Lab policy allows student mental health days
by ADRIANNA NEHME
NEWS EDITOR

The introduction of student mental health days in the U.S. has severe depression, and some youth are at greatest risk, according to Mental Health in America. With an increase in mental health concerns over the years, the state of Illinois is taking action to help students.

Starting in January, Illinois public school students ages 7 to 17 can take up to five mental health days without the need for a doctor’s note under a law signed by Gov. J.B. Pritzker, and while existing Laboratory Schools policy allows student mental health days, they aren’t designated.

Students will be able to make up any work they miss. State Rep. Barbara Hernandez, a Democrat from Aurora, co-sponsored the legislation. She believes it will be an opportunity for students to be proactive and receive a mental break from school but will start a conversation among families, teachers, and counselors.

“If there is something that parents need to know early on, they will be able to determine that,” Rep. Hernandez said in an interview with the Midwest, “because we only know something is wrong if somebody isn’t.” Ms. Campos said, “Parents often are proactive and will notify the school.”

Farah Sagrue, a U-High senior, would prefer to have designated mental health days.

“I know some of my friends’ families wouldn’t necessarily pull their child out if they were struggling mentally as much, which is really sad but true,” Farah said. “I think having those days off as a designated mental health day would validate it in parents’ minds and normalize it a little bit more, which is important.”

Counselor Teddy Stripling doesn’t have a strong opinion about whether designated mental health days should be implemented. He is more concerned about the impact of mental health days when what would be helpful for students. He believes the day off is a useful opportunity for students to have space to reset and come back.

Mr. Stripling said, “Across the nation in the past couple of years, there has been a rise in mental health needs for students, and so different states have been trying to do things to create a little bit of a buffer to support students in that process.”

In what some view as a controversial step, Mr. Brown said police would more aggressively pursue traffic stops, which will allow police officers to check for stolen vehicles or firearms.

“The killer of the UChicago graduate drove around the neighborhood late into the night, in his car closer to the entrance of the hospital to create a plan with the students. We are trying to identify or pay attention to when we see a trend happening or something going on, and take proactive and reactive part of it because we only know something is wrong if somebody isn’t,” Ms. Campos said. “Parents often are proactive and will notify the school.”

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“Sometimes I get nervous when it’s completely dark outside and there aren’t many people,” she said. “So adding more lights outside the school could be a good idea.”

“we are a large university police department when you compare it to most university agencies, but with our responsibilities and extended area, I would argue we’re not as large as we need to be,” Mr. Heath said at the webinar. “So we have asked for additional long-term UC PD staffing so we’re not pulling our beat officers from the community to address issues on campus.”

U-High junior Hannah Marx walks to her car after basketball practice nearly every day in the dark, and has noticed the increased police presence. In response to the uptick in neighborhood crime, she now moves her car closer to the entrance of the school, so she has to walk a shorter distance in the dark.

“I definitely see more security and police patrolling the area,” she said. “But I would definitely feel safer if there were more security officers specific to Lab.”

Although Hannah said she does not usually feel unsafe when walking to her car, she says that she feels uneasy walking around the school when dark at night.

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Wellness survey reveals areas of concern

Students express feelings of unease

by ADRIANA NEHME & SAHANA UNNI

Four of 10 U-High students don't feel comfortable asking for help when stressed, worried or upset. 53% of girls felt happy with who they were, a 9% drop from 62% in 2020.

These concerning statistics are just some of the results revealed in the high school portion of the 2021 Health and Wellness Survey, which was announced Nov. 17 accompanied by a series of infographics. The survey was conducted in March, with 83% participation among students in grades 9-12. When students took the survey, 73% had moved into hybrid learning, while 27% participated in distance learning.

Given how school was experienced differently relative to 2020, counselor Betsy Noel was surprised to see how the responses were still similar to how they were when students were in-person.

Wellness and Title IX Coordinator Betsy Noel oversaw the survey and said there were some expected results, such as struggling connecting and feeling sad and lonely.

"Even though that was expected, that was really sad," Ms. Noel said. "I was glad to see that there was no increase in bullying/harassment that was really sad," Ms. Noel said. 

"Regardless of if there are more people who feel unwelcome or fewer people who feel unwelcome, the presence of people feeling unwelcome should be just as uncomfortable for looking into certain ways that we can make people feel welcome," All-School President Brent Pennington said.

"I was curious where this 8% difference is allocated and whether students have a trusted peer to turn to or not," Ms. Choi said, "I see that and wonder who the folks are that they are turning to and who the folks are that they are turning away from."

According to fine arts department chair Zachary Hund, this could be a problem in the fine arts department, which now includes many different styles of art.

"I'm curious where this difference is allocated and whether students have a trusted peer to turn to or not," Ms. Choi said, "I see that and wonder who the folks are that they are turning to and who the folks are that they are turning away from."
Crimson brick houses tightly packed together form a perfectly neat row. The gentle curve of a large, red clock tower dominates the sky. Walking along the sidewalk, you feel blast-ed away from the chaos of today and altogether apart from present-day Chicago—but this area is still part of the city. Welcome to the Pullman neighborhood.

Visit and learn about Pullman, while being surrounded by its historic buildings, to dive deep into the heart of the American labor movement.

Only a 20-minute drive south from Hyde Park, in 2015 President Barack Obama recognized the Pullman neighborhood as the Pullman National Monument, Chicago’s first and only National Park Service site.

During the Industrial Era, George Pullman founded the Pullman Palace Car Company, had the goal of building a model industrial town where his employees could enjoy a happy and healthy environment. The company-run town of Pullman was finished in 1881.

Start a visit at the Pullman Visiter Center or just meander the extensively renovated Administration Clock Tower Building (610 E. 111th Street). Perfectly opened over Labor Day Weekend, the center contains an engaging history timeline and exhibit run by the National Park Service.

Step into a Pullman car model to experience first-hand the beauty of the green velvet furnishings, and afterward learn about four key stories: George Pullman, the town of Pullman, the 1894 Pullman Strike, and the Pullman posters, which led to the growing African American middle class.

The museum deftly weaves artifacts and symbols to showcase the history of Pullman. Explore building models and interactive elements bringing the story of the Pullman laborers to life. Match rotating dials to learn the cost of canned goods and listen to the story of the 1894 strike, which contributed to the creation of a new federal holiday, Labor Day. Throughout the exhibit it poses reflective questions for viewers about workers’ rights, connecting the story of Pullman to today’s visitors.

Quinn Wermeling, a National Park Service ranger, encourages people to come to the neighborhood and learn about Pullman’s importance.

“It’s our history and these are our treasures... This is for all of us to explore and enjoy and learn from.”
— Quinn Wermeling, Park Ranger

Looking back in time. After renovations, the Pullman Clock Tower now serves as the Pullman National Monument Visitor Center. In 2015, the Pullman neighborhood was recognized by President Barack Obama as the Pullman National Monument.

Pullman workers central to labor movement

George Pullman, president of the Pullman Palace Car Company, a luxury train car maker, wanted to solve the problems of poverty and labor unrest that plagued factories in the 1880s. He envisioned a town where workers had access to amenities like a school, theater, church, park and shopping mall. He hoped this environment would attract skilled laborers and lead to a happy, efficient workforce. With this goal in mind, Mr. Pullman bought 4,000 acres of land near to Lake Calumet, 13 miles south of Chicago.

Finished in 1881, each house had sunlight and fresh air, a front and back yard, and a sewage system—all rare at the time. However, not all residents were comfortable with the limitations of a company-run town. For example, all property was owned by the company, so workers had to pay monthly rent.

From the newly opened visitor’s last winter due to the coronavirus pandemic. This year, it has fully returned with safety measures such as sanitation, touchless payment and mask requirements indoors.

For the past year, Vendors come from across the world to set up shop at Christkindlmarket.

Tim Johannes, an employee of Helmut’s Original Austrian Strudel and a German citizen, is happy to return to normal after a year of slow business.

“It was really hard not coming,” he said smiling, adding that he felt he had missed a part of himself the past year.

Mr. Johannes and another employee working the stand, Elliott Pilk, took turns pouring hot chocolate and passing small boxes of warm fruit-filled strudel to customers while making conversations with them.

Bart Cajun, an employee of Din- kel’s Bakery on the North Side said that business has been busy as ever with more traffic than previous years. Even with a long line forming outside his stand, he started friendly conversation with everyone laughing and joking with them like old friends as he handed them their pastries and hot beverages. He explained that the market has been very crowded. He said, “It’s good to be back to normal.”
In our government, President Joe Biden has not yet made a deal with Congress to meaningfully address climate change on a federal level. A proposed carbon tax would incentivize clean energy and climate-responsible buying practices. However, due to heavy opposition to raising taxes, this policy has stalled. On a national level, tighter restrictions could be placed on deforestation, and ocean-cleaning efforts could be increased.

We must do something about Jersey Day.

Greenhouse gases into the atmosphere should be reduced, and legislative action on climate and corporate avarice could be considered with even greater respect to data. Adding that police could seem like an intuitive solution, yet data suggests that a single police officer prevents on 0.1 homicides per year, in addition to adding quantifiable burden to the lives of people of color and to the federal deficit. Instead, if the university supports in-school programs like Becoming A Man BUMI, which the university's over crime lab endorses, youth violent crime could be cut in half and graduation rates increased. Bilitating the affluence of tradition- ally poorer neighborhoods, fight- ing the problem of crime at the core. Sociological data has been called into question as a slow or untrustworthy method of deciding anti-crime policies, some arguing in favor of the experience and intuition from the police department. While the police certainly an asset in fighting crime, our current systems have been passed by city legislation, disproportionate to their numer- ous policing tasks and rampant corruption. While the city scram- bles to make vast reforms, the sci- entific practice of peer reviews has been fine-tuned over decades to re- lease untapped potential produc- ability of any published paper. The university funds numerous departments dedicated to the finding deep and effective insights on the stories of their own — something the film is released, however, we fall for it, time after time, and the Beast's" Le Fou would have been increased several times in the past — the tragedies in the last few weeks prove how ineffective they to our planet. China is current- ly a world leader in reducing carbon emissions despite promises to be the only 14.3% of global industrial greenhouse gas emissions. However, many other industrial compa- nies have made promises about carbon neutrality and renewable energy sources. However, ma- ny have struggled to cut carbon emissions, and steps toward pol- icy change have been frustratingly slow.

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Junior Amelie Liu publishes children’s book representing early experiences with intersectionality, culture

by WILLIAM TAN
ASSISTANT EDITOR

The pastel-colored pages of a children’s book open to a young girl celebrating Thanksgiving with her family. Her house is filled with the warm smells of food made by her grandmother, rich Matzo Ball-Wonton Thanksgiving. Her mother is there, but what? Where is the turkey? Can it be Thanksgiving without turkey?

Junior Amelie Liu has recently published her first children’s book, “Matzo Ball-Wonton Thanksgiving,” a heartwarming story of a girl discovering the significance of her multicultural heritage with the help of her Chinese and Jewish grandmothers, just in time for Thanksgiving. Not a coincidence, the main character of the book is named Amelie, and the story is partly based on her own experiences as a Chinese Jewish dual heritage girl navigating the world of American cultural traditions.

“It’s definitely based on my own life,” Amelie said. “I think it's a way of addressing and connecting with my own heritage, but I also think it's a way of utilizing my story, not only to help young children learn from it, but also for young children to see a character that might be similar to themselves, either if they're Chinese Jewish or have a multicultural identity.”

“Matzo Ball-Wonton Thanksgiving” is currently at Barnes & Noble and on Amazon. All proceeds from the book will go to the National Alliance for Children’s Grief (NACG), a non-profit that supports and educates bereaved children. Amelie feels a close connection to the NACG, as her own father passed away when she was 7. She has researched and worked closely with the organization in the past to create a curriculum for teens who have lost their parents.

“It’s a non-profit that’s very close to my heart. I've done a lot of grief talks with them, so I wanted to donate the proceeds to an organization that I know will help teens,” she said.

For Amelie, the idea to write a book came during the pandemic after witnessing nationwide movements such as “Stop Asian Hate” and “Black Lives Matter.” Issues that challenged her to think of her identity as an Asian American and Jewish person in a new way. She said she became hyper-aware of her identity as an Asian American and as a Jew.

“I think also during quarantine, I was forced to confront the loss of my father and the loss of connection to my Chinese heritage,” Amelie said. “Because I had so much time to myself, I had to kind of reanalyze my own brain. I think that's when I really realized the importance of my identity and the importance of young children understanding their intersectionality and feeling pride in it.”

Amelie worked on the book for over 18 months with the guidance of her grandmother, mother, or “bubbe,” Leslie Levintor-Suskind, and collaborated with Maria Dimitrieva for the illustration. Amelie said she initially underestimated the difficulty of writing a children’s book. Since children’s books only have a few words per page, the task of sharing her complex message became even more difficult.

“I wrote in an initial draft to my bubbe, and then it obviously went through countless and countless edits, and through the illustration process. So all of that was about a year and a half, and now we’re here,” Amelie said.

The process has its challenges. Amelie said she initially underestimated the difficulty of writing a children’s book. Since children’s books only have a few words per page, the task of sharing her complex message became even more difficult.

“What I really needed to do was translate, very, very complicated message into very simple words. That was definitely a challenge,” Amelie said. “I had to really reframe and really understand what I wanted to communicate in order to put that simply for young children to grasp.”

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Amelie dedicated her first children’s book to her family for their tireless and unconditional support.

“ar “I dedicate everything to them because I think they’ve really helped me understand my identity. They’ve been super support-ive throughout this whole process,” Amelie said. “Without them, I definitely would not have written the book, especially because they’ve played such an integral role in giving me a platform and people to talk to.”

Marvel’s ‘Eternals’ fails to adhere to cohesive plot

by PETER PU
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Due to the pandemic, I have been trapped at home away from movie theaters. The last movie I remember watching in theaters was “Frozen 2,” released in November 2019. Despite the new concern of the omicron variant, I came out of my shell to see “Eternals” before it hit platforms for streaming.

It was not worth it.

Marvel Studios’ “Eternals,” directed by Chloe Zhao, features a diverse cast that reflects the diversity of their characters and the representation of the plot. In one word, it’s a mess.

Because the film makes so many sizzle jumps from the present to Mesopotamia, ancient Babylon, the Gupta Empire and Teotihuacán, viewers are unable to piece together the true storyline until about two hours into this 2.5-hour slog. It turns out that the Prime Celestial Arishem is planning for the emergence of a new celestial to occur on Earth. He created the Deviants to destroy human predators, allowing for the human population to boom. But as the Deviants evolve, they become the new apex predators, so Arishem programmed the Eternals to keep the Deviants in check.

In those first two hours, viewers look forward to seeing Sersi develop into a mega-power, the Eternals to unite in their effort to stop the emergence, and Ikaris to live happily after with Sersi. Unfortunately, none of these occur.

Sersi’s journey of finding her true power is plagued by her insecurity as the chosen leader of the Eternals. Though she destroys a deviant in an underwater fight-or-flight sequence, Sprite almost kills her with a simple dagger.

At her critical confrontation with Ikaris at the end of the film, it is Ikaris that cavers into his feelings for Sersi rather than Sersi demonstrating her own strength. At the same time, Ikaris’ dilemma between remaining loyal to Arishem versus stopping Sersi is somehow unconvincing. It was truly surprising seeing Ikaris in tears, rather than wiping out Sersi with his laser eyes.

Sersi deserved a compelling fight scene, perhaps with Titmus or Arishem, where viewers could witness her full power. But perhaps that fight is just not in her, as her powers seem inherently defensive rather than combative.

At no point in the film did the Eternals seem united. The make-shift Uni-Mind maneuver seemed a last resort to end the film within 15 minutes.

Viewers need a steady development toward unity involving convergence in values and incentives among the Eternals, all occurring earlier in the film.

By building on the Darwinian allusions throughout the film, a more convincing resolution could have been collaboration between the Deviants and Eternals as both share the common goal of maintaining themselves in the universe.

Perhaps part of the reason the film dragged for 2.5 hours is simply because there are too many Eternals. Brevity and unity could be achieved by eliminating Mak- kari, who adds little to the storyline. The role of Karun is unclear as his documentary fails to come to fruition.

For most movies, the lingering credits can make me feel well in the credits. I left the theater as soon as “Eternals” concluded, dissatisfied that the ending with Ar- ishema suggested a sequel. I will never get those 2.5 hours back, and I will not be crawling out of my shell for the next one.
Since 1896, the Laboratory Schools have cultivated communities of scholarship, curiosity and creativity. In commemoration of Lab's 125th year, students, faculty, administration and alumni reflect on their experiences and future community aspirations.

Looking Back:
The Midway asked Lab alumni to share their most fond memories.

Compiled by William Tan and Peter Cox

“I think it goes without saying the teachers were incredible. Some of the best teachers that I’ve had in my academic experience were teachers that I had in third, fifth and I mean, high school. Needless to say, it’s actually remarkable because both of my kids go to Lab and there are teachers that are still there.”
— Chase Chavin, ’97

“I will say what I tell people whenever I’m talking about Lab, and I really think that it’s so important to me, is my Lab classmates and just other Lab alumni from any year are the most interesting people that I know because of their experience at Lab where they were really taught to think critically but creatively at the same time.”
— Sari Weichbrodt, ’94

“I know you guys remember Secret Garden too. But it looked very different for me before they did all the renovation of Lab School. I do remember myself that it was like a really quiet little hideaway that I think a lot of us in high school, you know, could kind of go and just peacefully be.”
— Lynn Sasamoto, ’79

“I didn’t like much of the art class, but there was a thing called cartooning. They actually had a unit where I spent a lot of time drawing the presidential candidates at the time, [such as] Harry Truman. It was really quiet little hideaway that I think a lot of us in high school, you know, could kind of go and just peacefully be.”
— John Davey, ’55

“Some of our classmates went to Washington to petition our senators to get out of the war in Vietnam. And, you know, we were doing all sorts of things, and that is actually one of the things that I remember and am active in well this day.”
— Cassandra Banks, ’70

“We talk about learning by doing, and to learn genetics we did an experiment where we crossbred fruit flies, and I remember it was so much fun, a lot of our fruit flies actually escaped, and so the fruit flies were all throughout the classroom, but we learned so much about genetics, and I never forget that because we ran the experiment the way we did, rather than reading about genetics.”
— Irene Reed, ’92

“I didn’t work out in the field house every day in the winter, or Stagg Field in the spring. Not only was the university track team on the track at the same time, but the University of Chicago Track Club, which is a world famous track club, with Olympic runners on it. I got to share the track with Olympians and with really good college runners.”
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“We talk about learning by doing, and to learn genetics we did an experiment where we crossbred fruit flies, and I remember it was so much fun, a lot of our fruit flies actually escaped, and so the fruit flies were all throughout the classroom, but we learned so much about genetics, and I never forget that because we ran the experiment the way we did, rather than reading about genetics.”
— Irene Reed, ’92

“I didn’t work out in the field house every day in the winter, or Stagg Field in the spring. Not only was the university track team on the track at the same time, but the University of Chicago Track Club, which is a world famous track club, with Olympic runners on it. I got to share the track with Olympians and with really good college runners.”
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“An environment where people support each other more ... I am definitely looking for things like more diversity in the administration, as well as more opportunities for students to talk to administration and really give their input and see real changes happening because of student voices.”

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“I would like, in 25 years, to see the admission process in the Laboratory Schools be need-blind. We’re not right now. We have a generous financial aid budget, but it’s not limitless. I’d love to see it be big enough to support any student who wants to be here regardless of need.”

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“I would like that in 25 years, we would be able to restructure the architecture of our science labs. Thinking into consideration how the science labs specifically are treated as laboratory spaces at the university level, we should really structure them so that they’re much more flexible, so we can use them in multiple formats.”

— Daniel Bobe-Jones, science teacher

“I would hope that students in the next 25 years feel like they aren’t so overwhelmed, and whether that is Lab focusing on itself or just kind of a cultural shift, I don’t know. That, you know, that’s something that I definitely would like to see.”

— Will Trone, ’22

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“I hope that the faculty, administration and students develop a better relationship. I feel like everyone is working hard for the betterment of Lab. It’s just that people don’t communicate at all, and that’s become a really big problem. I hope we can actually fix that by the time it turns 150.”

— Kaavya Shiram, ’24

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Mardigras: mini museums

Exhibit delivers Dunder Mifflin scenes to the city
by NOA APPELB AUM

F right is a wall with two colorful scenes featured there are more than enough to entertain families and friends alike.

The experience is able to account for many of the sets on the show, and the added details and references make some spaces really pop. Yet other rooms lack authenticity and vibrancy, making them dull and tedious.

Some exhibits are also designed to reflect the interior of Dwight's workspace, but his Michael Scott lives on through the Experience's iconic scene, interactive features and many, many desks. The pop-up will run until early February, and tickets usually sell out each week.

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On Saturdays, club engages young girls in science

by COLIN LESLIE
ASSISTANT EDITOR

Liquid densities measured, origami engineered, eggs fit into bottles and balloons inflated with baking soda and vinegar. These were some of the experiments girls ran on Nov. 13 in a U-High biology classroom. But the students experimenting weren’t in high school. They were lower school girls participating in the first Science Saturday of the year.

Facilitated by the Women in STEM club, the Science Saturdays program introduces lower school girls to STEM concepts with the goal of encouraging younger girls to continue pursuing STEM.

According to WiSTEM club president Jana Reiser, the board plans the experiments and presents them to the rest of the club, which then tries the experiments themselves.

Parents of elementary students are notified through the lower school principal and their teachers. This year, WiSTEM raised funds for the materials needed through a bake sale.

“We basically took very basic concepts from STEM fields that can be explained,” Jana said. “I know this year we had more kids on the older side, so we were able to explain a lot more of the science.”

According to junior Serena Thomas, a member who organized her first Science Saturday, the support of experienced WiSTEM members was essential for her to manage the responsibility of spreading the word about the event.

“It was kind of hard to reach out to different parents and get the word around about what we were trying to do,” Serena said. “Talking to people who were part of Science Saturday in the past and helped spread information about what was really useful to me.”

Serena said designing experiments so that they are interesting to younger students poses a challenge.

“I think at first they were a little hesitant since it was a new environment being in the high school,” Serena said. “But a few of them were with their friends and once we did the first lab, which was the liquid density lab, they all thought it was really exciting. A big part of it was just getting them engaged, asking them questions, what they think is gonna happen, so by the end, they were really excited about each individual activity.”

Jana said one of the goals of the Science Saturdays program is to introduce younger girls to a STEM community.

“There’s like this leaky faucet theory with women in STEM, which is basically that the higher you go in education of STEM, the more women fall out and stop doing it,” Jana said. “One of the ways to combat this is to create a strong network, so to have people you can rely on, and so that’s basically what we’re trying to do is just foster their own community.”

With this goal in mind, Serena said the feedback she received after the event was encouraging.

“A bunch of the parents actually emailed back, saying the kids had just hopped in the car and said that they loved it and want to do it again,” Serena said.

According to Jana, Science Saturdays also provide valuable experience for WiSTEM members.

“You basically have to teach young kids, and that in itself is a whole experience because you really have no idea what they will understand and what they won’t understand,” Jana said. “It’s a great opportunity to learn how to handle teaching.”

The Saturdays provide valuable experience through teaching, collaboration and preparation for the high schoolers, and liquid density balloons and origami for the younger girls.
A case of Chronic coaching

Swim coach and paramedic pushes others to succeed  
by CAROLINE HOHNER  
FEATURES EDITOR

On or off the floor, Coach Kate Chronic does what she does best, what she looks forward to doing each and every day: coaching. While the sun’s still out, she works as operations supervisor for a downtown Medical Express Ambulance Services garage, coaching and overseeing paramedics. When the sun sets, Coach Chronic heads to Hyde Park for a different sort of coaching; leading swim practices for students from Lab and schools all over the South Side through M3 Aquatics. In both her day and night jobs, Coach Chronic pushes others to do things beyond their comfort zone and to take pride in their accomplishments.

When Coach Chronic moved to Chicago in 2013, she also moved away from a career in clinical psychology. But she found that she missed working in a medical setting, so she decided to train to be an emergency medical technician at Malcolm X College. She later returned for a year of paramedic training.

Throughout all of her training and her start as a paramedic, Coach Chronic continues to indicate herself as a swim coach. When her commitments to both careers began to conflict with each other, Coach Chronic took on her current job at Medical Express Ambulance Services, where she helps paramedics prepare the ambulances and advises them throughout the work day. It’s a job with hours that accommodate her swim coaching.

While her double work day may seem overwhelming to an outsider, Coach Chronic says that she sees both careers not as work, but rather as part of her identity as a coach.

“I look at coaching as more of a lifestyle,” Coach Chronic said, “so no matter what, I’m in, it’s just kind of who I am, so it makes it easy.”

She said her job overseeing a garage with around 20 ambulances had a new degree of challenge throughout the past two years of the pandemic, due to rigorous protocols put in place to prevent the spread of the virus.

When a deadly virus could board the ambulance alongside each patient, working on the front lines of the pandemic puts the paramedics in danger as well.

“Our first inclination is to help and to do something,” Coach Chronic said. “And yet at the same time, the very people that you want to help are the people carrying the thing that could kill you.”

Whether in the garage or by the pool, Coach Chronic hopes she can push her trainees to decide to take risks and develop new and difficult things, and then help them follow through.

And, in either setting, Coach Chronic hopes the young people she coaches take away “a sense of empowerment and a sense of confidence that they accomplish something that they didn’t ever think they could do, or had not thought that they could do prior to being on the team.”

Coach Chronic has two sides as a swim coach: the one who pushes her team to succeed during practices and the one who, according to U-High senior Jennifer Hao, offered to give her swimmers rides if they ever felt in danger, no questions asked.

“She’s very strict at times, but she genuinely cares,” Jennifer said.

Even after stepping into a larger role as a swim coach in founding M3 Aquatics when U-High students couldn’t hold practices during the pandemic, and even after dealing with the stress of working in emergency medical services during a world-wide medical crisis, Coach Chronic’s love for coaching never faltered.

“I always said, long ago, if I ever stopped waking up and being thrilled to death to go to work every day, it was time for me to change careers,” Coach Chronic said. “I’ve been coaching for probably 30 plus years now, and have yet to wake up a day and not look forward to practice or not work.”

CARING COACH. Swim coach Kate Chronic addresses senior Spencer McKula after she applies a bandage to his hand injury. Using first-aid skills she gained while working as a paramedic, she removed Spencer’s stitches at swim practice.

Size and spirit: Dance Troupe invigorated in new year

After long break, Dance Troupe returns to court  
by KRISHITA DUTTA  
ARTS EDITOR

At the Sept. 8 pep rally, all of U-High cheered under the sun in Jackman Field as the Dance Troupe set the tone for the beginning of the school year with an upbeat, energizing dance performance to “You Make Me Feel” by George Michael Express Ambulance Services, where she later returned for a year of paramedic training.

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CARING COACH. Swim coach Kate Chronic addresses senior Spencer McKula after she applies a bandage to his hand injury. Using first-aid skills she gained while working as a paramedic, she removed Spencer’s stitches at swim practice.
Holding on with white knuckles, the climber’s chalky hands grip the peg. She hangs upside-down, straddling two pegs, preparing the strenuous lunges to the last one. If she makes a single mistake, she will not make it up the wall, scaling the two pegs. The route up the wall is now complete. This high-stakes situation is one rock climbers at U-High are accustomed to through their years of competition.

These student climbers have earned high achievements in competitions throughout the country, helping build a close-knit community that they recommend to others. The group, consisting of sophomores through seniors, practices together at the First Ascent gym on Block 37 three days a week. Numerous other accessible locations for weekly climbing are available around the city, such as Brooklyn Boulders in Lincoln Park and the West Loop, and Movement climbing gym, also in Lincoln Park.

Eli Strahilevitz, a sophomore who has been climbing for 10 years, suggests the sport to anyone interested, noting how it accommodates people at any skill level. "It sounds like a really daunting sport, really intense and physical, but it’s really not," Jackson said.

Additionally, sophomore Jack Skelly, who has also been climbing for 10 years, said rock climbing may seem intimidating but accommodates people at any skill level. "It's beyond gender to general issues with body image as well."

Several students have trained in the space. Student A, who asked to have her name withheld for fear of retribution, said: "I’ve done workouts with the class and try to make them feel bad for a minute or two, but I can only imagine how disturbing it is for sports teams to sign up for designated workout periods, so students could predict when the gym will be occupied."

If there were other times when sports teams weren’t there, I think I would be more open and feel more comfortable working out, because nobody's there to watch me lift weights or run on the treadmill," Student B said. "And it’s also less overwhelming."

Regardless of contrasting views, Mr. Zavala expressed that it is a unique sport that draws in students with the promise of competition and camaraderie. Unique sport draws in students with intense competition and camaraderie.
A lack of sun and colder days cause seasonal depression in some who are still healing from the pandemic

by MEENA LEE
SPORTS EDITOR

With cloudy days and early sunsets, many people are looking at another one used to going through the day without seeing the sun. This shortened amount of daylight hours may alter students’ feelings, and while a slight shift in energy levels can be attributed to “winter blues,” counselors say a drastic change in mood may be associated with something more serious.

Seasonal affective disorder, also known as seasonal depression, is a mood disorder that can affect people’s eating, sleeping, or social habits. It occurs specifically with a decreased exposure to sunlight.

According to U-High counselor Camille Baughn-Cunningham, SAD is a subtype of depression that can occur at any time of the year under any environmental circumstances. These symptoms include a generally sad mood, sense of hopelessness, social withdrawal or isolation. Dr. Baughn-Cunningham, a licensed clinical psychologist, noted that the specific time frame for seasonal affective disorder distinguishes it from generalized depression that can occur at any time of the year under any circumstantial circumstances.

“When you talk about all those same things, but with seasonal depression you’re going to see it at a certain time of the year,” Dr. Baughn-Cunningham said. “People who have SAD tend to experience those symptoms in late fall or early winter through to the spring.”

Dr. Baughn-Cunningham advises people to steer away from using the term in casual conversation. She explained why: “I think all of us do it that to some degree. I would want to remind all of us to be more thoughtful about the terms we use to describe how we’re feeling.”

Senior Sarah Brady experiences some of these changes in her energy during the winter. Although she is not diagnosed with SAD, she said: “I definitely get tired earlier. I get home from school and all I want to do is take a nap.”

Sarah also noted how different kinds of food affect her mood. “When I started eating different foods, I changed the way I was eating. I started to actually feel better,” Ms. Chereso said.

Non-medicinal remedies may offer health benefits

Although vaccines and drugs are normally scientists’ first defense against disease in Western medicine, some foods help to boost immunity.

While spending 40 years exploring how different kinds of food affected her body, Ann Marie Chereso, a U-High parent, discovered food can be used as a source of fuel and healing for her body. When she was a teenager she participated in Weight Watchers, a weight-loss program, and noticed how changing what she ate affected how she felt.

“I did it to lose weight... But what I started to realize was when I changed the way I was eating, I started to actually feel physically better,” Ms. Chereso said.

Science teacher Sharon Housinger said that while some traditions have proved to have no scientific evidence for their medicinal properties, scientists have discovered many true benefits. One example is food seasoning.

“Used to be this kind of myth that the reason we put seasoning on our food is because it kills all the bacteria and we can eat spoiled food. It turns out, you can’t eat spoiled food, even if you put spices on it.”

Although some beliefs have proved to be wrong, Ms. Housinger said some spices and herbs do have medicinal properties.

A 12-week study found that participants who took daily garlic supplements had 67% fewer colds than those who didn’t. The pigmented spice has a long history of use in India, like on the skin, if you have a rash or something being irritated. Ms. Housinger said: “In fact, I take turmeric every day, because there’s a lot of evidence that it helps with joint inflammations and cardiovascular health and things like that.”

Both Ms. Housinger and Ms. Chereso believe it’s important to know your body. Paying attention to what makes your body feel better and learning what to avoid is the best way to use food to improve your health.

Many foods are attributed with having medicinal properties, but Ms. Housinger said there are limitations with what each herb can accomplish. Furthermore, she advises against trying to self-treat medical conditions. For example, some plants can have antidepres- sant effects. “Having unregulated antidepressants can also cause other problems,” Ms. Housinger said. “So you shouldn’t try to treat themselves.”

Dr. Baughn-Cunningham, sun lamps are becoming increasingly popular as a way to help with fatigue in the winter, even for those who do not have seasonal affective disorder. Sun lamps, also called light boxes or SAD lamps, imitate natural light and act as a substitute for when people can’t get enough through- out the day.

Sarah started using a sun lamp last winter while U-High students were still in distance learning. Her Psychiatrist recommended a VPLE phototherapy lamp to help get enough natural light, which she uses for about 30-40 minutes a day.

“I online school I would use it in the morning, but now I use it at school, but I make sure it’s not too close to where I go to bed,” Sarah said. “I wouldn’t say there were crazy effects from it, but I really just think this will make the winter just a bit better.”

Despite these dark winter months, Dr. Baughn-Cunningham suggested that everyone, regardless of if they have SAD, listen to their body and its emotions and reflect on their mental health.

“Depression is really about how your body and your emotions and your brain and body systems. Sun lamps are becoming more popular. Sun lamps imitate natural light by providing the full spectrum of light without the potentially damaging ultraviolet rays. They are used both as a treatment specifically for seasonal affective disorder and as a general way for people to get more natural light during the winter. Though it won’t cure seasonal affective disorder completely, phototherapy, or light therapy, through the use of sun lamps can help ease symptoms and improve well-being.”

“Depression, seasonal depression or any depression, is going to be something that’s going to impact our lives in a really pervasive manner. It’s going to affect how you think, how you feel and how you function...”

Camille Baughn-Cunningham, COUNSELOR

Dr. Baughn-Cunningham emphasized a clear distinction between the general sense of low energy experienced during the winter — what she calls the “winter blues” — and diagnosed seasonal affective disorder. Clinical seasonal affective disorder would affect an individual’s life in more extensive ways than just a shift in energy levels.

“Most of us, if not all of us, feel some shift in our mood, our energy, our desire to sleep more when it gets cold and dark. Noticing those things is important, but that is typically not seasonal depression,” Dr. Baughn-Cunningham said. “People should be paying attention to those shifts, but not being quick to kind of rush to judgment or over-diagnose themselves.”

Because of this significant distinction, Dr. Baughn-Cunningham advises people to steer away from using the term in casual conversation. She explained why: “I think all of us do it that to some degree. I would want to remind all of us to be more thoughtful about the terms we use to describe how we’re feeling.”

Senior Sarah Brady experiences some of these changes in her energy during the winter, though she is not diagnosed with SAD. “I definitely get tired earlier. I get home from school and all I want to do is take a nap,” Sarah said. “I feel more worn down when it’s cold outside and there’s no sun!”

Many people may use the term seasonal affective disorder to describe their mood during winter months, but Dr. Baughn-Cunningham emphasized that clinical seasonal affective disorder would affect an individual’s life in more extensive ways than just a shift in energy levels.

“Depression, seasonal depression or any depression, is going to be something that’s going to impact our lives in a really pervasive manner. It’s going to affect how you think, how you feel and how you function,” she said.

Many of the treatment options for depression are used to approach seasonal affective disorder, though she notes both as a treatment specifically for seasonal affective disorder would affect an individual’s life in more extensive ways than just a shift in energy levels.

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