure in forms like tanning beds are equally dangerous."
— DR. SARA STEIN,
UCHICAGO DERMATOLOGIST

"Natural sun exposure and ultraviolet exposure in forms like tanning beds are equally dangerous," Dr. Stein said. Different wavelengths of light are responsible for sunburns and skin cancer, yet people are most commonly exposed to both in conjunction. "There's a couple different wavelengths of ultraviolet light — UVA and UVB are most relevant," Dr. Stein said. "UVB is what causes you to get a sunburn, but UVA — which is always right there with it — penetrates more deeply and affects the DNA of your skin cells, which we believe starts the process for skin cancer." Although skin cancer typically doesn't arise as a problem until later in life, Dr. Stein believes that teens should start protecting themselves now. "The more you're protecting yourself from ultraviolet light even as a young person, the better you'll be years down the road," Dr. Stein said. "Because a lot of the damage is being done during childhood." People can take many forms of protection, but Dr. Stein suggests physical barriers as the most effective method. "The best, most effective, safest, most environmentally conscious way to protect ourselves is with clothing, hats, shade, sunglasses, all these physical means of protecting from the sun," Dr. Stein said. "The sunscreen lotions and creams, we unfortunately never use them as comprehensively as

necessary to get protection." Some students are aware of these risks, but find them unavoidable. "I spend a lot of time outside because of rowing," sophomore Frances Lewis said, "but I feel comfortable because I can take precautions like wearing a long-sleeve SPF shirt." Junior Nathan Kilkus, who plays on the baseball team, reaffirmed this sentiment. "Sometimes I do get sunburnt while playing," Nathan said. "But I do my best to wear sunscreen during practice and games." Sometimes, students spend extended periods of time outside in the summer just to relax. During the coronavirus pandemic, senior Jana Reiser found it easier to spend time with her friends outside during the summer, especially around Promontory Point. "It's more convenient to spend time outside because my friend group is too big for us to comfortably hang out indoors without a lot of planning," Jana said. Jana gets easily sunburned, so she is sure to take as many precautions as possible while outside. "I usually just lather myself in sunscreen, and if I go swimming I make sure to reapply often," Jana said. "Sometimes I'll even wear a long-sleeve swimsuit in order to cover my back, which gets sunburned the most." Dr. Stein is confident that the dangers of sun and UV exposure are more well known recently. "Generally, the population is more aware now than they were 30 or 50 years ago because there is just more talk of it in the press and the public just in general," Dr. Stein said. "Though I'm not sure that teens or young people are understanding why we need to be protected."



MIDWAY ILLUSTRATION BY DALIN DOHRN

QUICK Q

What are your experiences with tanning, natural or fake?

JAMES MORIN:

"I was convinced by one of my friends to try tanning because he thought it would make us look better, and you know, I forgot about the fact that sunscreen and water don't really go well. So, I got obliterated by the sun, and I couldn't sit down properly and looked a little like the red lobster logo."



CHARLIE BENTON:

"I fake tanned once over the summer before I went on a tropical vacation because I was bored. I used Isle of Paradise tanning drops on my arms and legs and overall it turned out fine. But, it didn't really look good on me, so I wouldn't do it again. But by no means do I judge people if they choose to use fake tanner."



ELLA HULTQUIST:

"My routine is on a Thursday or Sunday, I would reapply my tan to let it marinate and wash it off. And it's really good because it lasts about a week but I really like doing it because it makes me feel really confident. It's taken me so long to get used to doing it, because being pale makes me super insecure but after a while I got the hang of it and now it's like this super simple and easy thing to make myself feel better."



KATIE BAFFA:

"I used fake tanner when I was a freshman and for a bit of my sophomore year. I thought that it was like a lot of work to apply it to myself, as there was a strict routine you had to follow for like two days in order to make it look authentic. I found that it wasn't worth it so I eventually stopped. The issue with fake tan is that once you get used to yourself looking tan you don't want to go back."



— COMPILED BY AUDREY MATEI

BY THE NUMBERS

While most teens understand that excessive sun exposure can lead to severe skin cancers, like melanoma, they don't necessarily understand that the issue begins during adolescence.

SOURCE: SKIN CANCER FOUNDATION

20%

of Americans will develop skin cancer by the age of 70.

1

blistering sunburn in adolescence doubles the risk for melanoma.

1-4%

of all melanoma cases affect adolescents.

90%

of skin aging is caused by the sun.

Sunscreens offer various protections, features

Banana Boat's Sport Ultra Spray (SPF 50)

\$12.89 for 9.5 ounces at Target
Banana Boat's Sport Ultra Spray is available in SPF 15, 30, 50 and 100, providing options for various durations of protection. One of the most noticeable things when using the ultra spray is its strong scent, which smells of sweat mixed with chemicals — a scent that represents a hot summer day. However, the bottle's nozzle lacks gumption and ability to dir-spray a specific patch of skin, instead spraying the skin and into the surrounding air, meaning the user is wasting and inhaling the sunscreen while applying. Once applied, the product feels oily and somewhat greasy. However, the sunscreen is known for its durability and protection when engaging in physically exerting activities.



Maybelline's Dream Fresh BB Skin Cream Perfector

\$8.09 for 1 ounce at Ulta
Maybelline's Dream Fresh BB Skin Cream Perfector is a pigmented cream that contains SPF 30. Its texture and behavior isn't dissimilar to most liquid-based foundations, with a smooth and easy-to-blend formula. Therefore, it could be easily applied to the neck and face with a foundation brush, beauty blender or your fingers. Its pigmentation as foundation is very sheer and is generally unable to conceal large blemishes and dark spots without the help of another product. Although, the airy, light texture and sheer coverage makes it suitable for minimal sun protection.



Up & Up's Illuminating Daily Moisturizer

\$10.89 for 4 ounces at Target
Up & Up's Illuminating Daily Moisturizer is a pump lotion with SPF 15. The texture reflects that of most unscented hand lotions, somewhat sticky at first but soaks in after a few minutes. Once applied, the lotion absorbs into the skin and feels light and not oily, making it perfect as a hand cream or facial lotion. However, the low SPF number makes it unideal to be the only sunscreen applied to the body during a summer's day.



Cetaphil's Sheer Mineral Sunscreen Stick

\$9.99 for 0.5 ounces on Amazon
Cetaphil's Sheer Mineral Sunscreen Stick is a roll-up SPF 50 sunscreen stick. The roll-up dispenser resembles a large chapstick and the user can drag the stick across their skin while pressing to apply. This method of application is relatively inefficient but does give a mess-free application, unlike the spray options. One of the most noticeable things once applied is the continuous sticky feeling of the sunscreen formula sitting on the skin. Notably, the product doesn't leave a chemically scented odor and its small size makes it easily portable for re-application throughout the day.



Neutrogena's Ultra Sheer Body Mist (SPF 70)

\$11.49 for 5 ounces at Target
Neutrogena's Ultra Sheer Body Mist is also available in a variety of SPF levels. Neutrogena is branded as being healthier and less-toxic and less prone to causing acne breakouts. The spray nozzle makes it easy for application and provides a firm spray of sunscreen on the directed area. Also, the chemical scent isn't as potent as other spray options. Once applied, it feels light and rubs into the skin much like a lotion or cream.



COMPILED BY TÉA TAMBURIO
PHOTOS BY MALCOLM TAYLOR

Function & fashion Clothing provides alternate protection

by AUDREY MATZKE
REPORTER

Whether students are looking for a more eco-friendly sun protection option, or are looking to avoid chemical sunscreen irritants, they can turn to UPF-protective clothing. From garish to glamorous, the market for wearable sun-protection continues to expand and refine itself.

COOLIBAR

Touting a colorful, modestly preppy array of "sun protection you can wear," Coolibar's online catalog is a leading purveyor of UPF 50+ fashion.

While, for me at least, their bottoms tend to border on matronly (the shorts they offer hit me right above the knee) Coolibar beachwear undeniably has its merits — not just as wearable sunscreen, but as clothing, too. Granted, it's the kind of stuff your mom picks out for you during her anti-para-

ben kick: stiff and patterned, more coverage than the bikinis and sternum-deep necklines you'd wear on spring break. But sometimes I love a good button-down, and if the moisture-wicking fabric and hidden ventilation-panels are any indication, maybe you will too.

At \$85 apiece, Coolibar's Women's Aricia Sun Shirt is no summer break haul-item, but I've owned mine since middle school, and, for what it's worth, it's kept my shoulders safe.

L.L. BEAN

If you're looking for something less expensive, L.L. Bean's \$25 patterned rash guard might be on your wavelength. No matter your price range, UPF swimwear has to toe a delicate line — the happy medium between function and fashion — and if long sleeves aren't your thing, you may be out of luck, here. That said, if you intend to while away your summer surfing or kayaking, you won't look the

least bit out of place.

For now at least, wearable sun-protection tends to cater to a niche demographic: all-natural granolaheads, people with latex allergies who can't afford to be aesthetically choosy, and so on. As the market expands, however, so too may the demand for more fashion-forward UPF-wear, ensuring everyone can shield the sun in style.

UV. LINE

Neutral-toned and understated, U.V. Line's Sun Hat catalog gives us a little more "boho chic" and a little less "Indiana Dunes park-ranger."

The Women's Jueré, a flexible straw-finished model, comes in brown, black, heather and wheat, so you'll have no issue matching with a favorite sundress or patterned Havana shirt.

Like much of Coolibar's selection, it's far from cheap — \$54.90 plus shipping and tax — but it's not the sort of accessory you'll grow out of any time soon.

Like summer itself, straw sun hats are a perennial classic. Durable, style-able and maybe even worth your investment.

THE MURDER ON YOUR BLOCK

by **AMY REN**
REPORTER

Almost a century ago, two teenagers murdered a little boy on the South Side. Their reason: to see if they could get away with it. Nathan Leopold and Richard Loeb, both precocious and affluent, spent months planning their “perfect crime,” and on May 21, 1924, they drove through Kenwood and Hyde Park with all the materials needed to pull off murder — everything except a victim.

In “Murder Among Friends: How Leopold and Loeb Tried to Commit the Perfect Crime,” author Candace Fleming compiles newspaper articles, court records and photos to create a narrative nonfiction account of the “Crime of the Century.” Unlike other books on the case, Ms. Fleming’s is aimed toward young adults. It explores the unusual friendship between Leopold and Loeb, their reason for committing murder and the dramatic court case that followed. The case gained widespread attention, not only because of its shocking circumstances, but also because of lead counsel Clarence Darrow, his criticism of capital punishment and his use of extensive psychiatric testimony.

Though Ms. Fleming has been fascinated with true crime since she was a teenager, this is her first book about it. She writes primarily for young adults and recognizes that it can be hard to find the time to read.

“We don’t have time; we’re busy, we have lives. We have social media, you know, so how do books compete?” Ms. Fleming said. “I’ve been thinking about this a lot, and I’m thinking there are certain stories, certain genres, that I think teens would read if you do it right.”

To her, an interesting story is key to creating a compelling book. Part of what makes the story so riveting is how they are so relatable on some levels but extreme on others.

“Why did Richard Loeb and Nathan Leopold do this terrible thing? They had everything.”
— CANDACE FLEMING

“Why did Richard Loeb and Nathan Leopold do this terrible thing? They had everything. Leopold is 19 but Richard is just 18, but these guys have already graduated from college because they’re so precocious. Their families are prominent families in Chicago. They have this unbelievable future ahead of them,” Ms. Fleming said. “And still they decide to do this thing. I don’t understand why, and I think that’s part of the obsession.”

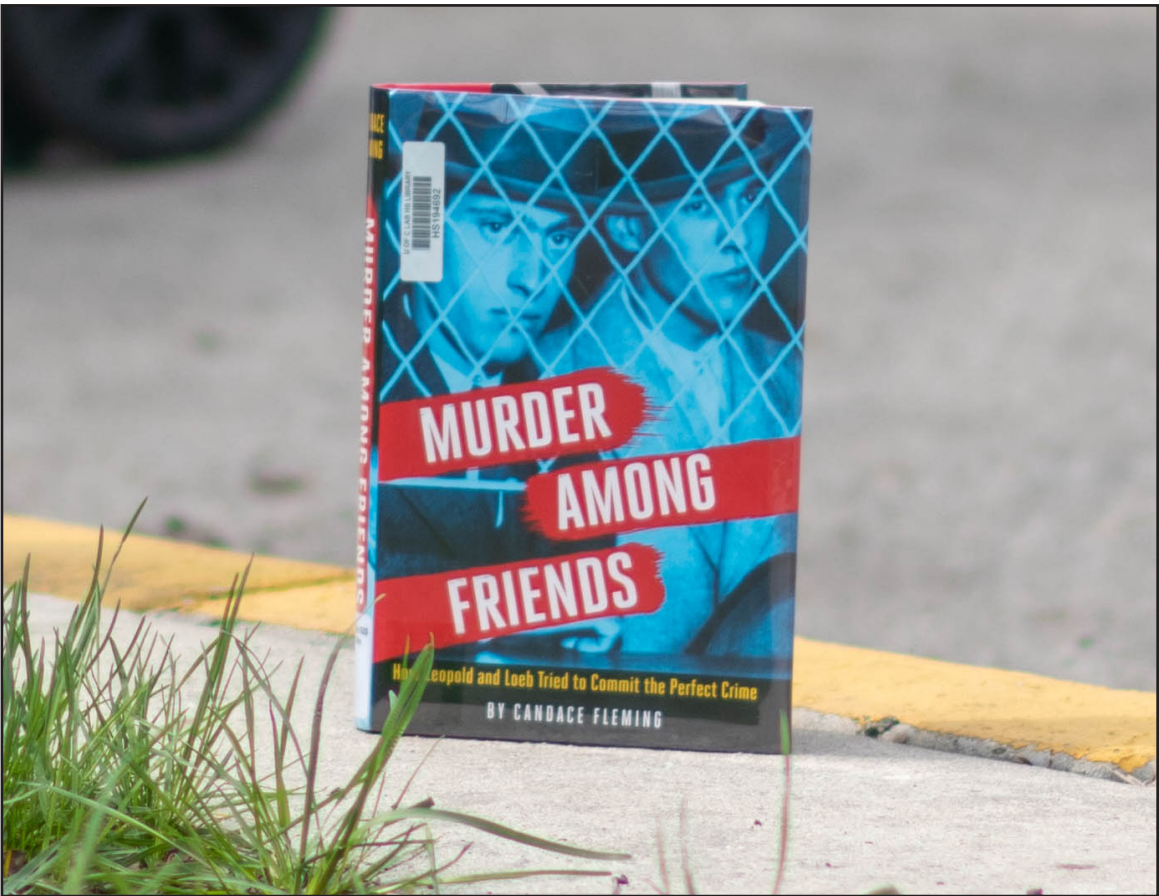
The influence and wealth of the Leopold and Loeb families meant the case transcended stereotypes surrounding crimes. People started wondering if such crime was, in fact, not directly tied to socioeconomic class, and they became obsessed with the murder.

“In the 1920s, it became a national case because parents couldn’t figure out why, and they looked at their own children and went, ‘Is my child going to grow up to do something heinous like this?’” Ms. Fleming said.

The proximity of the murder, on the border of the Kenwood and Hyde Park neighborhoods, just minutes from the University of Chicago and Laboratory Schools, makes it especially intriguing for Chicagoans. Both Leopold and Loeb were students at the University of Chicago at the time of the murder, and Loeb also graduated from the Laboratory Schools. The kidnapping and murder of 14-year-old Bobby Franks occurred between 47th and 51st streets and Greenwood and Ellis avenues. Ms. Fleming, who lives near Chicago, actually viewed the area where the crime occurred.

“It’s a really intimate murder. I

In a new young adult-oriented book, author Candace Fleming tells the true story of a century-old murder in Hyde Park



MIDWAY PHOTO BY CARTER CHANG

PERFECT CRIME. The murder Candace Fleming writes about occurred blocks from U-High.

went out and counted steps — seriously, I walked it, and I counted steps — and it’s all within three blocks, four blocks,” Ms. Fleming said. “Then, you have the backdrop of Chicago. 1924 is wild and crazy. You don’t need a driver’s license to drive around, so they’re going to speakeasies, nightclubs and dancing all the time, and they’re rubbing elbows with gangsters. Chicago’s lawless, and the police aren’t particularly good at their jobs.”

Ms. Fleming wove trial transcripts, psychology evaluations, newspaper articles and interviews from researchers into one coherent book. She kept copies of the materials, if possible, made notes at the top and then tossed them

into one of two massive bins.

“There’s absolutely no organization until I start to write, and I know that I have an unusual process because they’re long books. I always write my first drafts by hand with wide-line, loose-leaf paper and a big pen,” Ms. Fleming said. “I actually call it ‘dumping down’ because eventually I’ve done enough research, I know the story — at least, I know the story the way I want to tell it.”

Then, she just wrote. When she needed a date or description she didn’t remember, she left a space in the manuscript for later.

“I’ll leave a big old line in the middle of the manuscript, so if you look at my first drafts, they have giant holes. When I’m doing that first

draft is really just trying to find the story’s flow and the story’s pace and its organization,” Ms. Fleming said. “I know that I can dig back through my bins and find the perfect quote; oftentimes, I will remember, which always amazes me.”

At the heart of Ms. Fleming’s research is her love for true crime. When she was 14, she visited what is now the Chicago History Museum and was fascinated by the case.

“That was the first time I discovered the story, and they had out artifacts, like they have those glasses that Nathan left where they dumped the body,” Ms. Fleming said. “I remember being utterly compelled by the story... after two years of working on that book, I am still completely obsessed.”

Dress distress: Seniors search for perfect prom dress



MIDWAY PHOTO BY CHLOE MA

JUST BROWSING. Kennedy Bickham, a senior, makes her way through a store to look for her perfect dress. She chose to get her dress at a specialty store in suburban Aurora called Wolsfelt’s.

by **ANNGO**
CITY LIFE EDITOR

As Kennedy Bickham walks out of the dress shop’s fitting room, a hush of awe falls over the room. She’s beaming; she knows this is “the” dress. After rummaging through countless racks of dresses, stressing over whether she would ever find her perfect dress, this feeling of her prom-induced anxiety being lifted off her shoulders could be described as a near-religious sensation of fulfillment.

Not only are some seniors shopping for a dress they love, they’re searching for “the” single perfect dress.

Because of the stress that comes with prom dress shopping, when students do find their dress, a weight is lifted.

As of early May, senior Sophie Volchenboum hadn’t found her prom dress yet and anticipated a difficult time choosing.

“Once you’re narrowing it down, like if you have like three dresses you like, it’s hard to know if you’re picking it because you like it or if it’s because you think other people will like it.”

Sophie feels the pressure of prom, even after attending one last year.

“There’s a lot. There’s, like, always a lot riding on prom night.

Like, you want to have the best prom night ever. It’s a whole thing,” Sophie said. “There’s so many stereotypes around what prom night should be that it’s like you feel like you should have a certain type of prom night.”

Senior Zoe Morton went looking for dresses at department stores Macy’s and Bloomingdale’s but said she didn’t find any she liked.

“They weren’t the best quality and, like, the color and like the designs were really weird,” Zoe said.

After directing her search online, she found one dress she liked, but when it came it didn’t fit the way she wanted.

Because of that, she’ll have to tailor it.

Sophie said she doesn’t want to order her dress online because she’s worried it won’t fit properly.

She feels that for people like her with nonstandard measurements, it’s especially difficult to shop online.

“A lot of people are going online, and I don’t feel like I have the body proportions to always be safe,” Sophie said.

Last year, Sophie bought her dress from Macy’s but has noticed that her classmates have been shopping at specialty dress shops around Chicago.

“I went to Macy’s because I don’t

even know these, like, small boutiques,” Sophie said.

Peaches Boutique, a specialty dress store located at 5915 S. Archer Ave. on Chicago’s Southwest side near Midway International Airport, claims to be one of, if not the, largest prom dress stores in the country.

It’s gone viral on social media for its endless stock of flashy, glittery dresses.

Depending on the day, visiting Peaches can be a hectic experience.

Kennedi went there to find a dress but was unsuccessful.

“I went on a weekday, so I had 45 minutes to try things on, but they were really pressuring me to, like, buy something there, and it wasn’t like me,” Kennedi said. “And I just didn’t really like it.”

Kennedi finally found her dress at Wolsfelt’s in west suburban Aurora.

She said she preferred her experience at Wolsfelt’s because it was less stressful. Her parents were able to sit down, and she was able to take her time.

When she tried on her dress, she knew it was the one.

“Everyone just gasped when I came out,” Kennedi said. “And I just felt like, ahhhh — angel noises, you know.”

To my ninth grade self...

For the Class of 2022, May marks not only the end of April showers, but the end of their time at Lab.

Seniors give advice on work strategies, social life, following passions and more. Visit the Midway’s website for advice from more seniors.

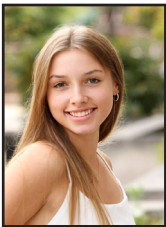
COMPILED BY JOAQUIN FIGUEROA & CHLOE MA



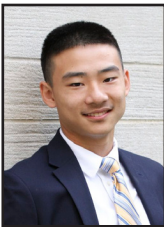
MIDWAY ILLUSTRATION BY DALIN DOHRN



Annika Ludwig: “I would say the advice I would give to my freshman self is don’t do things for college, do things that you’re genuinely interested in and the success that you hope to have will probably follow.”



Gracie Norton: “Typically in freshman year you don’t have a lot going on. Things are more hectic throughout the rest of high school. Work hard on your grades.”



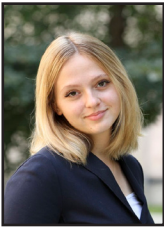
Todd Hao: “My advice would be to use the writer’s center for all your writing projects: for English or history, or anything like that. Even when you get in the college application process it’s very important and should be utilized.”



Jana Reiser: “My advice to my freshman self would be to explore all the interests you have, little and small, because it only gets harder to do later in high school.”



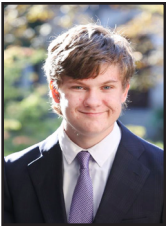
Ben Sachs: “Appreciate your teachers. They work really hard. Sometimes they can be difficult, but they really do care about their students.”



Clare Barbosa: “Opportunities will fly right over your head, so don’t let the time fly and go out and join clubs and sports. By the time senior year hits you’ve done nothing.”



Khairy Barnes: “I’d say my advice to my freshman self would be ‘Don’t take everything so seriously.’ Like, I stress myself out a lot over things that I end up just not getting done because I was just too panicked to do anything.”



Erik Sveen-Erling: “Plan ahead for the classes you would take. Make sure you have enough free periods in the day because knowing now, you need those to get your homework done. Plan out your years. Not year — years.”



Jessica Slear: “Your high school years are gonna end up different than you think they are, and you’re gonna make different friends than you might expect. So just don’t stress out, trust the process and just go along with it.”



MIDWAY PHOTO BY AUDREY PARK

THE MANE EVENT. A client saddles up at the Partners for Progress Therapeutic Equestrian Center in Wauconda. The center aids clients through equine-assisted psychotherapy, or in other words, with the help of both human therapists and 26 horses.

Healing on horseback Therapy center helps kids as they grow

by **AUDREY PARK**
MANAGING EDITOR

In an arena full of sand, children engage in a series of activities like grooming, riding and exercises with horses. They begin by walking on the horses and are eager to embark on the next activities planned by their therapists.

Here at the Partners for Progress Therapeutic Equestrian Center, therapists use horse therapy to increase abilities and function for children and adults with different kinds of needs.

Equine-assisted psychotherapy utilizes the tranquil nature of horses to soothe and engage those with developmental and physical disabilities. It has been proven to improve children’s healing from trauma as well as increase confidence and self-esteem.

Amanda Braden, PFP’s program director and occupational therapist, said that horse therapy is one of the most unique forms of therapy.

“We have a different approach than most kinds of therapies because our program really grows with our clients, so we are centered at meeting various needs across one’s entire life span,” she said.

Located almost an hour northwest of Chicago in Wauconda, the center has 26 horses, more than 100 volunteers and 200 clients a

“We have a different approach than most kinds of therapies because our program really grows with our clients.”

— AMANDA BRADEN,
PROGRAM DIRECTOR

week. PFP was founded in 2005 by Diane Helgeland, a former special education teacher and with a lifetime of experience working with people with disabilities and horses.

“She naturally paired the things that she was good at and that were near and dear to her to provide opportunities for others,” Ms. Braden said.

PFP has faced a number of obstacles due to the coronavirus and paused all programming for anywhere from a month for some children, to a year for others.

“We have been fortunate enough to have many of our donors step up and keep us going. Even though we are slowly returning to normal, the needs of the horses never changed,” she said. “It is important to keep them extremely healthy so that they can continue to be happy, healthy horses and provide quality care for our kids.”

Ms. Braden’s favorite part of her job is being surrounded by and witnessing the progress of the chil-

dren.

“Seeing our clients and kids make changes so progressively and being a part of helping their families work through the challenges that they are facing on a daily basis is profound,” she said.

Ms. Braden urges people to volunteer at the center to engage in the community. She said volunteers feel rewarded by the process.

Samantha Clark, a volunteer, said that her experience at PFP has so far been great.

“PFP is a great way of helping my community. I love working with children and people,” she said.

Beena Kamath-Rayne, whose son has received PFP’s services for around six months, said she is thankful for the program.

“It has been remarkable to see how he has engaged with the horses and done different activities that promote his strength and development,” Ms. Kamath-Rayne said.

Laughter and a feeling of warmth occupy the environment at the PFP Center, where progress is possible for everyone.

Ms. Kamath-Rayne said, “PFP is an incredible service to the community in the sense that it enables my son to get a combination of therapies in one setting in a way that is innovative and really captures his attention and engagement.”

Thriving: Brave Space Alliance uses mutual aid to provide for LGBTQ+ community of color

by **MEENA LEE**
SPORTS EDITOR

Stepping out of the elevator into the Brave Space Alliance's Hyde Park building, visitors are met with a colorful mural, upbeat music floating through the air and people with friendly faces asking how they can help. Flyers advertise support groups for transgender individuals or game nights that will welcome everyone.

The Brave Space Alliance takes a community-driven approach, centering Black and Brown voices and experiences, as they work to empower queer and trans people of color through programming, resource-sharing and mutual aid.

Lesaila Wade launched the Brave Space Alliance in 2017, and the organization has been serving the South and West sides of Chicago since. Alongside the programming and resources, the Brave Space Alliance offers an opportunity to build community, according to Carbon Ratchford, the executive assistant to the Executive Director Wade.

"I think that these spaces are important because they provide a space for people who look like me and other people of color to connect and find community," Ratchford said.

The programming at Brave Space Alliance is varied and culturally competent, which means it's run by those who understand and share the perspectives of the people they work with. For example, the support groups are geared towards specific identities within the LGBTQ+ community — Boi Talk for transgender men or trans-masculine people, Rose Petals for transgender women or trans-feminine people and Fluid AF for nonbinary individuals.

"Our support groups are for us, by us," Ratchford said. "They're from facilitators who fit that demographic that are in the community, and they are community led and organized."

The Brave Space Alliance often



MIDWAY PHOTO BY GABRIEL ISSA

FOR US, BY US. Located on 53rd Street in Harper Court, the Brave Space Alliance is a community-led center for LGBTQ+ people of color on the South and West Sides to receive support from people who look like them and share their experiences. The center aims to provide competent support.

organizes events for its community in settings outside of the organization's building. According to Ratchford, some members of the Boi Talk support group went on a camping trip and found it particularly helpful for connecting with each other.

"That was very healing and just to help them center themselves in their identities and to communicate with one another," Ratchford said.

The Brave Space Alliance organizes its barber shop for trans-masculine people, so they can come in and get their hair cut and styled by a culturally competent barber, who's going to be in a space that makes them feel safe, according to Ratchford.

"Because often in spaces of color, barber shops aren't the most

welcoming spaces for trans-identifying people," Ratchford said, "and we want to create that kind of barber shop feel but in a welcoming and inviting and inclusive space."

The Brave Space Alliance also does a lot of work with sharing resources given by the community.

"We believe that our community has all of the knowledge it needs to serve itself," Ratchford said. "It's just lacking the resources, but our community knows what it wants. It knows what it needs to get to — not only survive but thrive."

The Brave Space Alliance provides necessities such as food along with gender-affirming rooms with clothes and materials to help their community feel more comfortable in their bodies. The rooms extend beyond just of-

fering charity. They offer a space for transgender individuals to find what they need in a safe, welcoming, and informed environment that they may not find in spaces designed for the general public.

According to Ratchford, the clothing they provide can also help with employment.

"It matters a lot how you present in this world," they said. "And so if you come in and you get a wig from the makeup room, get some makeup and be able to doll yourself up, and look very professional, then you have a better chance at that interview, of getting that job."

The Brave Space Alliance works to address other barriers within the community such as employment, food insecurity and housing. Ratchford said the organization's resources help people live a

"We believe that our community has all of the knowledge it needs to serve itself. It's just lacking the resources, but our community knows what it wants, it knows what it needs to get to not only survive, but to thrive."

— CARBON RATCHFORD,
BRAVE SPACE ALLIANCE

full life and do more than just survive from day to day.

According to Brittany Thomas, director of programs, the Brave Space Alliance uses a framework of mutual aid to guide its work. Thomas said mutual aid programs stem from the idea that trans and queer people of color are the experts of their own lived experiences and can create a continuous method of support among themselves.

"When we develop mutual aid programs, it's like the community putting themselves and their resources into these programs and us putting them back into the community," Thomas said. "So these programs will forever be able to sustain themselves because they are community ran, they are community oriented and they are community sourced."

Thomas said mutual aid is especially important for the unique community of queer and trans people of color.

"Our ability to exist freely and authentically outside of our communities has been taken. It's about us reclaiming our time. This is reclaiming our time, it's us reclaiming our spaces, it's us reclaiming our culture," Thomas said. "It's us saying that the rest of the world may not want us to exist and live loudly and authentically, but, like, we are going to anyway, and we're going to take up as much space as possible."

Hyde Park gallery uses art to connect

Connect Gallery fosters creativity, exhibits Black art

by **KIA DUTTA**
ARTSCO-EDITOR

Nestled in Harper Court is a hidden gem of Hyde Park that aims to unite the neighborhood community through a collective appreciation for art and culture.

Connect Gallery, located at 1520 E. Harper Court, is open from noon to 6 p.m. Wednesday through Saturday, and during other days and times of the week by appointment only.

The gallery is owned by Rob McKay and Eric Williams. According to Mr. McKay, who is also the lead curator, the gallery aims to provide a space for Black and brown community members who struggle to gain access to galleries and more recognized art spaces.

"You get a lot of times where you go into the North Side or a lot of other whiter neighborhoods, and as a Black person go into the gallery, your experience is not necessarily positive," Mr. McKay said. "It's an experience of art that's not in your own experience with your own people."

Furthermore, Mr. McKay said

that a large factor in creating Connect Gallery with Mr. Williams was to defy the standards set for galleries in general. Overall, he wanted to foster connectedness within the observation of art that is conducted in galleries.

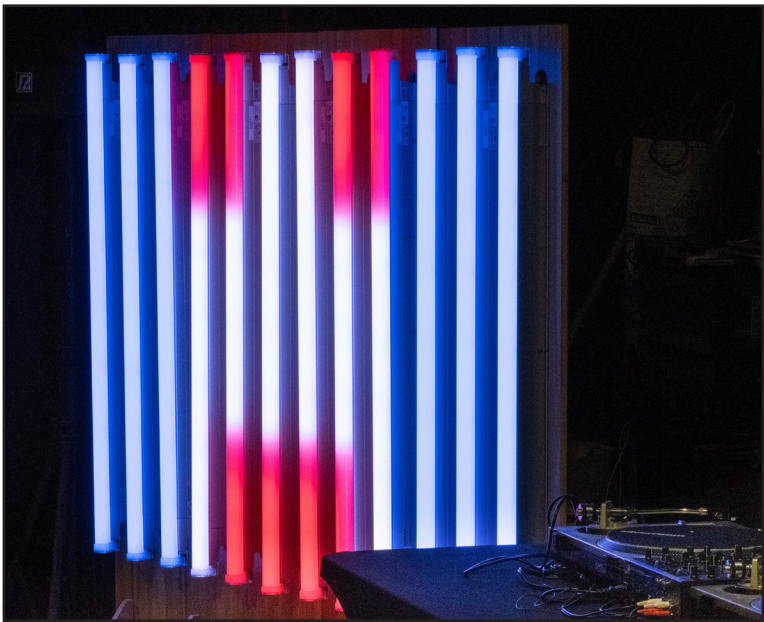
"We wanted to create a gallery that goes against all of that and encourages you to come in, to talk, to hear the music playing," Mr. McKay said. "Everything is art, and everything has value as far as creating a sense of connectedness goes. That's why it's called Connect Gallery."

As stated on the gallery's website, the Connect Gallery defines itself as an "anti-gallery."

The Connect Gallery hosts events of a wide variety, such as talk shows, record-release parties, open-mics and even comedy shows.

"We don't turn away much," Mr. McKay said. "If it speaks to building community and culture, we'll check it out and see how it fits with keeping the energy of the gallery high and positive. We want people to feel good in and out of the space."

The Connect Gallery aims to use art as a catalyst for social change. Mr. McKay explained that it's important for community members — especially young ones —



MIDWAY PHOTO BY PATRICE GRAHAM

GROOVY GLOW. LED lights, a permanent feature of Connect Gallery, set the mood for the space. Next to them sits a DJ table, which is sometimes used for events in the space. The gallery makes an effort to host events for the community.

to have access to a safe space that lets them tap into their creative side and unlock their passion.

"That's why I always help people to see the nuances of who they are as a creative being, you know?" Mr. McKay said. "And to help them see how they can use their creativ-

ity to make their day-to-day interactions better, and to imagine and dream. Once you give them something that sparks that creativity within them, you've turned on a whole new element. You help them to find out what they really love."

This summer festivals will bring back fun

As summer approaches, Chicago's beginning to buzz. Check out these neighborhood festivals that highlight Chicago artists and businesses.

Hyde Park Summer Fest
June 11-12, Hyde Park
The festival will feature small businesses and will host both hip-hop and house DJs.

Chicago Food Truck Fest
June 25-26, South Loop
The festival will offer catering from over 150 gourmet food and local food trucks.

The Chosen Few Picnic and Festival
July 2, Jackson Park
It is the world's longest-running event dedicated to house music and will feature a large range of music performances.

Millennium Park Art Festival
July 15-17, Michigan Avenue
The festival will have art for sale, artist demonstrations, festival food, and live music performances.

Bonding between batons

Runners perform better with strong team chemistry

by COLIN LESLIE
ASSISTANT EDITOR

The sound of fast footsteps fills the air, drowned out by the screams of parents and fans. Not heard, though, are the other runners in the relay. They are quiet and focused, waiting for their turn to take the baton and show up for themselves and their teammates to hit the goals they have set as a team.

The bonds among the runners and the added motivation to run well for their teammates are what catalyze a successful relay team, according to three relay runners.

The difference between relay training and individual training is the focus on baton handoff, according to sophomore Skyler Albert, who runs the 4x800m and occasionally the 4x400m relays.

“When you’re done with your turn and you want to give the baton to your teammate, it’s really important to do that as efficiently as possible because every second counts,” Skyler said.

The coach ultimately sets the order of the runners for a relay race, but the runners themselves are involved in the decision-making process through conversations at practice.

This order is important. According to Skyler, for example, getting off to a fast start can demoralize opposing teams.

“There’s also planning and strategizing,” Skyler said. “Not physical stuff, but looking at other teams’ times, finding out other teams’ lineups and preparing strategically.”

Skyler said that the practices are also an opportunity to socialize with others, which allows the members of the relay team to form a necessary bond.

“The bond is formed through normal conversation. I might go on a five-mile run with mainly one other person, and that’s like 40 minutes of just talking with somebody, which can be pretty productive and significant,” Skyler said. “A big part is warming up before each race. When you are performing in a relay, you’re warming up with your friends, so you get to talk and do that.”

According to senior Taig Singh, who runs the 4x400m and 4x200m relays, this bond extends beyond



MIDWAY PHOTO BY CARTER CHANG

HAND-OFF HUSTLE. Senior Maya Mubayi awaits a baton hand-off from sophomore Mary Bridget Molony during a relay team race at Lemont High School on April 14. While running is typically a solo activity, where athletes are pitted against themselves, the motivation from team has pushed runners to run faster.

the track, with relay teammates meeting up outside of school and talking with each other in group chats.

“Track is generally an individualistic sport, so everyone really runs for themselves and they try to beat their own personal records every time they run a race,” Taig said. “Relays are where you really get the team spirit. Usually there is a strong culture within relay teams.”

This culture is essential for the members of the relay team, ac-

cording to senior Amanda O’Donnell.

Amanda runs the 4x800m and then occasionally the 4x400m relays.

“Having a friendship or a strong bond is important,” Amanda said. “Doing a bunch of relays and setting goals together helps strengthen your bond as a team.”

Taig said relays often bring out the best in each runner.

“Given the amount of time you spend with each other in practices and leading up to competitions,

everyone does become friends,” Taig said, “and that chemistry really does lead to better running because we push each other harder.”

With teammates relying on him, Taig said he feels more motivation to perform.

“You have more of an incentive and pressure to run well in a relay because not only is your reputation and your pride and your placement dependent on how fast you run, but also that of your three other teammates,” Taig said.

Amanda echoed Taig’s thoughts,

adding that the desire to run well for her teammates helps her conquer the mental challenges of the sport.

“Running can be a tough sport mentally. When I’m running for a relay team, I have more motivation to keep going because we’re trying to get this time or qualify for this thing as a team,” Amanda said. “You really want to show up not only for yourself, but for your teammates, and I think that’s super helpful in running faster times and achieving goals.”

Lego Star Wars game remake balances the old, new



SOURCE: STARWARS.COM

SUPER SAGA. “Star Wars: The Skywalker Saga” brings a fresh look at a timeless Star Wars video game.

Players enjoy control of altering the story

by SAMUEL BECK
REPORTER

A young man summits the mound of sand in front of him, sporting an all-white robe and with a lightsaber hanging from his belt. The orange light of two setting suns reflects off of his hopeful face.

This iconic scene has become synonymous with Star Wars, a multi-generational story that has captivated people’s interest for almost 50 years and inspired a plethora of movies, shows, video games and many other forms of content.

Although much of this content is good, one such video game stands out from the rest. On Nov. 16, 2007, “Lego Star Wars: the Complete Saga” was released. It instantly became a smash hit, a childhood-defining memory for millions of players around the world.

Almost 15 years later, a remake, “The Skywalker Saga,” has been released that is a

comprehensive masterpiece, striking a balance between paying homage to the original and breaking new ground.

The game retells the story of the nine “Star Wars” films with Lego animations and gives the player autonomy to control the ways those stories are told. Even the iconic scene of Luke Skywalker, the series’ main character, watching the two suns set can be recreated in-game, along with any other scene from the franchise.

Every aspect of the game exceeds any expectations. The scene setting, even in Lego, is immersive and effective. The action and storytelling is comprehensive and intentional and well designed. The game also takes every opportunity to poke fun at itself and the franchise, a refreshing addition. The inclusion of voice lines — in lieu of the mumbling in the original version — adds a sense of the reality of the story coupled with genuinely impressive visuals and inspiring comedy.

The gameplay, although somewhat repetitive, does not become stale, even in the latter parts of the game. It poses unique puzzle

“Almost 15 years later, a remake, ‘The Skywalker Saga,’ has been released that is a comprehensive masterpiece, striking a balance between paying homage to the original and breaking new ground.”

challenges, as well as fleshed-out and entertaining combat scenes that appeal to different kinds of players. Whether you’re a young kid playing this game for the first time, or older, reliving the nostalgia, the game will cater to your needs.

Following the brilliance and nostalgia of the original iteration of this game, “The Complete Saga,” is no small feat, as the popularity of the original game generated an admittedly cultish fanbase.

With this in mind, the new game, “The Skywalker Saga,” respects the original while creating an entertaining product that can be enjoyed by people who have never seen a Star Wars movie.

Focused Faces

U-High athletes have spent the year in person working hard at their sports. Now it's time to showcase their most focused moments.

ON PAR. Swinging at the ball on Oct. 8, ninth grader Amelia Tan participates in the IHSA state golf tournament at the Red Tail Run Golf Course. Amelia scored among the top five ninth grade golfers in the state.

MATCH POINT. During practice, junior Kriti Sarav hits a forehand shot across the court. This year, the girls tennis team won the 1A IHSA State Championship on Oct. 21-23, and Kriti finished in the elite eight in singles.



MIDWAY PHOTO BY ANDREW BURKE-STEVENSON



MIDWAY PHOTO BY MALCOLM TAYLOR



MIDWAY PHOTO BY ANDREW BURKE-STEVENSON

SERIOUS STRIDES. Senior Zach Gin pumps his arms as he nears the finish line. Zach raced in the Latin Classic in Lincoln Park Oct. 5. Zach finished sixth.

WALKING ON AIR. Taking flight, junior Xavier Nesbitt jumps up to shoot the ball in a game against Northridge College Prep on Jan. 27. "I was like, 'Oh, I just gotta get this shot,'" Xavier said. "I just got to make something happen. I was just thinking — just be aggressive."



MIDWAY PHOTO BY ELLIOTT TAYLOR



MIDWAY PHOTO BY GABE ISSA

FLYING THROUGH WATER. Sophomore Elizabeth Oyler takes a breath as she comes up for air during a practice at Gerald Ratner Athletics Center on Oct. 5. "Whether it was shouting out 'halfway' or 'one more,' the encouragement and team spirit I felt in my first year on this team was truly incredible," Elizabeth said.



MIDWAY PHOTO BY CHLOE MA

PERFECT PASS. Looking across the field, junior Jacob de Jong focuses on his next pass during the Sept. 24 homecoming game on Jackman Field. The Maroons beat Riverside-Brookfield 1-0.

MORE ONLINE
The Midway photojournalism team has also been hard at work to capture U-High athletics. Scan the QR code to see more photos from all year.



BOYS TENNIS
Sid Shah



GIRLS SOCCER
Lucy Aronsohn



FENCING
William Zhu



BASEBALL
Sohrab Rezaei