

At U-High, 12% of students identify as “other gender or unspecified.” These students have noticed teachers repeatedly using wrong pronouns in class.



Partnering with local organizations, UChicago is using research to inform solutions to reduce gun violence and improve public safety on and around campus.



Selling items ranging from jewelry to art, African wares stores are a South Side staple. However, Hyde Park gentrification is putting them at risk.



University of Chicago Laboratory High School

# U-HIGH MIDWAY

1362 East 59th Street, Chicago, Illinois 60637

FEBRUARY 10, 2022

Volume 98, Number 7

## History courses revised

Flexible options reflect requests

by ANATHEA CARRIGAN  
MANAGING EDITOR

To give students more course options and schedule flexibility, the history department has responded to student requests and overhauled its curriculum for the 2022-23 school year.

Once students have passed Early World History in tier one, they will have more flexibility and a wider breadth of courses to take in subsequent years.

Students will have the opportunity to take a variety of semester-long modern world history courses in the second tier. Some courses will be designated as Advanced Topics, while one class will let enrolled students opt into an AT version.

Six courses are available to request for the fall semester: Industrialism and Environmental Impacts I, 20th Century Latin American History, Modern World Religions I, AT Imperial Dreams Found and Lost, AT Modern European History I: Humanism to Liberalism, and AT Optional Worlds of Asia I. Spring semester offerings include Industrialism and Environmental Impacts II, 20th Century African Liberation, Modern World Religions II, AT Global Cold War, AT Modern European History II: Radicalism to EU Globalism, and AT Optional Worlds of Asia II.

Third tier courses will remain yearlong. In addition to U.S. History, AT U.S. History and AT African American History, the department is launching a new course, AT Latinx Histories.

Economics: Theory and Application will be offered as a year-long course, relabeled to more accurately reflect the workload and rigor of the class. AT Comparative Politics and International Relations, and AT War and Violence in the Premodern World will each be offered in two parts over the two semesters.

The development of the new curriculum has been in process for a while, with encouragement from the curriculum committee and



MIDWAY PHOTO BY MALCOLM TAYLOR

**EXPERIENCING HISTORY.** Junior Michael Ewing portrays abolitionist David Walker during a roundtable discussion in an AT African American history class Feb. 1.

history department.

The curriculum committee's goal is to increase flexibility within student schedules.

"It's been a long-term aspiration of the curriculum committee to increase the number of semester offerings in the entire school," department chair Christy Gerst said. "Then students can mix and match between different departments."

The choice to offer more semester-long courses has allowed the department to respond to workload concerns.

"Students might need one semester AT and non-AT during the other semester depending on their extracurriculars," Ms. Gerst said. "The new structure allows them to do that."

The department introduced AT-optional courses to make courses accessible to more students.

"AT-optional courses allow students to have a discussion with their teacher at the beginning of

the semester to decide if they want to take the course as an AT or not," Ms. Gerst said.

With three new history teachers this year, the department had a unique opportunity to incorporate each person's expertise.

"This was something that we've been really pushing for. The issue came up within the very first and second department meetings of the year, and we had to move quickly to get it through the deadline process," Ms. Gerst said.

Ms. Gerst also noted that this process began before the new teachers arrived.

"We've been considering how our existing faculty wants to grow, not just change from outside," she said.

The new curriculum was created with students' requests in mind, according to U-High history teacher Paul Horton.

"What we're trying to do overall is to offer students a lot more choices," Mr. Horton said, "and

*"What we're trying to do overall is to offer students a lot more choices, and we hope that they will be interested in the topics and get away from the idea of taking a course because a certain teacher is teaching that course."*

— PAUL HORTON,  
HISTORY TEACHER

we hope that they will be interested in the topics and get away from the idea of taking a course because a certain teacher is teaching that course."

Ms. Gerst hopes students react to the curriculum positively.

"I hope that it gives students the flexibility they need and engages the interests they have," Ms. Gerst said. "We've put a lot of work into it, and I hope it is well received."

## New courses in math, science, fine arts added

by ERICH RAUMANN  
CONTENT MANAGER

Students will have more options and flexibility when choosing their 2022-23 courses due to an increase in semester electives. Students must submit course requests by Feb. 21.

The updated Program of Studies was released Jan. 28. The history department reworked course offerings. Art classes Mixed Media and Sculpture are now semester-long electives with an option to repeat. Chemistry C is now Chemistry, and Chemistry M is Accelerated Chemistry.

New classes have also been added across departments.

**Data Science and Literacy:** In this math course, students will learn the skills necessary to collect and analyze data. It is available to juniors and seniors who have passed Trigonometry, Statistics and Discrete Math Topics or Discrete Math and Statistics.

**Environmental Science:** This science course covers climate change, ecosystem ecology and other topics necessary for understanding our current environment.

**Microbial pathogenesis:** This fall semester science elective covers disease-related topics like immunology and virology.

**From Cell to Organism:** This spring semester science elective examines the developing embryo while discussing related topics from genetics to evolutionary biology.

**Food Chemistry and Research Methods:** In this spring semester science elective, students will understand the literature at the forefront of today's research, while learning about the chemistry behind food.

**Sew-Called Creations:** Students will design textiles and create sustainable, cutting-edge fashion in this fine arts course.

**Specializations in Digital Music:** This music class is available to students who completed their music credit, and they can choose a digital music path that may include performing live electronic music.

## Over 100 employees learn how to assess mental health needs



MIDWAY PHOTO BY MALCOLM TAYLOR

**HELPING OUT.** Fine arts department chair Sunny Neater holds her Mental Health First Aid certificate. The training took Ms. Neater 30 hours to complete.

by MEENA LEE  
SPORTS EDITOR

More than 100 Laboratory Schools employees became certified in Mental Health First Aid where they learned how to assess and meet students' mental health needs. Due to the training's success, it will now be offered to others in the Lab community within the next year.

According to Nicole Neal, Lab's director of student services, the six-hour training provided by the National Council for Mental Well-Being helped participants explore ways that mental health impacts students. Ms. Neal said the feedback she heard from teachers was positive.

"Some of them reached out and said, 'I've already been able to implement some of the skills that I learned with the students in

my courses,'" Ms. Neal said. "Some of them talked about how it really gave them a different perspective about things that they had already encountered with students."

Ms. Neal wants to see every employee at the Laboratory Schools trained and certified in mental health first aid. Though the school isn't mandating the training, Ms. Neal hopes the first group of participants will encourage others to engage with the program. Ms. Neal plans to include 10th-12th graders to complete the training. For this teen-specific training, the National Council for Mental Well-Being partners with Lady Gaga's Born This Way Foundation to teach students about how to prioritize self-awareness and self-care.

According to Ms. Neal, a pilot group of rising 10th-12th graders will complete the

training over the summer and act as ambassadors when the program will be accessible to all students in the fall. She hopes training students will further support their peers.

"It's about how we can create cultures, networks, within the student body that support, and that rally around mental health and wellness," Ms. Neal said.

Ms. Neal mentioned potentially providing this training to Lab parents. She believes expanding the mental health training to all members of the Lab community is the best way to unite the community over mental health and well-being.

Ms. Neal said, "The goal is for just as a community for us to raise our will, our awareness about mental health, and how it is all of our responsibility to make sure that this is a healthy place."

# School addresses antisemitic graffiti

by AMON GRAY  
ARTS CO-EDITOR

Antisemitic graffiti was found in Gordon Parks Arts Hall by a middle school student Jan. 14.

The graffiti was immediately removed after a picture was taken of it. The middle school community discussed the incident at their weekly remote assembly, and on Jan. 25, the rest of the Lab community was notified about the incident by an email signed by Laboratory Schools Director Tori Juedes, middle school principal Ryan Allen and Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Nicole Williams.

The graffiti consisted of a message in pencil on the back of one of the columns in Gordon Parks Arts Hall. It consisted of two lines: “X: You support Hitler? Y: ‘Yes.’” This message has been interpreted by the school as an act of bias and antisemitism.

The email acknowledged the rise in antisemitism in the United States in recent years.

Ava Eggner, president of the Jewish Students’ Association, said that the club was pleased the school had a thoughtful, serious response, but they were disappointed that the school had only addressed the Jan. 15 Colleville, Texas, synagogue hostage crisis and the rise of antisemitism as

*“This was an antisemitic message that is deeply troubling for our Jewish students, my Jewish colleagues and the faculty and staff, the Jewish families in our community.”*

— VICTORIA JUEDS, DIRECTOR

an afterthought to what had happened at the school.

“It was a little disappointing that the response only came when we saw this happening in our own community,” Ava said, “and not when it was happening to people in our country.”

Ms. Juedes said Lab will continue to ensure an experience of belonging for everyone through diversity, equity and inclusion programs that will help teachers approach difficult discussions and widen their curriculums.

“My interpretation and that of my colleagues is that this was an antisemitic message that is deeply troubling for our Jewish students, my Jewish colleagues and the faculty and staff, the Jewish families in our community,” Ms. Juedes said. “It’s offensive to them and it’s concerning on their behalf. And indeed for all of us.”



MIDWAY PHOTO BY MALCOLM TAYLOR

**FREEZING FUN.** Senior Julien Derroitte takes a Divvy bike into the snow while his friends share laughs during the snowstorm on Feb. 3 that recorded over a foot of snow in some Chicagoland locations. With school canceled due to the harsh weather conditions, some students ventured outdoors to experience the snowfall, while others stayed in and enjoyed the day off.

## School committee meets to address schedule changes

by AUDREY PARK  
ASSISTANT EDITOR

The high school faculty has formed a committee to investigate possible daily schedules to improve support for all divisions of the Lab community.

The schedule committee comprises around a dozen faculty and administrators, and was formed to focus on discovering schedules that will benefit the high school concerning both teaching and learning.

The committee was created to supplement the healthy start committee, which is focused on start and end times to the school day.

“It was born as a separate group to specifically focus on what would be a schedule that would benefit the high school,” English teacher Colin Rennert-May, a committee member said.

He projects that the earliest a new schedule could be implemented would be in the 2023-24 school year.

The committee has met twice and plans to meet every other week.

The committee also plans to host listening sessions with each high school department.

Mr. Rennert-May said, “Departments will get the chance to respond to and think about questions and provide insight into possible solutions for a schedule.”

After listening to the different departments, the schedule committee will also seek student input.

“It is essential for us to consider student voices,” co-chair Aria Choi, a counselor, said. “We are very mindful of listening to the student body in real time through in-person sessions.”

Eventually, after gaining enough data and information, the committee will begin the drafting process.

Ms. Choi said, “Right now, the priority is really to be sure to include all of the voices because ultimately, everyone will be affected if a new schedule is implemented.”

Other faculty members on the schedule committee include Jane Canright, Charles Disantis, Catherine Collet-Jarard and Daniel Bobo-Jones.



Aria Choi

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Connections Gala event rescheduled to May 5

The Laboratory Schools’ biennial Connections Gala event for 2022, originally planned for Feb. 12 but postponed due to coronavirus concerns and guidance from the University of Chicago has been rescheduled for May 5, a Thursday.

“Given the way the pandemic continued to unfold, we were more than willing to follow the guidance of the university,” said Nicola Idehen, a parent who is co-chair of the Connections committee.

The celebration of Lab’s 125th anniversary will still be held from 6-11 p.m. at the Museum of Science and Industry. Proof of a COVID-19 vaccination and face masks will be required for everyone in attendance.

Additionally, Lab staff, vendors and museum staff will comply with vaccination requirements to promote safety at the gala.

More information will be provided closer to the event.

“We will follow all of the precautions our venue will follow,” Ms. Idehen said. “The pandemic is a very dynamic situation, so whatever guidance is given at that time in May — we will follow that guidance.”

— SANDRA MORDI

### Model UN team bags win at last conference for seniors

The Model United Nations team won Best Large Delegation for the second year in a row at the Yale Model United Nations conference held online Jan. 20-23.

Although all 23 delegates placed well at the conference, YMUN was particularly special for junior Charlie Benton. It was his first time winning Best Delegate individually at a college conference.

“I was super excited! I worked super hard to prepare for it,” Charlie said, “and I worked super hard to strategize, work with other people, collaborate, communicate, and I’m really glad that the awards reflected that.”

The YMUN conference is the last competition seniors will attend, including secretaries-general Saul Arnov, Katie Baffa and Alma Moskowitz and other seniors.

“Saul, Katie and I will not be attending any more conferences,” Alma said. “It was a really bittersweet moment because we were on Zoom during the award ceremony, and so when we heard that we’d won Best Large Delegation, we were all crying.”

Seniors typically lead preparation for more competitive conferences, and Alma said she enjoyed seeing her contributions pay off.

“It feels good to know that you were part

of the reason why the team won,” said Alma, who also received a gavel for her individual award. “It was very nice to gavel on my last conference ever and to win Best Large Delegation. That was the cherry on top because the reason why individual awards matter is for the team award, essentially.”

— AMY REN

### Four students participate in all-state music festival

Four U-High students played at the Illinois Music Education Association’s All-State festival Jan. 29 at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, following a virtual audition process last fall.

Senior Erik Sveen Erling sang in the honors choir, and junior Nicholas Emerton sang in the all-state choir. Juniors William Tan played principal cello in the honors orchestra, and Amelia Zheng played violin in the honors orchestra.

The students’ performances were preceded by two full days of rehearsal, when most performers began playing their assigned music for the first time.

The students became eligible to perform after sending an audio recording of their work to the ILMEA which selected them, and more than 7,000 other Illinois students, to play at district-level festivals.

“The district festival was great,” Erik said. “I honestly thought that would’ve been the highlight for me for high school choir.”

Erik said he was wrong and that performing “America the Beautiful” with the honors choir and orchestra was much more powerful for him.

“Because of the nature of the song, when I was singing, I just felt a lot of pride in where I live and grew up,” he said. “It was kind of a spiritual awakening.”

— BERK OTO

### Students earn awards in arts, writing competition

Twelve students have received awards in the Midwestern Regional Alliance for Young Artists and Writers Competition. All gold key winners move on the national level of competition.

Students recognized for art are Colleen Cardoza, honorable mention in drawing and illustration, and honorable mention in painting; Inga Domenick, silver key in fashion; Justin Giles, honorable mention in drawing and illustration; Jenna Kilkus, gold key and two silver keys in photography; Anvi Padhi, gold key and honorable mention in photography; Alina Susani gold key and sil-

ver key in digital art, and silver key and two honorable mentions in photography; and Sasha Watson, honorable mention in photography.

Students recognized for writing are Abe Callard, silver key in short stories; Corona Chen, silver key in personal essay and memoirs, and honorable mention in science fiction and fantasy; Ida Karateke, gold key, American voices nominee in personal essay and memoir; Yannik Leuz, honorable mention in dramatic scripts; Audrey Matei, silver key in poetry; Alina Susani, honorable mention in personal essay and memoirs; Sasha Watson gold key and two honorable mentions in short stories, silver key and honorable mention in flash fiction, silver key and honorable mention in poetry, honorable mention in personal essay and memoirs; Vincent Zhang, gold key in poetry; and Sarina Zhao silver key in personal essay and memoirs.

While Sasha, a sophomore, doesn’t write to win awards for her work, she was overjoyed to have received several awards in this competition.

She said, “Being recognized with an award is a wonderful way to boost my confidence, especially when I feel stuck with my writing and can turn to the awards as a reminder that if I keep working hard I can see results.”

— SOPHIA BAKER

### Photojournalists recognized in national photo contest

Three U-High photojournalists have been recognized in a national contest.

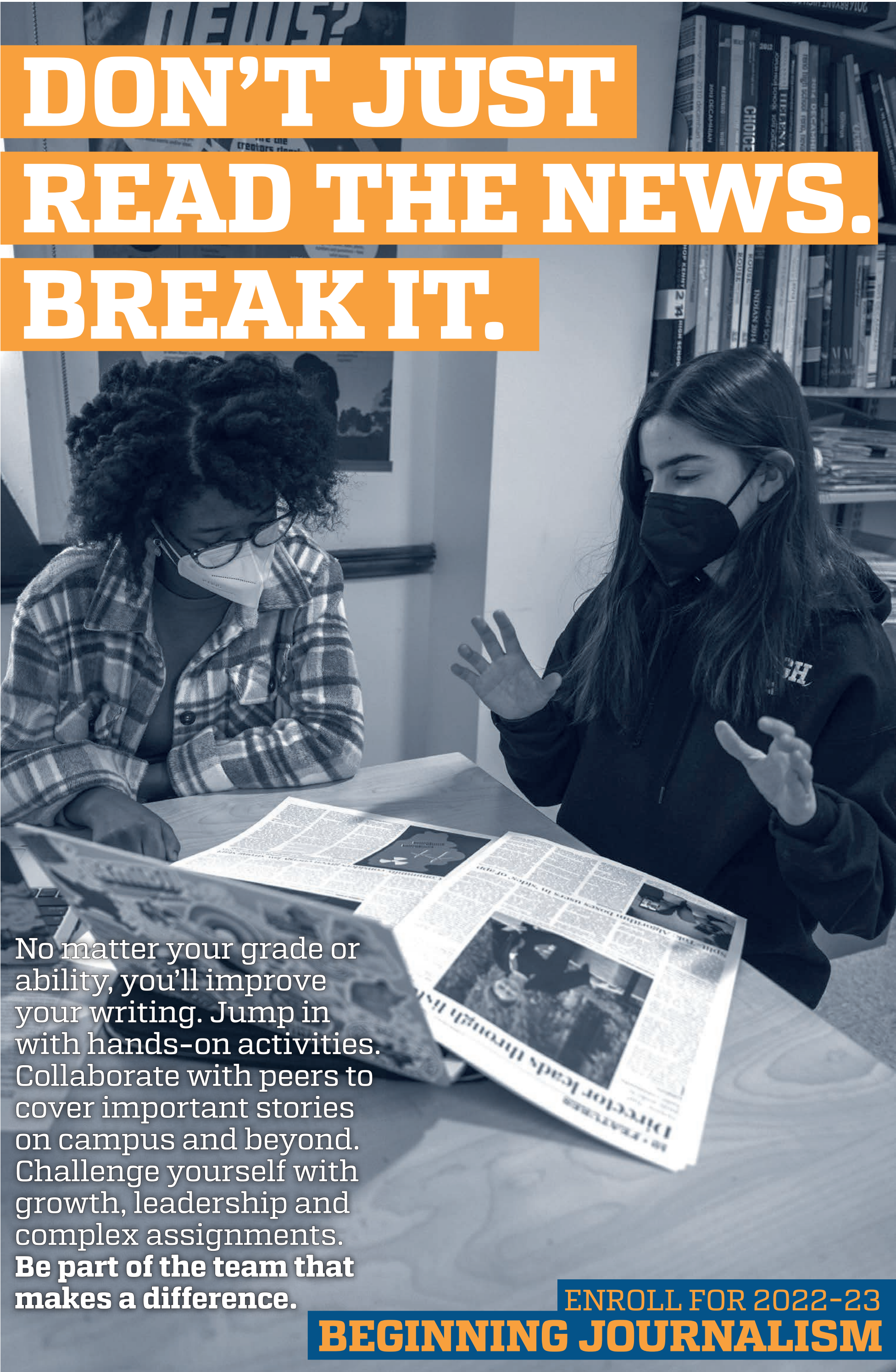
Selecting from 4,800 entries, judges for the Association of Texas Photography Instructors recognized the U-High photographers in the Fall 2021 contest open to students around the country.

Among them, junior Matt Petres received first place and first honorable mention in the beginning documentary/street photography for photos of the Columbus Day parade in October.

“That day, I’d gone there early, like a couple hours early,” Matt said of his experience shooting the event downtown. “I stayed there for basically the entire thing, so I was proud of the work I put in.”

Additionally, senior Andrew Burke-Stevenson was awarded third place in advanced street photography, along with an honorable mention in advanced student life. In the beginning sports action category, junior Gabriel Issa earned an honorable mention.

— AUDREY MATZKE



DON'T JUST  
READ THE NEWS.  
BREAK IT.

No matter your grade or ability, you'll improve your writing. Jump in with hands-on activities. Collaborate with peers to cover important stories on campus and beyond. Challenge yourself with growth, leadership and complex assignments. **Be part of the team that makes a difference.**

ENROLL FOR 2022-23  
**BEGINNING JOURNALISM**

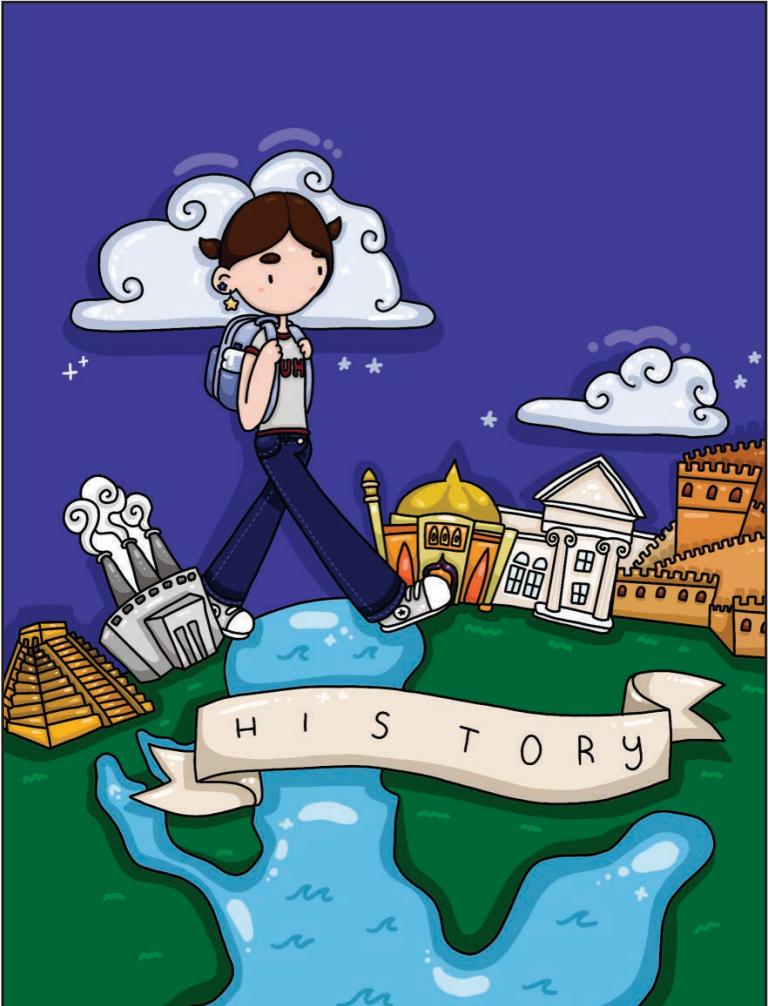
# Electives promote engaged students

As the Midway sees it ...

The history department has implemented new electives for the next school year and beyond, including new courses regarding religion, war and liberation. The decision to add electives is a step in the right direction — the additional courses account for a wider variety of groups and interests and suggest how electives could work in other departments. The new electives allow students to explore a wider range of topics more deeply. Year two of history has been changed into semester-long courses, offering topics that satisfy a variety of interests, like 20th Century Latin American History and 20th Century African Liberation. In addition to new courses, existing classes such as AT European History are split into I and II parts and have been renamed to describe the focus of each course, allowing students to specialize in areas of European history they find interesting. Semester-long electives provide students with more flexibility to mix and match between departments. New courses themselves can also amplify interest and further inspire students to broaden their horizons. For example, the English department has cre-

ated a significant number of electives for juniors and seniors who have completed both English 1 and Literary Analysis. Many students like choosing what class they will take, while others have commented that they eventually became invested in courses which weren't their first choice. Students have also expressed their support of the changing English electives over two years — over their final years of high school, they get to choose from 12 separate electives, greatly increasing the odds that at least one option will interest them. When students are interested in their classes, they perform and learn better. It may seem impractical to implement new electives and that there already are enough. While there are extra classes students can take for courses such as science, fine arts, music and math, there are fewer options per year. Often, students feel obligated to take advanced classes due to colleges' expectations, so their options are confined even more if they feel they have to sacrifice their interests for a more rigorous course load. For example, some colleges require that students take physics at some point in high school. This, combined with required Biology and Chemistry, leaves only a small number of classes that are col-

lege-level or advanced that these students can take. A similar issue is seen in math, where students are expected to follow a designated track, and, for those who start in Algebra 1 or Geometry, only one alternative advanced class is offered for each course, unless they double up on classes. Adding electives will keep students engaged with these departments, and they might discover an interest or talent of theirs within the courses. The history department has done well in creating new electives that focus on more specific elements within each course. U-High has both the financial and educational means to implement more elective options across other departments from which students can choose. While the current electives offered in other courses may seem like a significant amount, it leaves students with a noticeable lack of options, which decrease interest, productivity and overall learning. U-High has proven this past year-and-a-half that they are more than able to adapt to change — the history department's recent course addition emphasizes this notion — and should act accordingly by adding new electives in other departments. This story reflects the opinion of the U-High Midway Editorial Board.



MIDWAY ILLUSTRATION BY DALIN DOHRN

# Peer competition must become peer support

During a history class a presence of stress is tangible. School work is gearing up for the end of semester, extra-curricular events and competitions are increasing in frequency, and the ever-present pressure of college admissions is growing for many juniors in the AT U.S. History class. A familiar conversation plays out between two students. One says "I'm running off three hours of sleep," while another retorts "Well, I'm only running off two." Right after the class ends, two other students compare how many hours they spent on a recent paper, trying to one-up each other as if spending an extended amount

of time on a school project isn't already an accomplishment. Students shouldn't feel like they must compare their stress; instead, peer support should be fostered by maintaining healthy habits. It would be hypocritical to claim that I haven't engaged in similar conversations, which form a terrible-yet-easy pattern of negativity. Comparing stress only reinforces toxic habits. Trying to "win" in a conversation of "who has it harder" only achieves higher standards



Audrey Matei

for everyone. For high-achieving students, pushing yourself as hard as possible is a common goal. Consequently, if there is a constant feeling that you aren't pushing yourself as hard as other students, it can feel like you aren't as smart as them or as likely to get into a "good" college as them, regardless of any other factors. Comparing stress won't actually alleviate stress. Feeling overwhelmed is common for students. However, promoting these stress-related thoughts through comparisons with other students doesn't achieve any relief and is harmful to mental health, continuing a toxic cycle. A study published in Cognitive Therapy and Research about repetitive stress-related

negative thinking states "positive associations were found between all [measured indices of negative repetitive] thinking and symptoms of depression and anxiety." Still, communication about workload between students can have benefits. Discussing workload issues with other students isn't inherently bad. However, the conversations shouldn't be focused around which student has it worse but rather how they can improve it by sharing experiences, healthy habits and resources. Peers need to practice self-maintenance to improve their community. First, students should make sure they are taking care of themselves. By maintaining healthy habits and a healthy workload for

yourself, it is easier to focus on mental health and not on extreme expectations. This allows work to be more collaborative with more time for meaningful focus, less opportunities for negative spiraling and sets new examples for peers. School is a place with a primary focus on learning, an inherently collaborative action. Instead of competing, students should feel like they can support each other and work together, starting by taking better care of themselves. Schools with competitive environments like U-High make it easy for students to feel like they aren't doing enough compared to other students, but these comparisons are dangerous and actively need to be changed.

## Native Americans should have final say on sports teams that use Native American imagery

Across amateur and professional sports, teams are receiving pushback for their use of Native Americans as mascots, but this pushback is being met with resistance from people who want to keep the mascots. Still, some teams have changed. Cleveland's MLB team, for example, is now called the Guardians, and Washington D.C.'s NFL team is the Washington Football Team. The decision on whether to change Native American mascots should come from Native American people, as these mascots affect nobody but them. If these mascots are harmful — the National Congress of American Indians says they are — teams should get rid of them. Mascots should be harmless. Guard-

ing offensive mascots is nothing but a devil's advocate position, as the change affects nothing about the team itself. High school sports teams may find a rebrand more difficult because of limited resources, but professional teams owned by millionaires and billionaires have no excuse to keep their mascots. The people who defend offensive mascots are not the ones who are affected by them, so they have no real reason to be so protective. If Native American people want offensive mascots changed, then teams should change the mascots.



Colin Leslie

## To build reading habits, independent reading should become apart of the schedule

Textbook passages, articles from science journals, poetry for English class. With so much assigned reading throughout high school, students now read a lot every week — a lot, that is, except books they pick up for pleasure. The Lab administration should incorporate a semiweekly advisory period into the curriculum for students to read independently during the school day. Independent reading time will allow students to take both a break from work and a social break to reset during the school day. Given the opportunity to discover new books to read independently, students who had given up the habit of reading outside of schoolwork could pick it up again.

Mandatory independent reading could help rebuild reading habits in students. A 2012 report by the UK Department of Education found "a positive relationship between reading frequency, reading enjoyment and attainment." Time spent reading for pleasure wouldn't have to disrupt students' time to complete homework during school hours. For all the high schoolers who had to put down their personal books in high school, independent reading should be incorporated into the Lab curriculum as a mandatory event.



Caroline Hohner

## U-HIGH MIDWAY

Published during the school year by journalism and photojournalism students of University High School, University of Chicago Laboratory Schools. 1362 East 59th Street Chicago, Illinois 60637 Phone 773-702-0591 Email [midway@ucls.uchicago.edu](mailto:midway@ucls.uchicago.edu) Copyright 2022, Journalism students, University High School Printed by Grace Printing, Skokie, Illinois [uhighmidway.com](http://uhighmidway.com)

**EDITORIAL POLICY & MISSION:** 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.

**EDITORS-IN-CHIEF\*** ..... Lucia Kouri, Berk Oto, Peter Pu  
**MANAGING EDITOR\*** ..... Anthea Carrigan  
**DEPUTY MANAGING EDITOR\*** Téa Tamburo  
**NEWS EDITOR\*** ..... Adrianna Nehme  
**OPINION EDITOR\*** ..... Ryan Clark  
\*Members of the Editorial Board  
**FEATURES EDITOR** ..... Caroline Hohner  
**ARTS EDITORS** ..... Krishita Dutta, Amon Gray  
**SPORTS & LEISURE EDITOR** ..... Meena Lee  
**CITY LIFE EDITOR** ..... An Ngo  
**HEALTH & WELLNESS EDITOR** ..... Noa Appelbaum

**ASSISTANT EDITORS** ..... Louis Auxenfans, Peter Cox, Colin Leslie, Clare O'Connor, Audrey Park, William Tan  
**CONTENT MANAGERS** ..... Chloe Ma, Audrey Matei, Sahana Unni  
**REPORTERS** ..... Olivia Adams, Chloe Alexander, Sophia Baker, Samuel Beck, Toshiro Chin, Kiran Collins, Joaquin Figueroa, Mia Lipson, Evan Lok, Audrey Matzke, Clare McRoberts, Sandra Mordi, Milo Platz-Walker, Erich Raumann, Amy Ren, Katie Sasamoto-Kurusu, Zara Siddique, Ethan Swinger, Victoria Washington, Ainsley Williams, Oliver Wilson

**PHOTOJOURNALISM STAFF**  
**EDITORS-IN-CHIEF** ..... Elliott Taylor, Malcolm Taylor  
**MANAGING EDITOR** ..... Andrew Burke-Stevenson  
**PHOTOJOURNALISTS** ..... Henry Benton, Carter Chang, Patrice Graham, Gabriel Issa, Chloe Ma, Matthew McGehee, Matt Petres  
**ARTISTS** ..... Dalin Dohrn, Alina Susani  
**ADVISER** ..... Logan Aimone, MJE  
**PHOTO ADVISER** ..... Jayna Rumble, MJE

# VISUAL STORYTELLING WITH IMPACT



Go beyond the classroom to experience a different kind of storytelling, where your work is worth thousands of words. Starting at any skill level, collaborate closely with peers on your team to showcase the truth in visuals. **Get involved from a different perspective.**

ENROLL FOR 2022-23  
**PHOTOJOURNALISM**

# Spicy, Smoky, Iconic: Jerk

Jerk, a cooking style native to Jamaica, is the perfect match for chicken. Midway staff reviewed three jerk restaurants, looking for the best dish for your dollar.



MIDWAY PHOTO BY JOAQUIN FIGUEROA

## Uncle Joe’s Jerk Chicken

Uncle Joe’s Jerk Chicken, 1461 E. Hyde Park Blvd., has some of the best jerk chicken in the city. The popular restaurant’s orders fill up quickly with a long wait and line. However, the wait should not turn diners away. Although they’re known for jerk chicken, the menu has options for different meats, seafood and vegetables. They also have various sides, including but not limited to mac and cheese, rice and peas, and yams.

Their staff was very helpful and kind. The chicken was delicious, but there was a wait of approximately 45 minutes for the food, however you can call ahead to order your food.

The meat is very tender, juicy and flavorful. The chicken is not particularly spicy but had a sauce that came with it that brought more of a kick. This restaurant is definitely worth a second look. The mac and cheese paired well as a good side with the chicken. The food comes fresh and looks appealing. A jerk chicken dinner plate, which costs \$14, comes with half a chicken and multiple sides.

There was a long line of people waiting in the restaurant. The energy in the restaurant was low as the restaurant was not set up for people to sit down to eat. They only offer takeout, and don’t have any seating.

Uncle Joe’s Jerk Chicken is the perfect spot to get delicious jerk chicken, but you must call your order in early because it is a long wait but well worth it.

— JOAQUIN FIGUEROA



MIDWAY PHOTO BY TÉA TAMBURO

## Jerky Jerk

With a small takeout window and seating area next door, Jerky Jerk, 2253 W. Taylor St., serves an array of Caribbean dishes that feel authentic and flavorful.

The restaurant, best known for its jerk chicken, offers several options of chicken meat, including half a half chicken with both light and dark meat. Like with most chicken dishes, the dark meat is much more moist and flavorful, with a smoky, grilled flavor and smooth texture throughout. However, the light meat is noticeably more dry and lacks the smoky flavor of the dark meat. However, the chicken skin remains consistent throughout both: crisp and seasoned with ground pepper, which gives a savory and slightly charred taste.

When thinking of jerk chicken, adjectives like “spicy” and “hot” may come to mind. Surprisingly, the chicken itself was neither of those things. The entrée comes with a side of jerk chicken sauce which is immediately spicy upon a taste, but leaves a sweet but slightly burning aftertaste.

Jerky Jerk offers dine-in, takeout and delivery options. When calling to confirm and then picking up a takeout order, the staff is attentive and timely when preparing the order. Best eaten warm, their jerk chicken and side dishes travel well and do not require reheating.

For \$39 to feed a family of three, Jerky Jerk delivers a convenient and authentic Caribbean takeout experience.

— TÉA TAMBURO



MIDWAY PHOTO BY NOA APPELBAUM

## Jerk. Jamaican Barbecue

Jerk. Jamaican Barbecue, 811 W. Chicago Ave., compact in size and lacking in customers. The dishes are ordered fast-food style at the counter, brought on a tray with water, napkins, and sanitizer if one wishes to dine inside the restaurant.

Their renowned jerk chicken can be ordered in a multitude of ways, most of which involve a smoked outer crust, including quarters, chicken breast and chicken thighs. Each style is served with coconut rice and two choices of side dishes (plantains, jerk mac and cheese, coleslaw or corn). The chicken quarters fair on the spicy side, and the tanginess of the coating paired nicely with the well-cooked chicken pieces. Despite the apparent praise over the restaurant’s “Rude Boy Jerk” sauce, the meal was surprisingly lacking in moisture — everything tended to lean a bit dry, which, along with the spices, made it a hard dish to swallow. Still, the chicken encased inside the burnt exterior was soft, although it occasionally broke apart and physically separated from the crusted edges.

For \$17, the entire meal was medium-sized, with the chicken quarters coming in three distinct pieces. Overall, Jerk. Jamaican Barbecue Restaurant is a reliable dining experience in the Near North Side to grab a quick bite or to tuck in for a fast dinner with the family, but the experience is not enjoyable enough to be worth the price.

— NOA APPELBAUM

# VIRAL:

## Wordle game makes word waves at Lab

by **AUDREY MATEI**  
ASSISTANT EDITOR

During an in-class work day for a 5th period Spanish class, students fill the room sitting at their desks, computers open. Some work on their Spanish while others do homework for another class. Some talk to the person in the desk next to them, while others idly stare at their phone or computer screens.

The assorted screens display text messages, emails, shopping carts and Schoology pages, but in one corner of the room, a group of students’ screens show squares of gray, bright green and yellow. They clamor at their computer screens with one student shouting “Don’t spoil it! Don’t spoil it!” as they each try to be first to correctly guess the five-letter word of the day in the game Wordle.

Wordle has gained immense popularity among U-High students because of its competitive-yet-communal nature and challenging puzzles.

The Wordle website issues a new word every day. Players have six chances to guess a five-letter word, and each guess reveals clues about

which letters are in the answer. A green letter means a player’s guess is in the correct position. If the letter is in the day’s word but in the wrong position, it turns yellow, and if the letter is not in the word, the tile turns dark grey.

Because the word is the same for everyone, the game creates an element of community.

Junior Jacob de Jong has been playing Wordle for about a month and introduced it to some of his friends.

“We challenge each other to see who can get it first,” he said, explaining how he plays it with his friends. “We definitely dig into each other’s skin a little.”

The game is also making its way around the school in classrooms.

English Teacher Ian Taylor isn’t new to word games. Having played The New York Times Spelling Bee game for a year and a half, he was recently introduced to Wordle through social media and his students.

“I started sharing it with my seventh grade daughter and my advisory. We talked about it with the department here. I think a lot of us are playing,” he said, gesturing to

*“We challenge each other to see who can get it first. We definitely dig into each other’s skin a little.”*

— JACOB DE JONG

the other English teachers in the English office.

A third period Spanish class played a variation of the game in Spanish as a class warmup.

Sophomore Mary Bridget Molony was introduced to the game during that class.

“I had heard some people talking about it in class,” she said. “It ended up being super fun.”

Players also enjoy the puzzle aspect of the game.

Jacob said he uses a specific strategy to ensure optimal use of each turn.

“I usually guess two words with the most-used letters, so I guess ‘notes’ and ‘audio,’” he said.

Mr. Taylor explained that for him, the challenging nature of the puzzle is a big part of its appeal.

He said, “I like the buzz of the game and how the kids can do it together and compare it.”



MIDWAY PHOTO BY PATRICE GRAHAM

**WORDLE WIZARDS.** Two students play the daily Wordle puzzle side by side, a common sight at U-High. Wordle is an online game that gives users six chances to guess a new five-letter word every day. The game’s competitive and collective nature has made it a smash hit among students and teachers.

# Pronoun problems

Genderqueer and transgender students are frustrated by frequent misgendering from teachers. They want recognition.

by SAHANA UNNI  
REPORTER

Ladies and gentlemen. Boys vs. girls. His or hers. Sitting at a desk in a school that emphasizes inclusion, transgender students say teachers regularly use terms that do not acknowledge their gender identity. Without an easy way to report teachers, and fearing their grades being affected, these students have few other options except to bottle their frustrations.

With the 2021 health and wellness survey reporting that 12% of the U-High student body identifies as “other gender or unspecified,” teachers have had to become more accustomed to using non-cisgender pronouns. Despite the growing population of transgender students, many say teachers still often assume their gender identities and pronouns, which has caused frustration.

In some classes, gender is more prominent in the curriculum, where many transgender students expressed feeling excluded. Many of the world languages taught at U-High are gendered, forcing nonbinary students to choose between female and male pronouns.

Senior Kai McManus, who uses gender-neutral pronouns, decided to use masculine pronouns in Spanish class, without the option of using nonbinary pronouns.

Balancing a respect for student identities with a respect for Romance languages, middle school Spanish teacher Deb Foote, who co-advises the LGBTQ+ alliance, Spectrum, says the lack of gender-neutral pronouns in Spanish class is due to the responsibility teachers have to teach the language as it is written and spoken in Spanish-speaking countries.

“When we’re talking about the identity of students as individuals, there is an awareness about it, and of course we want to respect that as a department and as teachers,” Ms. Foote said, “but we are limited in the ways we can do it.”



MIDWAY ILLUSTRATION BY DALIN DOHRN

**PRONOUN PROBLEMS.** Transgender and genderqueer students want teachers to respect and use their correct pronouns.

Despite noticing an increased awareness of pronoun use in the past few years, sophomore Willow Stern, who uses gender-neutral pronouns, says teachers still assume their gender roughly three times a day. Worrying about being treated differently, Willow decided to not reveal their preferred pronouns to some teachers, causing teachers to use pronouns based on the teacher’s perception of Willow’s gender identity.

When misgendered, student reactions vary from having conversations with teachers after class to staying silent. These reactions often depend on how comfortable a student feels with their teacher.

“Most of my teachers, I feel comfortable telling them,” Willow said. “So I would respond if they use she/her pronouns for me. I typically just butt in and say, ‘Hey I use they/them pronouns’ before they could finish what they were saying.”

Transgender students have expressed appreciation toward teachers who are proactive in using the correct pronouns, but many have only noticed a handful of such teachers.

“I only have a couple of teachers who are open to that kind of discussion,” said ninth grader Ace Ma, who uses gender-neutral pronouns. “I think that a lot of them say that

*“I only have a couple of teachers who are open to that kind of discussion. I think that a lot of them say that they’re comfortable with it, but there’s no actual effort in trying to change their ways.”*

— ACE MA

they’re comfortable with it, but there’s no actual effort in trying to change their ways.”

While teachers often mistakenly misgender students, it is usually the lack of acknowledgment of the mistake that transgender students say they find upsetting.

“I have some teachers who are more apologetic than others. I have some who just kind of nod and I have some who just keep steamrolling ahead,” Willow said. “Most of the time when I address it pretty directly they’re OK with it.”

Science teacher Zachary Hund has attempted to be more respectful by providing a Google form where students can fill out their preferred names and pronouns at the beginning of the year. According to Dr. Hund, the expansion of the diversity, equity and inclusion curriculum to include pronoun usage has helped teachers to be mind-

ful of transgender students.

“I know a lot of faculty feel like how I feel, which is, we’re nervous,” Dr. Hund said. “We want to respect their decision, but this is new to us, and we want to do what we can to make students feel welcome.”

A number of students who have not yet revealed their gender identity to their parents asked teachers to use different names and pronouns in progress reports and emails, which many teachers have not done. After a teacher did not make this change for Ace, they said they were frustrated because they lost the opportunity to choose when to come out to their parents.

As transgender and genderqueer students continue to face discrimination, Kai said they would like to see more ways to report teachers.

Willow said students and teachers need to be more mindful of transgender students to make them feel more welcome.

“The main thing people could do would be to start being more proactive, because I feel like there’s a lot of pressure on the community to point out when people make mistakes,” Willow said, “and even though I know everyone is trying their hardest, I would really appreciate it if they could try to solve those problems before it comes to us.”

# In a pinch, students use borrowed menstrual products

by CLARE MCROBERTS  
REPORTER

“Having a period is not a choice, and it shouldn’t be treated as one,” Katie Williams, a sophomore, said, summing up a common complaint among U-High students.

For several years, students and staff members have worked to address the need to ensure that period products are free and available in Lab bathrooms. But Katie and other students said supplies still run short sometimes, leaving them scrambling to search for products in the middle of school.

In addition to dispensers that had long existed in the bathrooms where students can purchase products, baskets now offer free supplies. Still, there are times when the baskets of products go empty.

“I feel there needs to be a lot more work at Lab to get more pads and tampons accessible,” sophomore Yolo Martinez said.

Since at least 2018, students and staff members have worked to make period products more available to students. Ruthie Williams, a middle school home economics

teacher, helped organize a middle school group called Free the Tampons, which has pushed for making period products accessible to students. Back then, pads and tampons were only available for free in some bathrooms.

The baskets, including free supplies, were meant to solve the problem, but Ms. Williams and others say they notice that the baskets of supplies sometimes run out. When that happens, Ms. Williams said, an email to the school’s operations department quickly gets the baskets refilled.

Joe Wachowski, operations director, said the original idea for the free supplies was to be a shared responsibility where students would take a product when they needed it and then replace it with one of their own later. But that, he said, has not always happened.

“We have ordered the products for this year and already had to re-order more,” he said.

Still, some students say, there are times when the issue remains a problem.

Earlier this school year, Téa Tamburo, a junior, found herself

*“I think there’s change that still needs to take place.”*

— TÉA TAMBUR

sprinting through hallways, up staircases, and in and out of bathrooms in order to avoid being late to advisory. She could not find a single pad, but happened to run into a friend, who saved her from the menstrual emergency.

“I think there’s change that still needs to take place,” said Téa, who has worked to expand the availability of supplies in past years.

She said it is important to be open about periods to create a comfortable environment.

“It’s literally just a biological thing,” Téa said, “and I don’t think it’s anything to be embarrassed about.”

For the moment, some students have found their own solutions, which often involve distributing products to one another.

Téa said she keeps supplies in the bottom of her locker.

“All my friends have my locker combination, so they will just go in there and get them sometimes.”



MIDWAY PHOTO BY CHLOE MA

**PERIOD PRODUCTS.** Although pads and tampons are provided in bathrooms, they’re often out of stock, leading students to borrow their friends’ products.

# Strategies & solutions for SAFETY

Addressing the gun violence epidemic in Chicago requires approaches beyond increasing law enforcement. To aid neighborhoods affected by divestment and generational trauma, the University of Chicago has announced its intention to partner with community

organizations that provide trauma recovery, behavioral therapy and access to employment. University research groups are seeking to identify effective strategies to reduce crime. Meanwhile, Lab students continue to stay on alert while walking home after school.

## Partnership targets gun violence at its root

by **PETER PU**  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

In a roundtable discussion on Jan. 25, University of Chicago President Paul Alivisatos reiterated the university's commitment to partner with community organizations to address gun violence in Chicago following the deaths of two university students and a recent graduate in 2021.

Although the Department of Safety and Security has recently announced efforts to enhance university law enforcement and expand the Lyft Ride Smart program, Dr. Alivisatos underscored the importance of addressing root issues such as divestment, educational inequity, generational trauma, and lack of access to mental health services in the community.

"As an university we are committed to contributing our strengths and research and education and our resources to work in partnership with the community and the city to work toward common solutions urgently needed to address this most critical of issues," Dr. Alivisatos said during the discussion.

He announced the university's new initiative to issue grants funding partnerships between members of the university and community organizations. The funding will target areas such as social and economic pathways, trauma recovery efforts, reentry initiatives,



community police relations and understanding why certain violence prevention programs are effective.

Some initiatives affiliated with the university to improve public safety have already proven to be effective. These include the UChicago Justice Project, UChicago Medicine's Violence Recovery Program, Trauma Responsive Educational Practices project, Choose to Change, and READI Chicago.

Launched in 2015, Choose to Change provides six months of wraparound services and cognitive behavioral therapy to teenagers in the south and west sides of Chicago. During therapy sessions, teenagers learn to regulate themselves during high stress situations. As part of the wraparound services, mentors from similar communities build relationships with the participants, identify their interests, and help them form plans to pursue those interests.

"Any barriers that will prevent them from completing their education, we try our best to eliminate those barriers and support families and meet them where they

*"We can do things to decrease risk for violence, but we haven't concentrated those efforts in a way that makes real progress in reducing community level rates of violence."*

— DEBORAH GORMAN-SMITH  
UCHICAGO PROFESSOR

are and give them the support that they need," said David Williams, Midwest region vice president at Youth Advocate Programs.

Another program utilizing cognitive behavioral therapy is READI Chicago. Under a different model, READI Chicago combines therapy with providing employment opportunities and support services in areas such as Medicaid, housing, mental health and substance abuse. The 12-month program targets men in the North Lawndale, Englewood and Austin-West Garfield neighborhoods.

According to Senior Program Manager Nyzera Fleming, the program allows participants to learn socioemotional skills in the classroom and then apply those in real-world situations.

"In a setting where your supervisor may say, 'Hey, I need you to go from this task to the next task,' they're being coached on how to

handle those situations or, you know, be able to take feedback or be able to know those basic standards of HR as it applies to, you know, sexual harassment or how to handle anger management and things of that nature," Ms. Fleming said.

The Urban Labs Crime Lab at the University of Chicago has rigorously evaluated Choose to Change and READI Chicago. Researchers compared participants of these programs with peers of similar backgrounds. Compared to their peers, teenagers who participated in Choose to Change were 48% less likely to be arrested for violent crime, and they attended seven more days of school. Men who participated in READI Chicago were 79% less likely to be arrested for shootings and homicides compared to their peers.

Deborah Gorman-Smith, professor at the Crown Family School of Social Work, Policy and Practice, noted that even with new public safety initiatives, there will likely be no changes in the next three or five years.

"We've demonstrated really importantly that prevention works," Dr. Gorman-Smith said during the discussion. "We can do things to decrease risk for violence, but we haven't concentrated those efforts in a way that makes real progress in reducing community level rates of violence."

### Community initiatives:

#### UChicago Medicine's Violence Recovery Program

The VRP offers referrals to community-based behavioral and social agencies to support recovery and reduce the chances of recidivism. It supports adults, children and families who have experienced trauma as a result of violence. After improving public safety in Chicago, the program's model will serve as a template for other organizations in the nation.

#### Trauma Responsive Educational Practices Project

The TREP Project was founded by associate professor Micere Keels at the university's department of comparative human development. The project works to develop the capacities of educational systems that serve children growing up in areas subject to violent crime, concentrated poverty and housing instability.

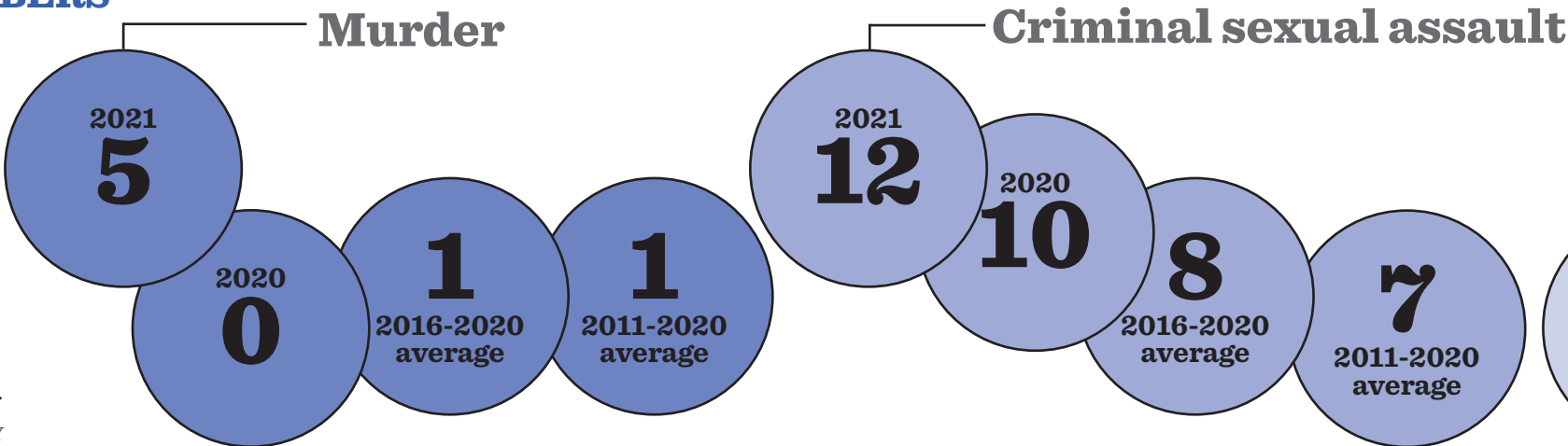
#### UChicago Justice Project

The UChicago Justice Project uses social sciences and the arts to conduct projects on policing, restricting and neighborhood violence. Located in UChicago's Department of Sociology, the team pursues projects to hold institutions accountable and promotes lasting social change

### BY THE NUMBERS

The following data from the Chicago and University of Chicago police departments illustrates the number of incidents of murder, criminal sexual assault, aggravated assault and battery, and robbery in the Woodlawn UCPD Patrol Area. The area spans from 61st to 64th Street, Evans to Stony Island Avenue, and Ellis to University Avenue. The onset of the pandemic in March 2020 was one factor influencing the rate of violent crime in the past 10 years.

— COMPILED BY AMON GRAY





MIDWAY ILLUSTRATION BY ALINA SUSANI

# Students keep up awareness



by COLIN LESLIE  
ASSISTANT EDITOR

Walking home or to a car after a day at school has become a little more complicated recently. While students say they don't feel unsafe around school, safety concerns in Hyde Park such as the fatal shooting in December of Shaoxiong "Dennis" Zheng have prompted some to utilize additional strategies for safety and increased awareness of their surroundings.

Issues with safety haven't changed the activities that senior Alp Demirtas enjoys, but they have caused him to take extra caution while walking around. "I still, like, go out downtown and go out in Hyde Park and do all those things,, but I just always remain vigilant because you never know what might happen," said Alp, a Woodlawn neighborhood resident. "I always look around me just to make sure I'm not being followed, make sure to keep my phone out of sight."

Alp said he and his parents have a couple ways to make sure he stays safe, such as phone tracking and a curfew, although they started well before the most recent safety concerns in Hyde Park.

"My parents just want me to come home before it's dark," Alp said. "They're also able to see where I'm at and my location and stuff, so that kind of helps ease things."

Senior and Hyde Park resident Jonah Schloerb, who lives near Promontory Point, said he often walks home after dark. According to Jonah, more street lights and blue-light systems may help ease concerns of students.

"Having more street lights everywhere just so everything's lit up and those blue-light things on the street corners that you can push the button of," Jonah said. "Those help me feel more safe."

After dance troupe practice, junior Ishani Hariprasad drives herself home in the Kenwood neighborhood. With the recent frequent security notifications from the university, she is more careful.

"Walking to my car when it's darker after dance practice, I usually walk with somebody, like one of my friends," Ishani said.

Ishani said that the university's security alerts are a topic of concern in her family.

"Every time my dad gets one of the emails, he forwards it to me and my sister, and she's at the university," Ishani said. "Once I leave the house in the morning, he and my mom both ask me to text them when I get to school and, like, vice versa when I leave."

Junior Anna Bohlen, who lives in Hyde Park lives only half a block from school, and while she said she usually feels safe walking home, there are times when she is walking in the evening when she's uneasy.

"I definitely watch my surroundings more, and if it's dark out and there's someone on the street, I watch them carefully, just in case," Anna said. "I don't think my parents feel fully comfortable with the idea of me walking home in the dark, but they're OK with it since I live so close."

# Research informs safety initiatives

by ADRIANNA NEHME  
NEWS EDITOR

In 2007, University of Chicago Ph.D. student Amadou Cisse was shot and killed on campus. Fourteen years later, UChicago graduate Shaoxiong "Dennis" Zheng, rising third-year student Max Lewis and Ph.D. student Yiran Fan similarly died from gun violence in 12 months, sparking a need for researchers to help resolve the issue of gun violence.

Programs at the University of Chicago are trying to better understand the source and the steps necessary to prevent future incidents of gun violence.

The University of Chicago Crime Lab was launched in 2008 and partners with the public sector to use research to test and evaluate programs that enhance public safety.

"I think one challenge is that there is this sort of perception, that all sorts of crime are up everywhere," said Roseanna Ander, executive director of the University of Chicago Crime Lab. "It's not all types of crime. It's gun violence that has increased very, very sharply."

According to Ms. Ander, the burden of the gun violence crisis is disproportionately concentrated in certain Chicago neighborhoods



and particularly specific groups. "If we're going to actually be serious as a city about equity, then we need to understand where the burden is greatest, and where the needs are the greatest and devote the needed resources equitably," Ms. Anders said. "And so I think it would be important for the university, but you know, all parts of the city government and philanthropy and others that have resources to take seriously this notion of equity."

According to Ms. Ander, the University of Chicago should think about employment opportunities for residents of Chicago, prioritize residents to create job opportunities and generate research.

In a broader scope, Ms. Ander believes the criminal justice system needs to be more effective when it comes to gun violence and reform.

"We need to focus on not having the criminal justice system involved in things that actually aren't really public safety issues," Ms.

Anders said. "So, you know, things like low-level arrests for substance use is an example of things that the criminal justice system gets involved in, that probably isn't really providing much public safety benefit, and probably creating real harm."

She expressed a need for more infrastructure to provide opportunities for individuals who were previously incarcerated or involved in violence to feel included in society.

"When you look at who's being victimized by gun violence, and who are the individuals who end up getting arrested for gun violence, the average age is something like 27," Ms. Ander said. "We do not have anywhere near the infrastructure that is designed to serve that population."

Myles Francis, project manager of the Chicago Center for Youth Violence Prevention, is working directly on these issues and hopes to see more funding opportunities for programs that approach violence from a community and trauma-informed perspective.

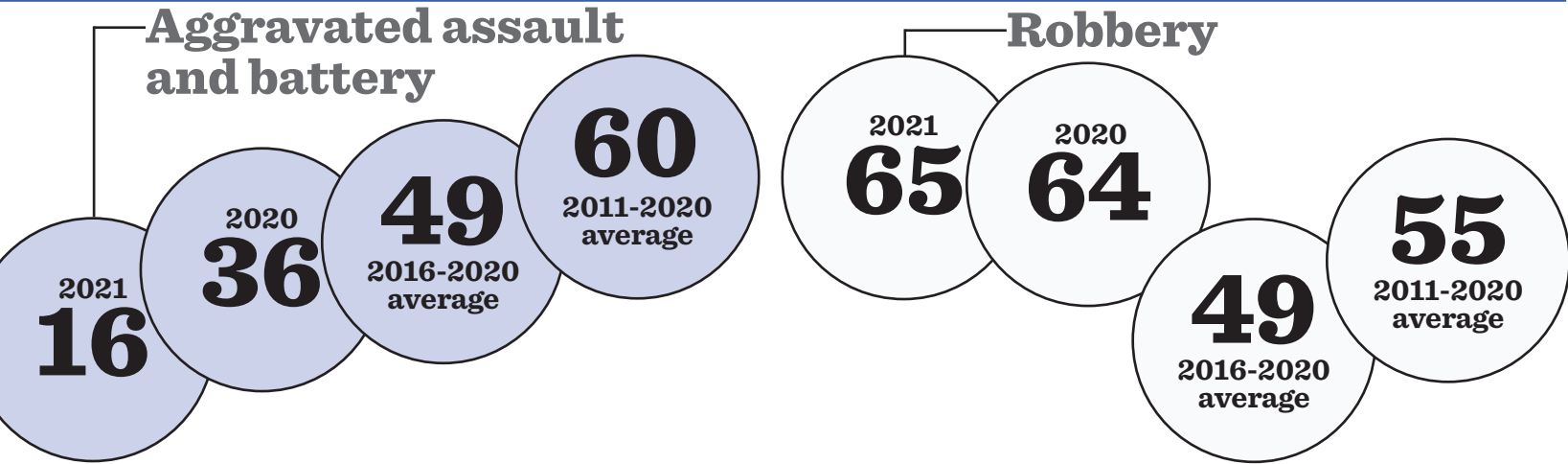
"We need to identify the people that are trying to do the work, trying to do street outreach and trying to tackle food insecurity," Mr. Francis said. "We also need to provide the funding necessary to connect those people and to give them the tools needed to implement their violence interventions at a high level and to evaluate them rigorously."

Mr. Francis said the University of Chicago needs to do a better job of listening to the opinions and suggestions of the community and incorporating them when taking action.

"The university has so many talented people, and so many resources, and so much access and so much money," Mr. Francis said, "and it owes a lot of that to the communities that surround it."

According to Mr. Francis, Hyde Park and the areas that surround the university present a unique challenge to public safety due to the "bubble mentality" it possesses.

"Hyde Park is a space where it seems like there isn't a full commitment, not from the community so much as the large power-wielding institutions, to address violence in a way that reflects how close they are to it," Mr. Francis said. "There is a community of people that would very much like to operate as if Hyde Park is downtown and doesn't have to engage with or worry about the violence that neighboring communities have to deal with."



# Elevator challenges generate anxiety

Long wait times impact students with disabilities

by LOUIS AUXENFANS  
ASSISTANT EDITOR

Class began five minutes ago, but Lorelei Deakin is still waiting at the Judd Hall elevator for the car to arrive. As the seconds tick by, the silence of the hallway sets in, and Lorelei grows increasingly anxious about getting to class.

The elevator has still not arrived, and she cannot use the stairs while in her wheelchair, so she starts considering other options to get to class.

Lorelei and other students with physical disabilities or injuries are frustrated about accessibility issues they encounter around Lab, which they say have increased their personal and physical stress.

Lab meets and exceeds ADA guidelines for building accessibility, according to Director of Operations Joe Wachowski, because it follows the higher standards set by the University of Chicago. However, students with disabilities say elevators break down once or twice every two months, making it hard to get around campus and causing them to be late for class.

There is no elevator to the second floor of Sunny Gymnasium, and the Judd fourth floor is available only by elevator or stairs, which makes it inaccessible when an elevator is out of service.

When an elevator is broken, junior Mayu Blume pushes herself to carry her backpack up the stairs, which is not ideal because she worries about further hurting her leg and hip.

Lorelei, a junior, pointed out that some abled students do not follow the elevator policy, which only allows faculty, staff and the students who checked out an elevator key to use an elevator. These extra trips mean that people with needs like her have to wait longer.



MIDWAY PHOTO BY MATT PETRES

**ELEVATED STRESS.** Students with disabilities or injuries report an increase in frustration and anxiety at the school’s lack of accessible elevators.

The elevators can also be slow to call, particularly the Judd elevator.

Lorelei said some ramps at Lab make it difficult for her to control her wheelchair. Some ramps are too long, so it becomes exhausting to use, while others are too short, making her gain too much momentum.

Ninth grader Hana Javed said problems she encountered in middle school using the elevator next to the Kenwood entrance still persist today. According to Hana, the elevator smelled horrible, due to bits of trash left from transporting garbage, and the elevator key was difficult to acquire.

“It was almost impossible to obtain without really putting up a fight, almost,” Hana said. “You had to prove your injury or disabili-

ty, and then they still wouldn’t really trust you, so you had to get a doctor’s note — you had to get other permission — and I didn’t really have time to prove it when I had to use it.”

Hana’s experience made her wary of the school’s investment in making improvements to accessibility.

“I know it’s been experienced by other people — this issue of trust between the school and yourself — and it kind of feels like there aren’t a lot of resources to help,” Hana said.

Senior Peter Stern had a broken leg for six weeks last fall and, while on crutches, encountered problems with elevator wait times and fire drill procedures.

During a fire drill in October, Pe-

ter could not easily use the stairs, so he waited in a stair landing’s help area and pushed the “press for help” button, but no one came. He said it was concerning to expect someone to come but have nobody show up.

While Peter’s injury meant he encountered these issues for only a short time, he understands the frustration students with disabilities have with accessibility issues.

“I was kind of able to suck it up and not suffer too much, but I could definitely see how, if this was something you had to deal with every day for the entire year, it could be extremely frustrating,” Peter said.

Given the constraints of working within a historic building, there were some limitations to address-

*“I know it’s been experienced by other people — this issue of trust between the school and yourself — and it kind of feels like there aren’t a lot of resources to help,”*

— HANA JAVED

ing ADA guidelines when the Historic Campus was renovated in 2013-2016.

Mr. Wachowski said additional elevators could not be added during the renovation due to space and funding constraints. The first elevator to need an update will be the middle school elevator, followed by those in Blaine and Judd, but as of 2022, no dates have been set for changes.

Yet, Mr. Wachowski hopes to install an elevator in Sunny Gym in the future and understands the complaints about long elevator wait times. He timed the Judd elevator before and once had to wait up to 12 minutes because there were different elevator queues before his.

Lorelei and Mayu acknowledge that there are issues, but they also appreciate the existing accessibility at Lab, and want to work to improve it. Both would appreciate faster, more responsive elevators.

Recently, Lorelei formed a committee with student groups like Eye to Eye and Students with Scoliosis to address accessibility issues at Lab and foster discussions with administrators.

Mr. Wachowski said that he and senior administration will meet later this month to address the issues raised by students with disabilities before the winter break.

“There are changes to be made, but the teachers I’ve been working with and administration members and committee members I’ve been working with are committed to making that change,” Lorelei said. “And if anybody has accessibility concerns, whether it impacts them directly or not, then I encourage them to speak up about it.”

## To meat or not to meat: Fast food vegetarian options

by SAMUEL BECK & ERICH RAUMANN

Diminishing the risk of heart disease and cancer, lowering blood pressure and cholesterol, reducing the amount of air pollution released from growing and raising animals and ending the cruel treatment of animals in mass factory farms — these are some of the reasons that many people are becoming vegetarian. As the health and environmental benefits of vegetarianism become more well known, consumers are beginning to turn to vegetarian alternatives for popular meat products.

In response, fast food chains that traditionally rely on processed meat, such as Chipotle, Burger King and KFC have all released vegetarian alternatives in an attempt to cater to these consumers with fast, affordable options. These plant-based alternatives, often made from soy or pea protein, claim to taste nearly identical to meat. Although the demand for these alternatives is high, there has been skepticism in the past over the validity of nonmeat substitutes, and many consumers tend to default to meat options. Many of those who tend to default to meat-based meals cite the often higher prices of vegetarian alternatives, and question the extent to which they really do taste like meat.

To see for themselves, two Midway reporters, Samuel Beck, a lifelong vegetarian, and Erich Raumann, a lifelong meat eater, tried meatless versions of Chipotle, Burger King and KFC’s popular dishes, assessing their taste and similarities to real meat, along with researching their price and health benefits. They discovered a wide variance in taste, texture and presentation, varying from almost inedible to nearly identical to the dish they imitate.



SOURCE: CHIPOTLE

**Chipotle**  
*Plant-Based Chorizo*  
(tested burrito with flour tortilla)

★★★★☆

1,005 calories (with rice and guacamole)  
45g fat  
2400 mg salt  
30g protein  
Similarity to meat: 7/10  
Price: \$8.50

The Chipotle Vegetarian Chorizo was rich, crispy, if not perhaps a bit dry, and added a nice touch to the overall flavor of the burrito. This, combined with its relative similarities to the genuine meat it substitutes, makes it a great addition to an order, and a viable alternative to genuine meat.

FINAL VERDICT: ✓



SOURCE: BURGER KING

**Burger King**  
*Impossible Whopper*

★★★★☆

629 calories  
34g fat  
1078 mg salt  
25g protein  
Similarity to meat: 9/10  
Price: \$6.19

While the taste and texture of the meatless patty does not resemble an actual hamburger, the Impossible Whopper is mostly indiscernible from the highly processed beef sold at fast food restaurants like Burger King or McDonalds. If you are looking for a vegetarian replacement for a classic fast food burger, the Impossible Whopper takes the cake.

FINAL VERDICT: ✓



SOURCE: KFC

**KFC**  
*Beyond Fried Chicken (6 nuggets)*

★★★★☆

480 calories  
27g fat  
1440 mg salt  
36 g protein  
Similarity to meat: 4/10  
Price: \$6.99

While the texture of the meatless chicken was firm, chewy, and incredibly dry, the flavor was intense and made up for some of the texture shortcomings. If you’re willing to chew a bit more than usual, this is a somewhat viable alternative to genuine meat.

FINAL VERDICT: ✗

# ‘Fundred’: Battling lead poisoning with art

Gallery enables students to create unique art on bills

by **ETHAN SWINGER**  
REPORTER

The latest feature in the Corvus Gallery provides students an opportunity to use art as a tool to spread awareness about lead poisoning. The Fundred Project will be featured in the gallery inside Gordon Parks Arts Hall until March 11.

The Fundred Project was created in 2006 by Mel Chin, a MacArthur Award-winning artist, in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. While in New Orleans, he discovered that 30-50% of inner city children had lead poisoning. The Fundred Project revolves around the idea of participants creating a “Fundred,” a unique picture drawn on a blank “Fundred dollar bill.”

Any Fundreds submitted before the spring of 2022 will be transported through an armored truck to the permanent Fundred Reserve in the Brooklyn Museum in New York. For Mr. Chin, the most important part of these bills are how they give children and underrepresented groups a voice through their unique Fundred.

“What’s invisible is also your voice if you were 7 years old. And then what’s visible to our country and the world, that’s largely about capitalism, is money,” Mr. Chin said in an interview. “So by tying in what’s visible and appreciated,

*“By tying in what’s visible and appreciated, connecting with the idea of your voice, maybe it can make a difference,”*

— MEL CHIN,  
FOUNDER OF THE FUNDRED PROJECT

connecting with the idea of your voice, maybe it can make a difference.”

The Fundred Project aims to increase awareness of and eliminate the threat of lead poisoning. According to Mr. Chin, children are being poisoned in the environment they live in, and those who live in low-income areas are hit the hardest.

Thousands of children are exposed to lead in water, dust, air and soil, causing learning disabilities, nervous system and kidney damage, and other physical issues.

Additionally, houses built before 1978 may be lined with lead paint, which can have easily digestible, and invisible, lead dust. The project has brought necessary attention to the issue of lead poisoning and provided ways for children to reduce exposure to lead.

“It’s not the big lead flakes either; it’s the dust. It’s the particles in the water. So particles in the soil that you can’t see. So [lead poisoning] can happen when you’re a kid,” Mr. Chin said.

In addition to spreading awareness to people at risk for lead poisoning, the Fundred Project has



MIDWAY PHOTO BY MALCOLM TAYLOR

**FUNDRED DOLLAR BILLS?** Until March 11, the Corvus Gallery will feature Mel Chin’s “Fundred Project.” The gallery showcases “fundred” dollar bills, which each have a unique drawing on them. According to founder Mr. Chin, each piece of art displays another voice that contributes toward the fight to raise awareness about the dangers and prevalence of lead poisoning.

received attention from Congress, which Mr. Chin believes represents everyone who has contributed to the project.

“We’ve met with Speaker Pelosi,” Mr. Chin said. “We’ve met with individual representatives, but what the project did over the years is to bring people who have drawn Fundreds from these neighbor-

hoods to come to D.C. to meet the representatives.”

Mr. Chin is confident that taking the Fundred Project to Washington, D.C., will encourage lawmakers to possibly create policies to combat lead poisoning.

“It’s going to take some really big policy decisions,” he said. “That’s why we focused in D.C. It’s going

to take ways of making the houses remediated in a proper way.”

Mr. Chin believes the impact of the Fundred Project lies in its ability to join the voices of Americans and represent them.

He said, “[The Fundred Project] is not me, but represents the people in America, the kids, adults that contributed to the project.”

## Best and worst of page to screen

### “The Lorax”

“The Lorax” movie is fun. It has an entertaining plot and well-constructed characters, but in the shadow of the original book, the movie is a disappointment.

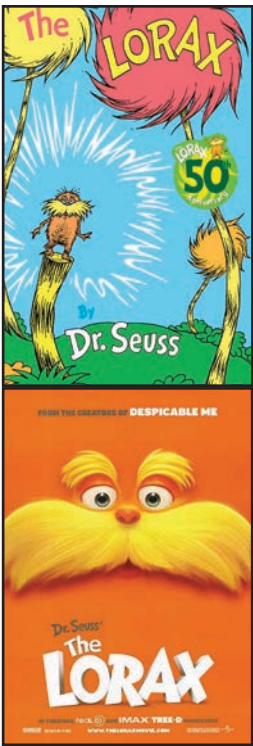
The impact of “The Lorax” book stems from the story’s simplicity. Its message is powerful and focused. Without the freedom to leave details off the page, the movie cheapens the intended message.

In the book, the child who listens to the Once-ler’s story is addressed as “you” and the Once-ler himself is never fully shown. The kid listening to the Once-ler is meant to be you, the hypothetical reader of the book. The Once-ler is faceless because he represents the many faces of older generations who harmed the environment. These choices are made poignant because “The Lorax” is a picture book: a story often read by parents or teachers to young children. The adults take on the role of the Once-ler, telling the story of their mistakes to the children who will inherit the world.

In the movie, “you” is replaced by a character named Ted Wiggins and the Once-ler has a face along with a fleshed-out backstory. The Once-ler has a demanding family that pressures him into making his reckless decisions, and Ted only wants to learn about trees to impress his crush. Ted often appears naïve and stupid, while the Once-ler seems sympathetic. These two changes are antithetical to the book’s intent.

The animation is colorful and exciting but somewhat devoid of texture

The “thneed,” an amorphous representation of meaningless capital in the book, is presented in the movie as a spoof mixture of a Snuggie and a Sham-Wow. The Truffula Trees that represent nature and define an ecosystem in the book, are simplified to an ascetic in the movie. While the book spreads a message about environmental decay, capital culture and hope for the future, the movie presents a muddled cynical message about decaying human nature, corporate surveillance and despair.



SOURCE:  
RANDOM HOUSE  
ILLUMINATION STUDIOS

## Some film adaptations miss target

by **CLARE O’CONNOR**, ASSISTANT EDITOR

“The Lorax,” “To Kill a Mockingbird” and “The Lord of the Rings” movies don’t have much in common, but they all share the same origin: they’re ad-

aptations of popular books. Some adaptations elevate their source material while others fall flat and smudge their books’ legacy. These movies show the range of how adaptations can succeed and fail.

### “The Lord of the Rings”

“The Lord of the Rings” movie adaptations successfully build off of the source material, respecting the invested audience while welcoming new viewers.

The secret of the adaptation’s success is J.R.R. Tolkien’s intricate storytelling and world-building ability. Tolkien is known for his almost arduously descriptive scenes and intricate complex lore. His detailed writing provides extensive guidelines for a visual interpretation of the text, making the film adaptation satisfying for fans of the books.

The movies cater to the books’ fanbase by including subtle details in the films that reference context that’s only in the novels. By including details like evidence of the events of the Hobbit in the films’ scenery and adding elvish inscriptions on props, the movies respect the books and the fanbase they cultivated.

The references aren’t distracting and, because the story follows a mostly straightforward plot, first-time viewers don’t get lost.

This balance is exemplified by the choice to create a director’s cut of the films.

Dedicated fans of the books can watch a longer version of movies that include details that the director, Peter Jackson, thought would be satisfying for fans, but confusing or boring to the general audience.

Every part of the adaptations were clearly meticulously planned. The shooting locations, the groundbreaking special effects, the intricate props, and the epic score all show incredible thought and effort as well as a hefty budget, culminating into a breathtaking love letter to the fantasy genre.

Tolkien’s “The Lord of the Rings” books were perfectly suited to transcend their medium, and the films delivered on that potential by sparing no expense in faithfully recreating the epic world created in the novels.

“The Lord of the Rings” franchise pulled off one of the most successful translations of a complicated fictional world from text to movie theaters by working to maintain the complexity of Tolkien’s masterpiece.



SOURCE:  
ALLEN AND UNWIN  
NEW LINE CINEMA

### “To Kill a Mockingbird”

The movie adaptation of “To Kill a Mockingbird” is widely recognized as one of the best film adaptations of a classic novel. The movie brilliantly condenses 281 pages into two hours and nine minutes of film without feeling rushed or hollow.

“To Kill a Mockingbird” can be distilled without jeopardizing the integrity of the story because the story presents an idealistic and uncomplicated narrative. That simplified narrative is believable because the story is portrayed from the perspective of a child. Full characters and major plotlines are completely absent from the movie adaptation, but those details were never necessary for the execution of the basic main plotline. Instead of exploring a more comprehensive plot, the movie focuses on thoughtfully depicting the novel’s characters. Award winning performances from actors Gregory Peck and Mary Badham do justice to the novel’s classic characters and brought the movie massive recognition. Because of the excellent acting and the simplified plot, the movie often feels more like a character study than a complex narrative.

While the book’s straightforward narrative strengthens its film adaptation, it also represents a common critique of the story. Critics argue that “To Kill a Mockingbird’s” story oversimplifies a dense and sensitive topic. Instead of depicting and exploring racism through Black characters and culture, the plot depends on white savior archetypes. “To Kill a Mockingbird” was revolutionary for its acknowledgment of long-lasting institutional racism within the American legal system, building the foundation for later films that would go beyond acknowledgment and open complex conversations. Looking back, the movie lacks much of the nuance required to properly address such massive issues, but this lack of delicacy was an essential part of making the movie so successful and culturally impactful.



SOURCE:  
J.B. LIPPINCOTT & CO.  
UNIVERSAL STUDIOS

# A CLASS ABOUT WHAT MATTERS TO YOU

It's your digital life. How do you understand media influence and navigate the evolving online and social media worlds? Analyze trends and current events. Learn to participate in a culture where you will create, publish and advocate. **Equip yourself to engage and express.**

ENROLL FOR 2022-23  
**MEDIA LITERACY & ANALYSIS**

# Fighting for representation

## City Council battles over number of Latino wards, first Asian ward

by **ANNGO**  
CITYLIFE EDITOR

The stakes are high as the City Council works through the process to approve a new map for the city's wards, made necessary every decade after the census to ensure wards have equal populations. Latino residents, now Chicago's largest ethnic group, are fighting for representation, and Asian residents are close to finally becoming the majority in their own ward, symbolizing a milestone in their representation as well as what may be the end of Chicago's political machine.

As the Black and Latino City Council caucuses clash, May 20 is the deadline for the Council to approve a new map for the city's wards, or the decision will go to the voters in a referendum. The City Council's proposed map, backed by the Black Caucus, has 33 supporters, eight short of what it needs to become official. The Coalition Map created by the Latino Caucus has 15 supporters.

Key leaders in each caucus have said they don't fear a referendum. According to Dick Simpson, a former alderman who is now a University of Illinois at Chicago political science professor, aldermen want to avoid a referendum so they don't lose control.

"Their first priority is to have a map for their ward that would get

them reelected," Dr. Simpson said. "Second priority is probably to have a map that has good representation from their racial group. The third priority is the federal standards, and an ideal map is compact, contiguous and ideally would preserve neighborhoods."

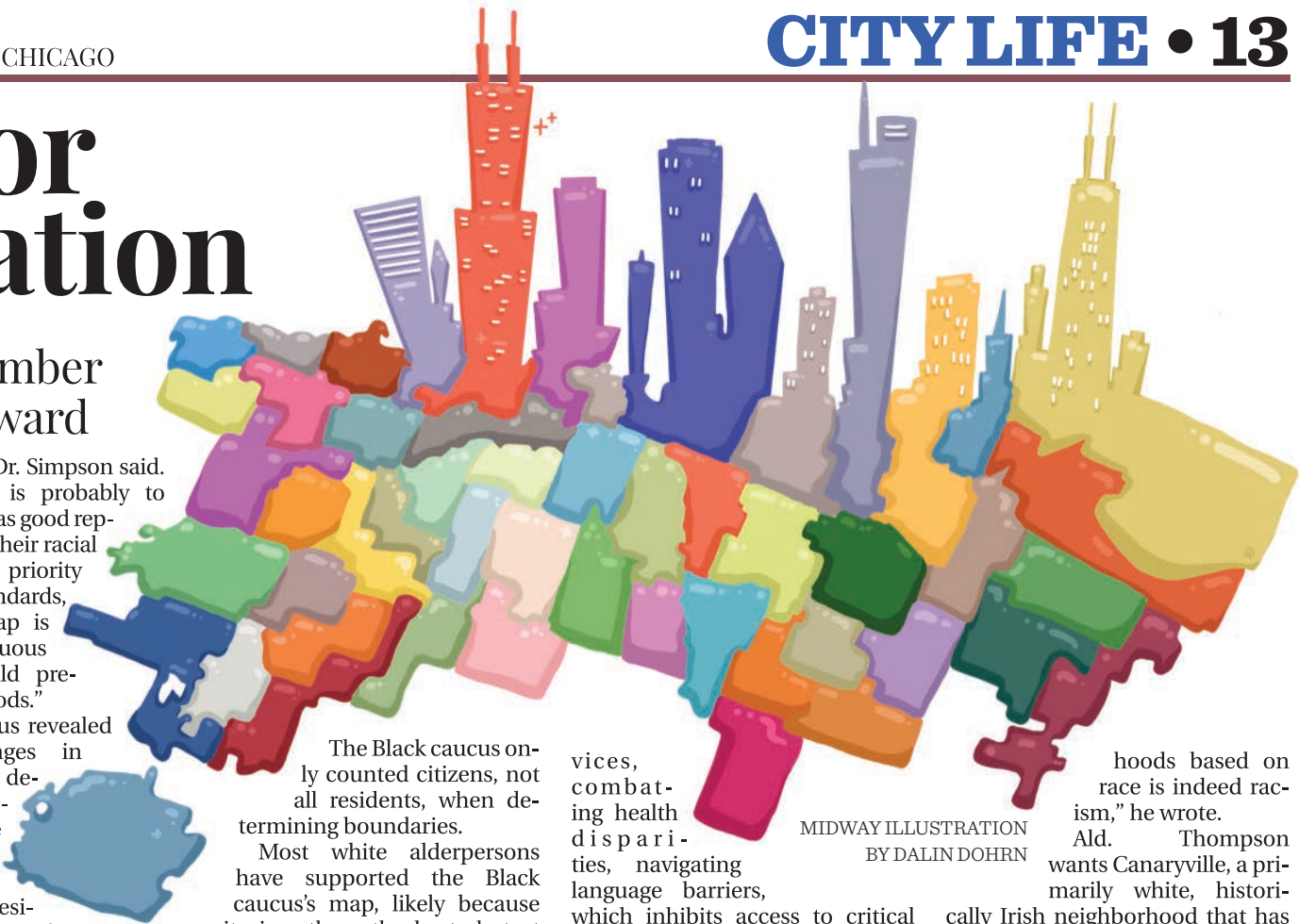
The 2020 Census revealed significant changes in Chicago's racial demographics. Chicago's white (31.4%), Latino (29.8%) and Black (28.7%) residents are nearly equal in population, and Asian Americans now make up 6.9% of the city. While Chicago's Black population has fallen by 10% since 2010, its Latino population has grown by 5%, and its Asian population by a staggering 30%.

The Latino Caucus wants to create more Latino-majority wards to reflect their growth. Ald. Gilbert Villegas (36th), caucus chair, says the 2012 map, which had 13 Latino and 18 Black-majority wards, underrepresented Latino residents' actual population. The Latino caucus says they won't accept a map with fewer than 15 Latino-majority wards. While the Black caucus has conceded one ward, they have made it clear they won't lose another.

*Mapping Change:*  
**2012-2022 Map:**  
0 Asian wards  
18 Black wards  
13 Latino wards  
19 other wards

**City Council Map:**  
1 Asian ward  
17 Black wards  
14 Latino wards  
18 other wards

**Coalition Map:**  
1 Asian ward  
16 Black wards  
15 Latino wards  
18 other wards



MIDWAY ILLUSTRATION  
BY DALIN DOHRN

The Black caucus only counted citizens, not all residents, when determining boundaries. Most white alderpersons have supported the Black caucus's map, likely because it gives them the best shot at maintaining control of their own wards.

### Gains for Asian representation

Both maps include creating Chicago's first Asian-majority ward. The Chinatown community is currently split between two wards, one of which has a 41% Asian population.

To express their grievances, they must communicate with two different alderpersons while having their power diluted between both wards.

Tommy Choi of the Chinese American Service League's Community Equity Research Center said Chinatown community leaders and residents have fought for their own ward for over two decades.

"An [Asian American Pacific Islander] City Council member would help us address the challenges of our community members facing and accessing social ser-

vices, combating health disparities, navigating language barriers, which inhibits access to critical services," Mr. Choi said.

According to Mr. Choi, 57% of Chinatown residents are foreign-born and speak their native languages at home.

After two years of the pandemic and an increase in anti-Asian harassment and violence, the prospect of an Asian majority ward has been a point of hope for the Asian American community.

"This is a very historic moment for us," Mr. Choi said. "We can finally accomplish what we've been fighting for for decades."

The current alderman representing the area, Ald. Patrick Daley Thompson (11th), proposed his own ward boundaries that would encompass Chinatown and keep together the neighborhoods the other maps encroach on but with a 48% Asian population.

In a letter to his constituents Ald. Thompson wrote the new map should keep neighborhoods together instead of creating boundaries based on race.

"Dividing areas or neighbor-

hoods based on race is indeed racism," he wrote.

Ald. Thompson wants Canaryville, a primarily white, historically Irish neighborhood that has played an essential role in the Daley family's political legacy, to remain in the 11th ward.

Ald. Thompson is one of two aldermen who haven't shown support for either the Black or Latino caucus maps.

According to Dr. Simpson, the City Council has four main factions: liberal centrist, progressive, conservative and the machine political bloc. The Daley family belongs to the latter.

"It is a power struggle among multiple factions," Dr. Simpson said, "from each of the political points of view there's a lot at stake."

Whether or not the remapping process goes to a referendum, the final map the city will use will have profound consequences for Chicago's next decade of politics.

"[The factions] are all vying for power," Dr. Simpson said, "and who gets elected and which of those blocs make a majority and who's the next mayor will determine the future of all legislation in the city."

# Hyde Park's last few African wares stores persevere

by **CHLOE MA**  
CONTENT MANAGER

Tucked between the shiny new storefronts of Sweetgreen and Philz Coffee on 53rd Street in Hyde Park, sits a small but resilient community of stores selling African art, clothing, personal items and home goods. Some have been in business for decades, but changing demographics and gentrification of Hyde Park have forced out or closed many of these stores.

An ever changing subcommunity of this neighborhood includes the multitude of African wares stores scattered from 53rd to 47th streets. Most of these stores specialize in African wares and art. Some started as businesses and later blossomed into a community. The store owners and customers now make up a body of people that aim to share with and educate others about their culture and history.

During the pandemic, a lack of customers has exacerbated the effects of gentrification. Despite this, the community has persisted in its efforts to expose others to African culture and commerce.

**Kilimanjaro International:**  
Hidden away on 53rd Street near the core of downtown Hyde Park, the charming shop Kilimanjaro International is far more than it seems. On the outside, passersby can see an array of colorful jewelry and artistry, bright clothing and various works of art. On the inside,

this shop lifts up its community by supporting local homeless youth artists.

Not only does Kilimanjaro International sell American art, but also art from African artists. The owner of this store, who refers to herself as "Mother Rose" or "Sister Rose," hopes that the young people she supports will continue to make a positive difference in Hyde Park like she has for over 35 years.

Mother Rose also connects homeless artists with artist mentors in order to help them create their own businesses.

Mother Rose also said that the gentrification of Hyde Park has been pushing small businesses like herself out by raising rent, along with the people she strives to support and uplift. She used to rent the storefront now occupied by Five Guys, but was forced to move when the rent was raised too high.

The pandemic has also put a strain on businesses, with fewer people going out to brick-and-mortar shops. She hopes to continue helping people learn how to run a business, but without the revenue from in-person customers, it has been hard.

She expressed her concerns and devastation at this fact, stating that she wants to help the homeless people she sees in pain.

"The homeless I see in the streets, in the cold, we need to help and reach people but it takes money to reach people and the busi-

ness now is not doing really well," Mother Rose said.

Kilimanjaro International is still open for business, located at 1305 E. 53rd.

**Kayra Imports:**  
Colorful fabrics and clothing, a twinkling wall of earrings and the smell of incense wafting through the air are the first things to be noticed when entering Kayra Imports.

Run by Alassane Soumare, Kayra Imports has three locations: 53rd street, 87th Street and 83rd Street. The stores sell African clothing and fabric, as well as custom designs and styles.

Mr. Soumare has been in Hyde Park for 11 years but has been in the United States for over 20 years. According to Mr. Soumare, approximately 95% of his customers are Black and come from Chicago and its surrounding suburbs.

"I haven't seen a lot of changes myself, since I've been here over 20 years," Mr. Soumare said in regard to the demographic of Hyde Park.

He has built up a loyal clientele over the years and credits this to the strong Illinois community. Mr. Soumare says that the best part of operating Kayra Imports is meeting unique people and making lifelong friendships

**Frontline Books:**  
Frontline Book Publishing, a bookstore located on Harper Avenue and 52nd Street, caters to any-



MIDWAY PHOTO BY MALCOLM TAYLOR

**IN THE COLD.** Owner of Kilimanjaro International, Mother Rose, stands with the art she frequently displays outside.

one interested in books about African and African American culture and people.

"We serve books that you wouldn't find in other book stores, about our people," the owner, Sekoutafari, said. "There are a limited number of Black bookstores now; at one time, there would be three or four hundred nationwide."

Frontline Books has been in Hyde Park for approximately 18 years and is one of the longest-standing Black bookstores in the area. Sekoutafari credits his store's endurance to the support from the community that surrounds him. He said the store's received support from both Black and non-Black people in the community who have all pushed to

keep the shore open.

He also talked about the Black book stores that had existed in the neighborhood for upwards of 30 years that no longer exist due to rising rents in the area.

As the Black Lives Matter movement gained traction, more young people visited his store to educate themselves, according to Sekoutafari. He said many people come in wanting to learn more about racism, the Black Panther Party, Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X.

One of Sekoutafari's favorite memories of working at his store is when Michael Jackson's father, Joe Jackson, insisted the store stay open after hours so that he could go in and look after having a meal next door.



CREATE

MORE

THAN

JUST A BOOK

Working as a team, use your voice and creative freedom to record history for the high school community. Gain and develop skills in writing, design, publishing, communication and leadership. **Make memories people will cherish.**

ENROLL FOR 2022-23  
**BEGINNING YEARBOOK JOURNALISM**

# Students sign on: Athletes commit to college

by **AUDREY MATEI**  
CONTENT MANAGER

Email. Practice. Compete. Visit. Interview. Repeat.  
For most of the Class of 2022, the summer of 2020 was a period of relaxation after a hard sophomore school year unexpectedly going virtual due to a global pandemic. The stress only worsened for student-athletes trying to continue playing their sport in college.

The time had finally arrived when college coaches could contact them. They spent countless days emailing college coaches, weeks missing pivotal practices and competitions, and months worrying “How am I going to get into college if I can’t even talk to my coach face to face?”

After an unusual 18 months filled with a lot of hard work, some pressure was finally alleviated for the committed college athletes with the future looking bright.

Five seniors are committed to continue their athletic career in college: Emma Baker, Colin Leslie, Amanda O’Donnell, Emilee Pak and Zach Smith.

David Ribbens, athletics director, said it’s great to have so many high-level athletes in the Class of 2022 and that the school has a part in helping students through recruitment.

“On average there are only two to three Division I athletes every few years,” Mr. Ribbens said, referring to the most competitive division in the NCAA. “Oftentimes our coaches, counselors and myself are a big part of supporting the student’s decision to commit. It’s kind of a collective effort.”

Amanda is an épée fencer committed to Yale University in Connecticut, which competes in the Division I Ivy League. She began fencing at age 7 and competes for her club, Windy City Fencing, on both a national and international level. Amanda is ranked 13th for all fencers under 20 in the United States and has received nine medals at national competitions.

Recruitment was Amanda’s long-term goal, and she said the process was more stressful than anticipated.

“Recruiting has always been in the back of my mind, but it wasn’t the reason I was doing the sport,” Amanda said. “The coaches can definitely put some pressure on you,” she said, explaining how college coaches curate teams. “In general, the schools were all on different timelines, which was pretty stressful.”

Amanda said she is looking forward to the bond of being a part of a college team but doesn’t expect much difference in terms of competitiveness.

“Right now, we have one to two team events a year as a club, but in college there is much more of a team feeling and I’m su-



MIDWAY PHOTO BY ANDREW BURKE-STEVENSON

**ASPIRING ATHLETES.** In a ceremony organized by the U-High athletics department on Nov. 10, seniors sign their letters of intent. By signing, they pledged to continue their athletic careers in college at the DI and DIII levels.

per excited for that,” she said. “But I’m also not too nervous. The schedule is just a little more than my club has right now.”

Emma committed to play tennis at Cornell University, another Division I Ivy League school. Emma has won the individual IHSA State Championship this year and has won a state championship with the U-High team twice. Because her father used to play tennis as well, Emma began playing at the early age of 5.

She competes individually for the United States Tennis Association and played two years for the U-High varsity team.

Emma said she wants to use her college experience to achieve her goals and better her game.

She said, “All-Ivy singles or doubles is something I want to achieve. I just want to win matches for my team, perform well, and have a good relationship with my coaches to develop my game.”

Tennis teammate Emilee committed to Wellesley College in Massachusetts, a Division III school in the New England Women’s and Men’s Athletic Conference. She also plays individually and for the U-High varsity team, contributing to the two state titles.

Through her junior and senior year she was communicating with coaches and felt some pressure with the process.

“Colleges were looking at tournaments and rankings, and it was stressful in that sense,” she said. “But it wasn’t that bad because in the second semester of junior year I was at a tennis academy, so I had a lot of

people helping me so it was actually kinda exciting.”

Zach committed to play basketball at Oberlin College in Ohio, a Division III school in the North Coast Athletic Conference. He plays for his club team, the Illinois Stars, and he has played four years of U-High varsity basketball.

Throughout high school he reached out to many colleges and attended showcases to introduce himself to different schools. However, he found that the coronavirus pandemic negatively impacted his recruiting process.

“For basketball, the junior season is a really important year for AAU and school because you commit in senior year [...] and I kinda lost that. Also, colleges were behind on recruiting because of that year, too,” he said.

Colin committed to play baseball at College of Wooster in Ohio, another Division III school in the North Coast Athletic Conference.

He plays for a travel team, J. Rush Athletics, and played four years of U-High varsity baseball.

He started contacting coaches at the end of sophomore year and verbally committed to Wooster before his senior year after showcases and visits.

Finally committed, the soon to be collegiate student-athletes of the U-High can celebrate not having to worry about the pressures of recruitment and have a lot to look forward to in the next four years.

## Committed athletes



**Emma Baker**  
Tennis



**Cornell University**  
Ithaca, New York



**Colin Leslie**  
Baseball



**The College of Wooster**  
Wooster, Ohio



**Amanda O'Donnell**  
Fencing



**Yale University**  
New Haven, Connecticut



**Emilee Pak**  
Tennis



**Wellesley College**  
Wellesley, Massachusetts



**Zach Smith**  
Basketball



**Oberlin College**  
Oberlin, Ohio

# Senior brings enthusiasm, exhibits optimism

by **RYAN CLARK**  
OPINION EDITOR

When Sarah Solomon arrived at Lab as a junior and started soccer for the first time in her life, her coach hardly knew what to do with her. But in a brief span of time, she has proven to be much more than an exemplary athlete. To her teammates, she’s a leader, a mentor and, above all, a friend who inspires with her unwavering optimism, sincerity and dedication — to others and to the three sports she deftly balances.

For Sarah, now a senior, participation in sports is much more than just an extracurricular activity.

“Sports are my safe place. They are the place I need to go at the end of the day to breathe and think about nothing for a bit and run,” she said.

Sarah loves sports so much that she participates in back-to-back seasons of volleyball, basketball and soccer. Having done dance, gymnastics, flag football, cross country and swimming in the past, sports in all varieties constitute a way of life in which she can channel her competitive instincts for good.



MIDWAY PHOTO BY MALCOLM TAYLOR

**COURTSIDE CONNECTIONS.** Senior Sarah Solomon looks for an open teammate to pass to in a basketball game on Feb. 1.

“Being able to have a space where I can feel less anxious or my most confident has allowed me to figure out who I am as a person,” Sarah said.

When she lived in Hamilton, New York, near Colgate University, the college’s student athletes and her cyclist father acted as athletic role models for her.

Now she has become a role

model in her own right.

For sophomore Stella Sturgill, who plays on the girls soccer team, Sarah has helped her to think about the point of exercise with a healthier mindset: instead of coming from feelings of inadequacy about one’s body, working out can be about caring for oneself and others in a positive way.

For the soccer team, Sarah has

demonstrated her encouraging and friendly character both in her work as a goalie and outside of games. She has set up social gatherings and introduced her teammates to weightlifting to strengthen in the off-season.

“She is kind of like the glue, and she is the mutual person that connects people,” Stella said.

Furthermore, Sarah has a striking candor.

“I don’t think there is anyone who is more authentic to herself, and I think she carries that authenticity through everything she does,” Stella said.

Her dedication to her friends comes alongside persistent practice, which includes focused drilling and off-season work.

For Maya Atassi, a junior who plays basketball with Sarah, Sarah is a reassuring and energizing captain.

“She always has this optimism. She’s always looking on the bright side of things,” Maya said.

Through gestures large and small, whether it be bringing snacks before the game or finding ways to entertain others on bus rides, Sarah combines team spirit with earnest friendship.

“When she sees you she hugs you, when she sees you down she asks you how you are — it’s just the little things that make her who she is,” Maya said.

Likewise, volleyball teammate Ariana Vasquez, a senior, feels revitalized by Sarah’s good-spirit-edness and motivation to always train harder. For her, Sarah didn’t even feel like a new student.

“Her attitude on the team was just so positive and she was always bringing everyone up and keeping the energy there,” Ariana said. “She gives the best hugs ever.”

Despite her highly demanding athletics schedule, Sarah said that she doesn’t feel it’s a particular struggle to balance everything. Athletics is simply how she can be the kindest and strongest version of herself, and for all her friends, and it shows.

A pandemic and moving to another state couldn’t repress her indomitable spirit, and she’ll surely keep playing more sports, always improving and remaining a source of hope and joy in her teammates’ lives.

“I don’t know how I did it,” Sarah said, but it sure was good that she could.

The 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics is different than any other. Here is a look at a Games that will be filled with...

# COVID, controversy, competition

by **AUDREY PARK**  
ASSISTANT EDITOR

Athletes from all over the world prepare year-round for the most anticipated days of their career: the Olympic Games. Perhaps the most prestigious milestone an athlete can reach, the Olympics are filled with moments of pride for themselves, their team and their country.

Due to current unusual circumstances like COVID-19 and political tensions, the 2022 Winter Olympics in Beijing, which began Feb. 4 and continue to Feb. 20, are unlike any before. Coverage will be televised on several TV channels, including NBC, USA, CNBC and the official Olympic Channel. The games can also be viewed on apps such as Peacock and NBC Sports for free.

Over 90 nations will compete across 15 different sports, and a total of 109 medals will be awarded. The Beijing Games will feature seven new events ranging from women's monobob, an event included partly to increase women's involvement in the Olympics, to ski jumping. The sports are categorized into the three general groups: ice sports; alpine, skiing and snowboarding; and Nordic events, with the full schedule available on the Olympics website.

Beijing is the first city to have hosted both the Summer and Winter Olympics. It was selected as the 2022 Winter Olympic venue back in 2015. The decision was controver-

sial due to the area's limited annual snowfall, however the country beat Almaty in a bid and by four votes at the 128th International Olympics Committee session.

One of the biggest differences between this year's Winter Olympics and those past is the regulations in place against COVID-19 to counter the recent surge of cases of the omicron variant. International spectators have generally been prohibited from attending the Olympics, though a small number have been selected to attend.

According to the medical expert panel chair for the 2022 Beijing Olympics, athletes, press members and officials who have tested positive for COVID-19 in the past 30 days are mandated to provide five negative PCR tests before entering China. Should an Olympic participant contract COVID-19 within China's borders, they will be required to isolate until they test negative twice.

Although there is a vaccination policy, the International Olympics Committee describes "fully vaccinated" as participants following their own countries' guidelines. Though strongly encouraged by the IOC, a booster shot is not required. Lastly, the Olympics will utilize a Closed Loop System, a type of shield that will minimize contamination and transmission by creating a "bubble" and close off the game arenas from the rest of the city.

Besides the challenges posed by the pan-

demic, intense geopolitical tensions have created controversy surrounding this year's Olympics, specifically due to its location in China. Many athletes have expressed unease and disapproval of the games being held in China because of the country's alleged human rights abuses.

The Biden administration announced a diplomatic boycott against China, which will still allow U.S. team athletes to participate in the 2022 Olympics while halting official delegations such as U.S. diplomats and general official representation. U.S. athletes participating in the Games will proceed as normally, with "full support" from the Biden administration. Britain, Australia and Canada joined the diplomatic boycott.

Although the boycott seems significant, Christy Gerst, U-High Comparative Politics and Global Relations teacher, explained how Olympic boycotts such as at the 1980 Moscow Olympics Games historically have failed to make their intended impact.

"I view this boycott as something insignificant to the larger scheme of China and the United States' relationship," Ms. Gerst said. "It is moreso the message of the people that is powerful."

Despite the peculiarity surrounding the Beijing Olympics, athletes worldwide will continue to deliver their finest performances, making the Games just as exhilarating as any other.



MIDWAY ILLUSTRATIONS  
BY DALIN DOHRN

## QUICK Q:

What are you most looking forward to watching in the Winter Olympics?



"I'm most looking forward to snowboarding, just because I remember really admiring Shaun White in the last Winter Olympics, and also ice skating because I feel like ice skating is just a really beautiful sport."  
— Kara Tao, senior



"I like watching the half pipe a lot. I always found that one really interesting. I guess watching the tricks they do, I feel like there's a lot of potential that people can work with for the half pipe."  
— Spencer McKula, senior



"The opening ceremony's always really nice because each country does it so differently, and they integrate their own culture into the opening ceremony."  
— Sara Kumar, junior



"Probably skiing and snowboarding. I go snowboarding on some winter vacations and it's just exciting to see skilled snowboarders do their work."  
— Austin Kim, sophomore



"I am most looking forward to figure skating as I myself am a figure skater. I am excited to watch Kamila Valieva since she is favored to win, and I have been watching her for a long time."  
— Brianna Chang, 9th grade



"I'm looking forward to watching the hill skiing. I think that's real good because I like to see how those guys come down, and I've been watching that for a long time."  
— Terry Shanks, staff

COMPILED BY JOAQUIN FIGUEROA  
AND AMY REN

## Tournament trivia: 22 facts about the Winter Olympics

by **TÉA TAMBURRO & PETER COX**

This year's Winter Olympic Games will be held in Beijing from Feb. 4-20. Here is a list of interesting facts about the games and their history.

1. Beijing hosted the Summer Olympics in 2008 and is the first city ever to host both games.
2. This year will be the 24th Winter Olympic Games, with the games first taking place in 1924 in Chamonix, France.
3. These Olympics will set a record with 109 events over 15 disciplines in seven sports. This is an increase of seven events since 2018.
4. Due to concerns about COVID-19, no foreign spectators will be allowed at the games, and tickets are not being directly sold to the Chinese public but instead distributed to specific groups.
5. 90 out of 193 eligible countries will participate in the Games. This is because many tropical nations choose not to participate in the Winter Olympics.
6. The United States team includes 222 athletes.
7. Norway has won the most Winter Olym-

pic medals with 132 gold, 125 silver and 111 bronze medals.

8. China will send 406 athletes to the Games, a massive increase from the 82 they sent to the 2018 Winter Games.
9. The estimated budget for the 2022 Winter Olympics is \$3.9 billion (China spent \$43 billion on the 2008 Summer Olympics).
10. When the Winter Olympics began, the only sports included were bobsleigh, curling, ice hockey, Nordic skiing and skating.
11. The mascot of the 2022 Winter Olympics is an animated panda named Bing Dwen Dwen. "Bing" means ice in Mandarin Chinese and symbolizes purity and strength. "Dwen Dwen" means robust and lively, and represents children.
12. The Winter Paralympics will be held March 4-13, 15 days after the Olympics conclude.



13. The official emblem of this year's Olympics is "Winter Dream:" (dōng mèng) and features the Olympic colors (except black) and the colors of the Chinese flag.
14. Only two people have won gold medals in both the Summer and Winter Olympics. Swedish skater Gillis Grafström won golds in figure skating in the 1920 Summer Olympics and the 1924 and 1928 Winter Olympics. American athlete Eddie Eagan won a gold medal in boxing in 1920 and a gold in bobsleigh in 1932.
15. Until 1992, the Summer Olympic Games and the Winter Olympic Games were held in the same year, and the next Winter Olympics, after 1992, was in 1994.
16. Because the Russian government was found to have tampered with lab data that it provided to the World Anti-Doping Agency in 2019, Russia will compete under the "Russian Olympic Committee" designation, which was also used in the 2021 Summer Olympics.
17. The United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee has recom-

mended that athletes use burner phones while in China due to concerns about online activity being monitored.

18. The 2026 Winter Olympics are scheduled to be in Milan and Cortina d'Ampezzo, Italy.
19. China has won 12 of its 13 Winter Olympic gold medals in skating.
20. The four indoor venues originally constructed for the 2008 Summer Olympics will be part of this year's games, and the Beijing National Stadium will host the opening and closing ceremonies.
21. The iconic Olympic flame is brought to the country hosting the games via a relay beginning in Greece and usually going through several different countries before reaching its final destination. The tradition began at the 1936 Berlin Olympics.
22. The Big Air stadium is the first permanent location for Big Air ski and snowboard jumps and was built on a decommissioned steel mill.

Find 22 additional facts at [uhighmidway.com](http://uhighmidway.com).