



University of Chicago Laboratory High School

## PAGES 6-7 • IN-DEPTH

This summer, the Supreme Court ruled against affirmative action, banning race-conscious admissions from higher education. Read reactions and analysis to this monumental decision.



## PAGE 8 • ARTS

In her quest to reform Indian stereotypes, actress and writer Mindy Kaling, may be negatively impacting her own community in the way she portrays ethnic women in her recent productions.



## PAGE 10 • SPORTS

After suffering a serious injury in 2022, senior Mahin Schneider was unable to play soccer last season. Now, he has returned to the field a stronger, more dedicated player and team member.



# A warm Woods welcome

*Principal Woods brings dedication to new community*

by MIA LIPSON  
News Editor

A student runs along the court at a basketball game at a school in the Noble School Network under the glaring lights in front of a cheering crowd. In the midst of the game, he turns his head to the audience and sees his teacher, Martin Woods, cheering in the stands, and he smiles.

When he was a teacher, Mr. Woods wasn't just there for sports games. From musicals to dance recitals to cheer competitions, Mr. Woods was always present, supporting his students from within the classroom and cheering them on the outside of it, too.

That is at the core of who he is as a leader and administrator: an educator who cares deeply for his students and encourages them to pursue what they love.

Throughout the first few weeks of this school year, Mr. Woods has devoted himself to learning about Lab's community, and as U-High's new principal, he is committed to fostering a safe, supportive learning environment that promotes balance and belonging.

At Lab, Mr. Woods would like to emphasize the importance of academic-life balance, which he first experienced as a high schooler himself while attending a Chicago institution similar to Lab in its emphasis on academic rigor. His parents' support in his extracurriculars, from singing to theater to track, he said, shaped his approach



Midway photo by Carter Chang

**OPENING ADDRESS.** U-High's new principal Martin Woods gestures to the crowd of students at the back to school assembly. Mr. Woods is eager to get to know students and embrace the Lab community's spirit and closeness.

to education.

These experiences instilled the value of curiosity and personal development in schools.

According to Mr. Woods, a key part of academic-life balance consists of pursuing one's passions and making the most out of all Lab offers.

"I want to impress upon students the value of taking advantage of everything Lab provides, from Hyde Park to the athletic program here to your clubs and to leadership opportunities," Mr. Woods said. "Lab is really rich with opportunity, and as a community, we can continue to access that."

Reinforcing a sense of belonging also remains at the heart of Mr.

Woods' goals for Lab. Mr. Woods wants to continue the work to ensure Lab embodies the "beloved community," a term coined by Martin Luther King Jr. that ensures every individual shares compassion and care for one another to boost a sense of belonging.

In order to create that welcoming community, Mr. Woods believes cultural humility — self-reflection and work to address one's own biases — is a key avenue to achieve safe and welcoming spaces throughout the school.

"It takes humility to commit to learning about other people and honoring differences, and you have to work at that. We must have awareness that we carry with

us as we move in every space. So it's in our interactions at lunch, on the soccer field, and in the classrooms," Mr. Woods said. "It's really those micro-interactions that we have throughout the day that can be small touch points for learning about other people and having people learn more about us. We have to look at every interaction as a learning opportunity and as a way to make a positive impact on our community."

Mr. Woods believes supporting students' mental health is another necessary way to achieve the "beloved community."

"My job is really making sure all members of the community care enough to pay attention to one an-

other and have those necessary conversations," Mr. Woods said. "I think that putting the emphasis on the academic-life balance will also create a less stressful experience for students. That balance allows students to take breaks and engage in activities that bring them joy, which certainly affects their mental and emotional well-being."

Currently, one of Mr. Woods' main goals is to gain a better understanding of the Lab community, and appreciate the work that has been done by students, faculty and administrators to live up to Lab's mission.

To do this, Mr. Woods has been getting to know the student body, throughout the beginning of school.

He is doing this by organizing advisory visits in the upcoming weeks and maintaining an open door policy, which he encourages students to utilize.

"Those are the experiences that remind me of why education chose me and why I chose education, because it is truly the impact that we make on our students that brings me the greatest joy," Mr. Woods said.

At Lab's upcoming games, Mr. Woods will show his spirit under the blazing lights of Jackman Field. He will stand on the bleachers cheering on a new team, as the Lab community unites to celebrate the students, start of the year and, importantly, Maroon pride.

"I'm just really having an amazing time getting acclimated to this institution that we all love and that the world celebrates," Mr. Woods said, smiling warmly. "It's been a pleasure getting to know the students, the faculty, the administration, and I've just had the best time falling in love with Lab."

# New schedule prompts mix of convenience, irritation

by VICTORIA WASHINGTON  
Opinion Editor

With more than two weeks into the 2023-24 school year, students have embraced the 8:30 a.m. start time and lab periods but find co-curricular weeks to be stressful and harder to get work done.

The new schedule was presented last winter after more than a year of planning and features standardized 50-minute periods and course start times that have been well received by students.

Due to the standardized class periods, junior Chani Patterson enjoys increased free time during the day. She finds it easier to get work done and can manage her time more efficiently.

"I actually really enjoy the new schedule because I have a free period and I have an hour every single day to do my work," Chani said. "The lab periods are really effective because I can finish all my work during the school day. I have more time outside of the school day to do other things like ACT prep and relaxing."

**"I love the 8:30 start. I hated going to class at 8 a.m., and now I can take my time getting up in the morning."**

Sarra Grimshaw, senior

Ninth grader Mia Lane appreciates the elimination of long periods for every class, which were replaced by four 75 minute lab periods for science classes.

"In middle school, the really early start and 90-minute periods were really bad first thing in the morning," Mia said. "I like that we have 50-minute periods now and only occasional lab periods."

Senior Sarra Grimshaw appreciates the later start time, especially because she doesn't have a first period class.

"I love the 8:30 start," Sarra said. "I hated going to class at 8 a.m., and now I can take my time getting up in the morning."

While she appreciates the free time in the morning, Sarra already noticed how having every class period meet on Mondays and Fridays can be stressful, particularly when she has homework due the next day. Although some students have been able to take advantage of the late start, junior Jashan Gill finds it harder to commute.

"It's nice that I get to wake up later, but then I also go to bed later, so it didn't really change that much," Jashan said. "It has made it tighter for me to catch the train because I take the Metra at 3:38 p.m., so I have to rush from school."

The new schedule also incorporates eight co-curricular weeks into the school year. During typically scheduled lab classes or free periods, students are required to attend community assemblies and workshops.

Sophomore Maggie Yagan relies on time during Labs C and D to complete assignments. She finds it more difficult to plan when those periods are taken up by assemblies. "Teachers assume that we have



Midway photo by Danny Aronsohn

**MORNING RUSH.** Students pile into the high school entrance, which opens at 8:15 a.m. for the middle school and 7:30 a.m. for the high school.

way more time on Wednesdays than we actually do during co-curricular weeks," Maggie said, "It becomes inconvenient when we have co-curricular weeks and then nothing changes around the amount of homework."

Chani enjoys having time on Wednesday afternoons and Tuesday mornings to study.

However, she understands the importance of bringing the community together for regularly scheduled programming.

"I think they are nice for gathering students together and giving us a break from labs," Chani said, "but I feel that they are unfortunately taking away from necessary homework time."



# German exchange students explore Lab



Photo provided by Ellis Domenick  
**THE CHICAGO EXPERIENCE.** Paul Alber, German exchange student, and Ellis Dominick went to White Sox game with other exchange students.

*For two weeks, students took in Chicago's culture*

by **KABIR JOSHI**  
Reporter

On Sept. 7, 15 German exchange students arrived in Chicago from Ludwig-Thoma Gymnasium in Prien am Chiemsee, Germany, for the 12-day yearly exchange program Lab hosts to foster a greater understanding and appreciation for German culture beyond what they learn in school.

This is the second year after COVID-19 canceled the trip that U-High will be hosting the German exchange students, and the first year the program fully returns to what it used to be, allowing students to experience a different living space and culture and build bonds overseas.

The Lab exchange program aims to create a safe environment between students, allowing them to explore Chicago and learn about how lives may differ across the world.

Exchange student Magdalena Baumgart has enjoyed spending time around downtown Chicago and Hyde Park.

"At Lab, everyone is very friend-

ly and very inclusive. The teachers have all been great," she said. "I like Chicago because on one hand you can walk through the big buildings, but on the other you can walk in the park, enjoy a coffee or read a book."

Junior Oliver Go has enjoyed the friendship that he has developed with his exchange student.

"I have learned a lot about German culture, and Germany in general, through my exchange student, and I'm sure he has learned a lot about America from me. Together we have experienced each other's everyday lives which are very mundane to one but are more interesting to the other," Oliver said. "Living with another person allows you to forge a strong connection with them."

U-High students visited Germany this summer, experiencing German culture and schools in the mountains, where they stayed for three weeks.

In addition to improving their German skills, the exchange program allows students to experience the contrast of living in the rural part of a country as compared to their experience at home.

The students have many activities planned for their exchange students, such as sightseeing tours on the river and a visit to

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Oliver Go, junior  
”

Steppenwolf theater.

In addition to these activities, Lab and exchange students also work on a common project that focuses the culinary arts between the two cultures.

Susanne Pralle, the head of the exchange program and a German teacher at Lab, has worked for months with the school in Germany to make this a unique and fun experience for all the students involved.

Ms. Pralle said, "It's a really great contrast for our students to go somewhere that mountainous, almost storybook alpine landscape... It's a great contrast for the German students when they get here because they get to experience what it's like to be in a major metropolitan area in the US, as well as the difference in the way the cities look."

## Students adjust to new security with relief, resentment

*Kenwood Mall gate, assemblies need student IDs*

by **HALEY MAHARRY**  
& **EDWARD PARK**

Lab's new security measures that require more frequent use of student IDs for access and attendance, and U-High student reactions range from appreciation to aggravation.

Students are now required to tap IDs at assemblies and to unlock the new gate along Kenwood Mall that is locked from 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. on school days.

Junior Mihir Epel bikes to school daily, and appreciates the new gate for the extra security it provides.

"I think that it is a positive addition to the school, because I've heard a lot of people having their bikes stolen out on Kenwood Mall," Mihir said. "And personally, I think it's good to increase the security so that less bikes are stolen."

Sophomore Addy Johnson, hasn't encountered any issues with the gate.

"I get that the gates are there for

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I get that the gates are there for safety reasons and also maybe to keep people inside of the school and know who's coming in and out of them. So far, they don't really make a difference in my life.”  
Addy Johnson, sophomore  
”

safety reasons and also maybe to keep people inside of the school and know who's coming in and out of them," Addy said. "So far, they don't really make a difference in my life."

Sophomore Maggie Yagan dislikes the gate, so when she walks to school, she enters through the Judd Hall entrance to avoid the gate and the morning crowds.

"I think they make this place feel like a prison and don't actually do much to make me feel safer," Maggie said.

Senior Leyton Mueller has had an overall positive experience with the gates, except for getting



Midway photo by Bryce Light

**TAPPING IN.** A student taps their ID to enter the gate along Kenwood mall, which was installed in August and locks daily after 8:30 a.m.

locked out of the gym building after a morning run.

"I didn't have my ID and I had to wait for a couple minutes for someone else to open the door for me," he said.

Sophomore Camila Bravo appreciates the gate, yet also has her own doubts about it.

"I think the security gates are well meaning and perhaps do make the school safer," Camila

said. "But I find it a little pointless because they are sometimes open, and they can lock out students who forget their ID."

Student IDs are also used for attendance at mandatory assemblies during co-curricular weeks. During the first assemblies of the school year, significantly higher attendance meant longer lines and extended time to enter the assembly hall.

"Last year definitely people weren't going to assemblies, but there is something about this year that makes the assemblies feel different," junior Ilana Umanskiy said.

Senior Austin Kim understands why the measure was implemented, even though it causes a slight inconvenience.

"I think that it was also implemented with good intentions at heart. I also think that there are probably ways to circumvent it. Even if there are, I think the general sentiment is that it's a little annoying," Austin said. "I know that some people want to skip the assembly, but I think this is probably more effective at keeping people at school."

### news in brief

#### Lab purchases lifeguard training supplies for CPR

After receiving a \$2,000 grant from the Parents' Association last spring, Lab purchased the BigRed LightSaving Mannequins for the CPR and lifeguarding rotations in the P.E. department.

Joyce Grotthuss, who teaches CPR, a required course for juniors, believes students will benefit from the new supplies. The new equipment has LED lights to indicate direct feedback of blood flow. The mannequins also light up, providing immediate feedback to let students know that CPR is given correctly.

"I think students would benefit from seeing the lights, and hearing the clicks, versus my verbal feedback, which is what we usually do," Ms. Grotthuss said.

Josh Potter, who also teaches lifeguarding, a P.E. elective, also believes the equipment will be useful.

"It knows how deep you're going. It knows how fast you're compressing as well," Mr. Potter said.

"So it helps you really get a realistic idea of what it is to save someone's life and to really restart the heart."

Ms. Grotthuss is eager to put the equipment to use this year.

"I'm very excited and happy to try them, and I just can't wait," she said. "I mean, I love teaching CPR, because I feel like it's a life skill for everyone to have."

— Edward Park

#### Midway staff, individuals recognized with awards

The U-High Midway is a finalist for The Pacemaker, a top national award, while individual students from the Midway and U-Highlights are finalists for 10 national awards.

The Midway is a Pacemaker finalist for the fifth time in a row, with 16 previous finalist nominations. The prestigious Pacemaker Award is set to be announced on Nov. 4, and the Midway is among 54 schools to receive this recognition for its dedication for excellence in student journalism. Mid-

way Editor-in-Chief Audrey Park expressed her pride in the journalism program.

"The awards are definitely a reflection of the amount of work the staff puts in. I'm very proud of the members on the team for all their hard work," Audrey said. "It's very rewarding, and it's definitely the energy that we want to continue for years to come. And for this year especially, we have things planned, and this is definitely something we can achieve again."

A spread in the 2023 U-Highlights received an award for Design of the Year: Yearbook spread.

Amy Ji, U-Highlights editor-in-chief, is grateful for the award.

Amy said, "We're all super proud of getting this award and seeing it all come together. I would say this is one of the hardest spreads we worked on, mainly because it was challenging coming up with ideas on how we can fit in the words and interviews we got from students."

— Milo Platz-Walker

## Administration promises data security after transcript breach

by **TAARIQ AHMED**  
Digital Editor

After saying their goodbyes to U-High at the end of the year, certain members of the Class of 2023 received the high school transcripts of their peers due to an unintentional security leak.

The administration sent a message to the students who had received the transcripts asking them to delete the emails and attachments, and sent an apology letter to the families of the graduating class.

Sarah Arehart, Laboratory Schools registrar, said the incident was caused by human error, and she understands frustration regarding the incident.

"A transcript is a private document," Ms. Arehart said. "It covers your academic journey, and sharing that information with anybody else, without permission, is always difficult. We take

student privacy seriously when it comes to data management."

Brian Hewlett, director of information and registrar services, said that months before the accident happened, staff in the registrar's office were already exploring ways to improve the system.

Last school year, the staff discovered Parchment, a third-party platform for safe and secure documentation flow used by the University of Chicago. Parchment was not used during the incident. The platform is still being arranged for use later this school year.

Ms. Arehart said she is hopeful that a system like Parchment will prevent a future similar error.

"I think the implementation of Parchment is evidence that we already had student privacy on our minds," Ms. Arehart said. "It's part of a larger shift that we are making in order to make sure that those digital records are all secure."



# Fact or fiction

Teens use social media as news source, risks included

by CLARE McROBERTS  
Features Editor

It used to just be a step-by-step cinnamon roll tutorial. A group dancing in sync to a popular song. Maybe a few ferrets, compelled by their owners to dance along to a catchy tune. But more and more, social media has become a place for creators to spread what they consider news. A claim about how COVID-19 is transmitted. An assertion about a coming election. Even a bogus death notice of a popular influencer.

Nearly a quarter of people younger than 30 get their news from TikTok on a regular basis, a recent study from the Pew Research Center found. Users, from Gen Z especially, find that creators on popular social media platforms can be useful and appealing sources of information. Still, there are risks.

"In some ways, they can be really helpful and we can trust them if they've earned our trust. But in other ways, you need to maintain your skepticism because you have to realize that they aren't doing original reporting or they are not journalists," said Stephanie Lynn Edgerly, a professor and associate dean of research at Medill School of Journalism at Northwestern University.

In August, a post appeared on the Instagram account of Tay Tian, known as Lil Tay, announcing the death of her and her brother. It sparked a flurry of attention mourning and reminiscing on the internet personality, who had faded from the spotlight as a pre-teen several years ago.

The post was wrong.

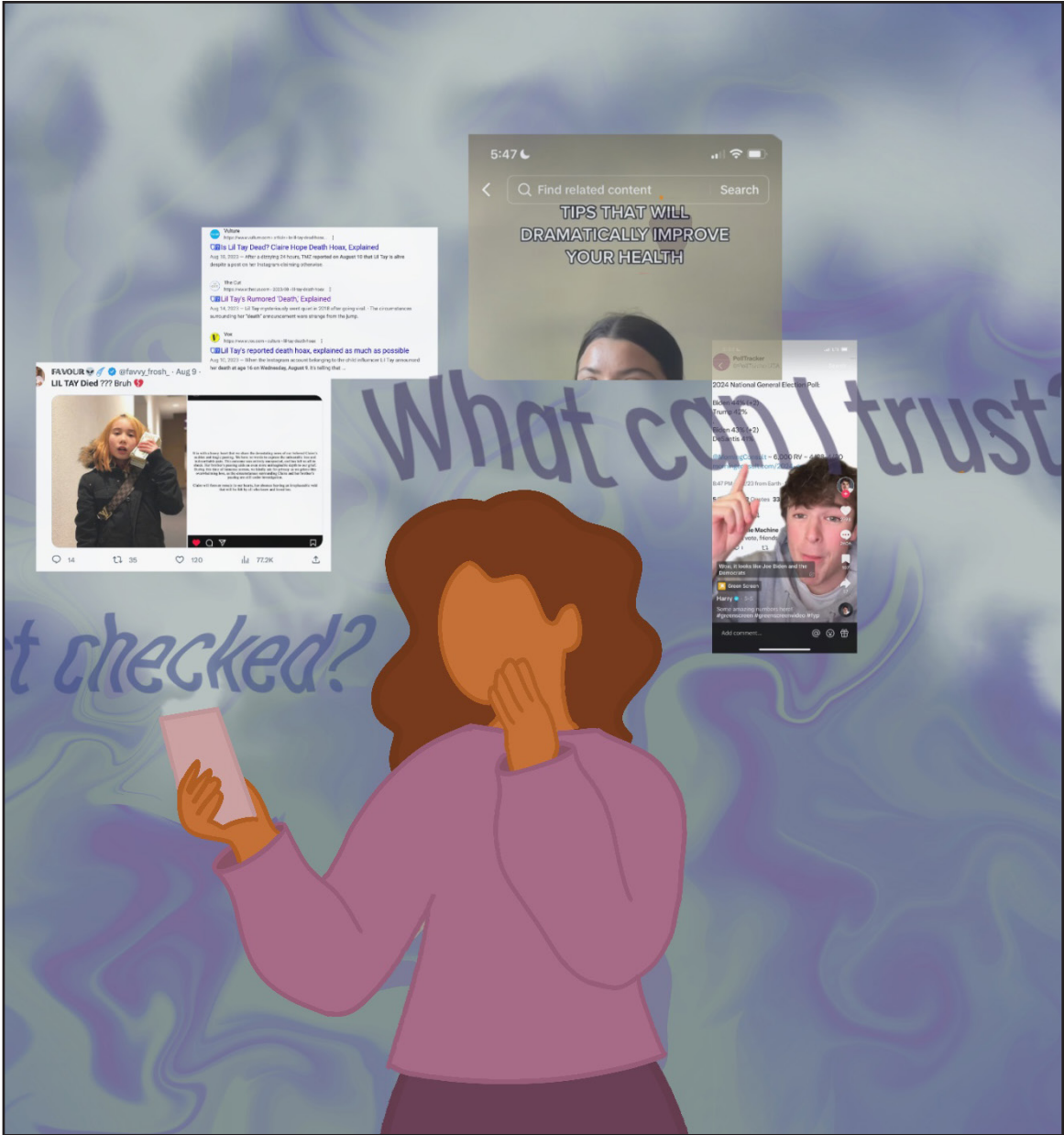
**"I think a lot of decisions that mainstream news media make are not geared toward the target audience of teenagers or young adults."**  
Stephanie Lynn Edgerly,  
Northwestern University

A day later, Lil Tay and her brother announced through their family that they were alive and that the account had been hacked. "I definitely believed Lil Tay's death at first," sophomore Bayaan El-Bawab said. "When I found out it was fake I was really annoyed because it seemed like such a terrible thing to lie about."

Sometimes, people are drawn to a particular influencer who they come to trust over time. This year, a report from the UK's Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism found that in terms of news, audiences are paying more and more attention to these social media creators over traditional reporters. In other cases, anonymous or lesser known posters spread information which gain popularity on outlets like TikTok and Instagram.

"I definitely know a lot of people who get a lot — if not all — of their current news from social media," said Justin Salomon, a ninth grader.

Ava Cohen, a junior, said that she gets most of her news from The New York Times and other traditional media outlets. Still, like



Midway illustration by Clare McRoberts

**MEDIA MAYHEM.** Almost a quarter of people younger than 30 — Gen Z especially — use TikTok as a news source on a regular basis. Although many find it more digestible than traditional media sources, there are risks.

her peers, she sees reports — especially about lighter topics — on social media.

"There have been times where a friend or myself have just assumed the information is correct because it's more pop culture related," Ava said, "but usually it's more funny that we believed the story in the first place."

There is a reason behind this shift in where young people are getting their news, Dr. Edgerly suggested.

"I think a lot of decisions that mainstream news media make are not geared toward the target audience of teenagers or young adults. I think they're serving people who

are homeowners, who are parents, who are retiring," she said. "I would say it's probably, one part, distrust, but I think it might be more a part of feeling unattached, or feeling like you're not the target audience for some of these news media, and therefore you look elsewhere."

Relying on influencers for news becomes a problem when they step out of their field of knowledge, potentially misleading followers.

"People can have this kind of expertise in certain domains. It might be fashion, it might be sports, it might be science and technology. But I think where that starts to get

a little blurry with the psychology is when those lines are crossed," Dr. Edgerly said. "We get people who we know are really popular or have some sort of expertise or notoriety in fashion, talking about a political issue. Or in sports and they talked about political issues."

Where this leaves students is working to sort truth from fiction themselves.

"It's a lot easier to get more reliable information from these newspapers: they're edited a lot more closely than just social media posts," Justin said. "Not saying that social media posts are bad for getting information — some can be pretty useful."

# Subtitles gain popularity among Gen Z



Midway photo by Grace LaBelle

**DOUBLE TASKING.** A student watches a video on their phone, using the subtitles feature. In a 2022 study, almost 60% of Gen Z respondents said they use subtitles.

by MILO PLATZ-WALKER  
Reporter

Through the bustling and chaotic passing period, a student sits beside their locker swiping through TikTok after TikTok. Unable to hear the TikToks due to the whirlwind of footsteps and chatter surrounding them, one feature illuminates the dialogue, making it possible for the student to continue watching the content: subtitles.

With each swipe, white text surrounded by a black box flips across the screen, allowing media to be consumed in a newer and more accessible way. Something previously seen to be reserved for foreign films and people with hearing impairments has now been adapted to today's ever-changing social media trends.

In April 2021, TikTok, the short-form video platform, added an automatic closed captions feature for creators to quickly add to their videos. This feature has proven helpful to people in many additional ways depending on the types of videos presented on their TikTok "For You Page."

According to a 2022 study by YPulse, 59% of Gen Z survey respondents and 52% of millennials said they use subtitles — sig-

**"Sometimes the subtitles take away from the accents and characteristics of the people. It can sometimes be fun to hear people's accents and learn about the person or character."**  
Jonah Vaang, senior

nificantly higher than older generations.

For sophomore Theo Lindau, this feature has bridged a gap found in content from diverse backgrounds, where accents may be harder to understand.

"I do like automatic captions on TikTok," Theo said. "Like, if you see people from other countries talking and you don't know exactly what they're saying, the captions can help"

Since TikTok started, its creators have found trending music in the background can boost viewer engagement. But, many other users find such music distracting from the main purpose of the video.

In cases like these, subtitles can be beneficial for audiences who find themselves getting distracted by other aspects of the video. This is the case for senior Jonah Vaang.

"Sometimes on TikTok I enjoy seeing subtitles," Jonah said, "because they often have background music that can be distracting."

Bryce Light, a junior, echoed many teenagers when he admitted that he initially didn't pay much attention to subtitles. However, as he continued using the app, he began to see subtitles more and more.

"As I kept scrolling and scrolling, I realized that it was actually super helpful," he said.

Bryce's realization underscores the subconscious integration of subtitles into the TikTok experience.

Although subtitles may help viewers stay focused on the main purpose of the video or movie, some students said that they may also take away from certain enjoyable features.

"Sometimes the subtitles take away from the accents and characteristics of the people," Jonah said. "It can sometimes be fun to hear people's accents and learn about the person or character, whether it's a movie or TikTok."



# Shanks shares spark

*Terry Shanks receives recognition for positive, lasting impact on community*

By **CHLOË ALEXANDER**  
Arts Editor

Since 1998, Terry Shanks Sr. has stood watch at his desk in the boys locker room. He has guided a quarter-century of graduating classes from 3rd to 12th grade, being a familiar face and a pillar in the Lab community. Now, Mr. Shanks is being honored for his commitment to students.

This honor, the Billy Streeter Award for outstanding community service, has meant a lot to Mr. Shanks, marking a new start for his family after so many years of hard work, a lifetime achievement recognizing where he came from and all that he has been through.

Growing up on the South Side, Mr. Shanks still recalls how drug and gang violence infested his neighborhood. He remembers the friends who ended up in jail and died young.

"I think that that was a great gift that [God] gave me and, man, I get overwhelmed when I think about it because, like, I have so many of my friends who didn't make it," Mr. Shanks said. "I got some that did, but a lot of them died or, a matter of fact, one of my dearest friends died in jail. My friends would be proud of me."

Mr. Shanks fosters lasting connections with the students who use the boys locker room, teaching them respect and sportsmanship. He is a constant figure in their lives who they can trust.

"I don't want to be no iconic guy. I got that there's a difference in just being nice to people and treating people with respect," Mr. Shanks said. "I think that's it a lot to be interactive, just making people comfortable letting them know that if they need some more, if I can help them, or whatever I could do for them, just let me know."

Mr. Shanks has been the model of a recipient for the Billy Streeter Award. Junior George Stackert is one of the students who have been impacted by Mr. Shanks since third grade. George feels elated about Mr. Shanks' efforts being noticed.

"He's always been, like, a positive presence in the boys locker room. He's really fun to talk with," George said. "He's a great guy. I think it's cool that his efforts are being noticed like that. You know, just in the small things, like, helping with lockers and everything to



Midway photo by Kaden Moubayed

**A PLEASANT PRESENCE.** Terry Shanks was given the Billy Streeter Award for outstanding community service and for his longstanding commitment and impact on students from third grade to graduation.

just bigger things to, just being real supportive of me as a person."

The Billy Streeter Award is in honor of former Lab custodian Billy Streeter, who made a difference in the lives of Lab students by creating a welcoming and friendly atmosphere.

Whitney Amuchastegui, a development associate for communications and stewardship at Lab,

said, "For me, this award truly emulates and embodies the focus Lab places on educating the whole child, and caring for each individual as they are ensuring that they are each seen and appreciated. And that we are all doing this together."

With all the qualities the award committee looks for when reviewing the many nominations,

Mr. Shanks checked all the boxes, from service to impact. Many colleagues nominated him, and the majority of nominations for the award were for Mr. Shanks.

A multitude of comments were given regarding why he should get the award, but a few highlighted in the award announcement on Aug. 28 talked about his relationships with students, being a role model

## memories

Community members share how Mr. Shanks has been a big impact at Lab:

"Mr. Shanks is our elder statesman in the P.E. department, and he brings wisdom and common sense to our daily lives. He's there as a good support system and a good employee and a good friend. He would always be very helpful and intervene when kids were having conflicts in the locker room. He also had a good relationship with parents. He's always been a resource of seeing kids in a different light than what we may see in the classroom or on the field."

— Daniel Dyra, P.E. teacher

"When I first met Mr. Shanks he was very kind and welcoming, and he makes this place feel warm and homey, and it's kind of like family now. He's just very thoughtful, and I think that's what kids see — I think that's what teachers see — is that he's not only caring but he even goes a level deeper to just personally know every single person."

— Josh Potter, P.E. teacher and soccer coach

"Mr. Shanks is the heart and soul of the Lab community. He really just makes my day. ... In the morning and after school, I always see him there. He's always got a smile on his face and he's always dapping me up. He makes my day better."

— Brayden Kenny, junior

for students and getting to know every student who passes his post.

"The relationships that he has developed over his 25 years at Lab continue beyond students' graduations," said one nominator. "He keeps in regular contact with alumni, helping them organize games on weekends, and keeping up with their successes in life. He is usually one of the first people that returning college students ask to see when they come back over a break or a long weekend."

With this achievement, Mr. Shanks said he and his family will be thankful for the rest of his life.

# Teenager inspires bill protecting child influencers

By **KATIE SASAMOTO-KURISU**  
Editor-in-Chief

A student scrolls through videos on her TikTok page after a long day at school. After some time, one pops up from a family vlog channel, centering a small child. Curious, the student goes to YouTube and begins exploring the page, stopping at a vlog of a failed April Fools' prank on a little girl by her parents. The student keeps scrolling through videos, and the more she sees, the more she realizes something is very wrong.

This student is Shreya Nallamothu, a junior at University High School in downstate Normal, Illinois, who inspired the country's first bill addressing the rights of these influencers.

The bill, signed into law last month, ensures a portion of the earnings a child makes being featured is saved in a trust until they turn 18.

The effort was a culmination of a lot of things she observed in the

“As I saw these cases of exploitation, I was really surprised to see that there was nothing in place for the children, and I wanted to try to help them.”

Shreya Nallamothu, activist

child influencer industry throughout the pandemic on social media.

"I kept seeing family vlog channels and child influencers on my For You page. And so as YouTube started recommending these videos they also started showing me videos of exploitation," she said in an interview with the U-High Midway. "As I saw these cases of exploitation, I was really surprised to see that there was nothing in place for the children, and I wanted to try to help them."

Her initial interest in the top-

ic stemmed from an appreciation of her own childhood and the experiences she had with her family growing up.

"To me the issue was important because I was someone who was able to grow up with a lot of those embarrassing moments tucked away, hidden safely in a cabinet and a bunch of VHS tapes," she said. "To see these children not have the ability to opt out of being in the family blog, but then being used for money and as a cash cow for the families as their only income was just appalling to me. And I couldn't believe that some people didn't have the basic privilege that I was afforded."

Now when Shreya scrolls on her For You page on TikTok or on her recommended YouTube page, she won't see rampant child exploitation on social media, but happy kids who are protected under a law finally granting them the rights they deserve, at least in Illinois.



Photo provided by Shreya Nallamothu

**MAKING A MARK.** Shreya Nallamothu stands next to Illinois Senator David Koehler, who she worked with to advocate for a bill preventing the exploitation of child influencers.



# Safety changes emphasize distrust

As students entered school on Sept. 5, instead of an easy flow into the building, they encountered a large, daunting metal fence with gates blocking the Kenwood Mall entrance to school. The only information regarding the stark security change was sent in an email in July briefly mentioning the gate being installed.

From needing your Lab-issued ID to gain entrance to the school grounds, to tapping them again to confirm attendance at assemblies, lots of U-High security changes were made without as little as a survey sent out to students for input. These new changes caused a shock to the systems of many students, leaving questions running through their heads, while assembly protocol changes emphasize lack of administrative trust in students.

In order for Lab to continue fostering a two-way trust between the administration and students, there must be more transparency regarding major changes to the school.

No formal communication has been sent to students explaining what prompted the changes. While the construction of the gate could have been related to new safety protocols from the University of Chicago, the possibility of a previous incident threatening students perpetuates fear of the South Side and reinforces stereotypes.

In these stereotypes, the “Lab

as the  
midway  
sees it.

This represents the opinion of the U-High Midway editorial board.

Schools bubble” is furthered, along with the creation of a physical barrier around the school. The bubble is the isolation of Lab from the rest of the South Side community through religious, racial, socio-economic and political representation — or lack thereof. Creating a barricade around the school isolates it from the rest of Hyde Park.

This bubble has always been there in theory and idea — as an independent school connected to the University of Chicago, we’re already far removed from the Hyde Park community and the South Side. But now, the daunting mental gates surround the school, creating a display of the bubble that exists and practically advertising to the community that we are this separate institution dropped in the middle of your neighborhood.

The fencing around Lab sends a message that we as students need to be protected from danger surrounding the school. Because we lack information regarding an in-



Midway illustration by Eliza Dearing

cident prompting these gates, it leads to the thoughts that in the Hyde Park community, there is something, or some people, in the area threatening the school. As young adults, U-High students are capable of handling information regarding major changes to the school. We can understand and get behind the decision to put a barricade around Lab if the administra-

tion is transparent with students. The efforts by the administration to make Lab safer are not being taken for granted. With hopes for the future with safety, the administration is asking for student trust, but, in order to build that, there needs to be background information and discussion with students — informing the community about what is going to change.

We are mature enough to be trusted with the information regarding changes in our school. Sharing with students what is going on in the school, asking for input with decisions and finding out about how students feel unsafe at school are all solutions to fostering a more transparent and trusting relationship between students and administrators.

# Self-advocacy in tennis is just as important as the game

by **Jaya Alenghat**  
Reporter

It’s a hot summer day in the middle of August, and the crowd watches as you battle for match-point. The rally feels never-ending until you hit an amazing shot down the line. You watch as the ball hits the white line of the court and bounces up to hit the fence, but right before you can scream in celebration, your opponent calls, “Out!”

You look up in confusion as her team applauds and chants. Is it



Jaya Alenghat

too late to protest? Will the other team think you are a sore loser? Now you are second-guessing yourself: maybe you were too exhausted and tired to see that the ball was out. Tennis players around the world face physically and mentally challenging situations during their matches. Rather than criticism, tennis players should receive support when they advocate for themselves or question the play. Even if you are not a tennis player or fan, it is important to understand that actions which might seem aggressive at first, can be derived from unfair and difficult situations. Self-advocating in situations like these actually require a lot of bravery.

In Coco Gauff’s first match of

the 2023 U.S. Open Women’s Singles against Laura Siegemund on Aug. 28, Ms. Gauff argued with the umpire about her reluctance to give her opponent time violations. From the beginning of the match Ms. Gauff was irritated with how long her opponent was taking between points, but she only spoke out about it in the third set when Ms. Siegemund claimed she was not ready as Ms. Gauff served.

What was most noticeable about this moment was the crowd’s encouragement. While some might argue that tennis crowds should be quiet to allow concentration, players often need support in times like these.

According to an NPR article, Ms. Gauff’s self-advocacy made

“  
Rather than criticism, tennis players should receive support when they advocate for themselves.  
”

the issue “much harder for the umpire to continue to ignore.”

In addition to the crowd’s cheers, Michelle Obama, who was watching the match, defended Gauff’s actions. In an article on usopen.org, Ms. Gauff said, “[Michelle] said it’s good to speak up for myself. I think she was happy that I spoke up for myself today.” Tennis players have to learn how to deal with nega-

tive thoughts and self-doubt during games, and hearing encouragement makes this much easier.

Much of the media has compared this incident to Serena Williams’ 2018 U.S. Open match against Naomi Osaka. In this match, when Ms. Williams was accused of cheating, she argued with the umpire and smashed her racquet. Ms. Williams has been stereotyped as aggressive and violent when many are not aware of how mentally difficult a tennis match can be.

Ms. Gauff’s overwhelming support this year has demonstrated society’s improvement over time. Tennis players should not be labeled as hostile or mean during matches when they are simply speaking up for themselves.

# Disney should prioritize remakes with diverse characters

by **Skye Freeman**  
Reporter

When Walt Disney Animation Studios released its live-action remake of “The Little Mermaid” in May, the well-known media company received backlash for casting an African American woman to play the lead, with protesters claiming the deviation from the original appearance “ruined” the original magic.

Yet, a dark history of Disney and



Skye Freeman

other artists whitewashing the diverse past of the Middle Ages may hint at an attempt from Disney to re-introduce culture into their films and appeal to a wider audience of new generations.

The majority of Disney’s films are based in a medieval setting and focus on the European version of the Middle Ages (500 C.E. to 1500 C.E.), a fantasized aesthetic. Only 11 main characters out of the 54 produced Disney films are nonwhite, so it’s time to acknowledge that the Middle Ages occurred globally, and were not homogeneously white.

Ariel from “The Little Mermaid” is... a mermaid. Why does a

fictional being’s race matter? Why is the new live action remake of “Snow White” sparking criticism for Disney choosing to replace the original seven dwarves with a new set of diverse characters of varying races and sizes, even though it is a healthy attempt to avoid reinforcing harmful stereotypes from the 1937 film?

From Buddhist art found in Viking burials to Muslim North Africans occupying the European Iberian Peninsula from 711 C.E. to 1492 C.E., medieval prejudice did exist, resulting in the exclusion of mentions of race in European writing to feed into modern mainstream perception. There are many new

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While the old Disney aesthetic will forever be unmatched, it’s time for a new set of diverse characters.  
”

movies and stories Disney can produce from all walks of life at this time period or in another, and stop repeating the same stories in different forms of film.

While the old Disney aesthetic will forever be unmatched, it’s time for a new set of diverse characters, remakes or not, and par-

ents can decide what to show their kids. Younger generations should be able to turn on the TV and see characters that resonate with parts of their identity, without having to question whether they are worthy enough to be a Disney princess.

In all, these Disney characters are just fictional. While some people may be upset by the deviation from the original appearances, why does a mermaid or a fairy or an ice princess have to be a specific race? Disney should focus on producing new films instead of remakes, with more historically accurate backgrounds for future generations to appreciate their identities in every form.

u-high midway

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1362 East 59th Street  
Chicago, Illinois 60637  
Phone 773-702-0591  
Email [midway@ucls.uchicago.edu](mailto:midway@ucls.uchicago.edu)

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mission and editorial policy.

The Midway is an independent newspaper that strives for excellence across all of our platforms. We are a student-run newspaper for the entire University of Chicago Laboratory High School community. We aim to not only represent the multitude of thoughts and experiences at U-High but also inform community members through transparent, timely and complete reporting.

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

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

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# Affirmative APPREHENSION

On June 29, the U.S. Supreme Court banned affirmative action in a 6-3 decision, terminating race-conscious admissions in higher education.

The court concluded that affirmative action violated the 14th Amendment's equal protection clause. This decision has sparked controversy and questions regarding the application process.

## 6 key events leading up to the affirmative action decision

### 1978: Regents of University of California v. Bakke

The Supreme Court rules a university's use of racial quotas unconstitutional but that accepting more minority students with affirmative action could be constitutional.

### 1996: Hopwood v. Texas

The Supreme Court bans race-conscious admissions, financial aid considerations and recruiting policies in public and private institutions. In the same year, California voters approved Proposition 209 which ended state affirmative action programs.

### 2003: Grutter v. Bollinger

Following two lawsuits that challenged the University of Michigan, the court ruled in favor of the university, allowing it to still consider race as a factor in applications.

### 2014: Schuette v. Coalition to Defend Affirmative Action

After the majority of Michigan voters argued against affirmative action, the Supreme Court upheld the ban of affirmative action in higher education, adding that state voters should have the right to decide.

### 2016: Fisher v. University of Texas

A white student at the University of Texas at Austin said she was unfairly rejected from the school in 2008. The Supreme Court sent the case back to the lower court, and still, the high court upheld affirmative action at the university by a close vote of 4-3.

### 2023: Students for Fair Admissions v. Harvard/University of North Carolina

The Supreme Court ruled against affirmative action at Harvard and the University of North Carolina, prohibiting public and private colleges from considering race in admissions decisions.

— compiled by Audrey Park

## Students debate ruling

By SAHANA UNNI  
Editor-in-Chief

For some Black students the Supreme Court decision to end affirmative action in college admissions was disappointing but not surprising. Although senior Katie Williams had anticipated the ruling for two years, she said the finality of the decision feels restrictive as she now must find other ways to incorporate her racial identity in her applications. However, for some of her peers, the termination of affirmative action is perceived in a more positive light.

As Lab is closely connected to a top university, there is a stark difference in how U-High students view the end of affirmative action in college admissions depending on their racial identity and political stances.

Some students, like senior Robert Groves, who identifies as white, believe that ending affirmative action in the college admissions process is a welcome change.

"I think overall it's a complex issue, but it was probably the best

thing," Robert said. "When you start to consider factors like race and gender, there's less of an emphasis on merit and things you can control."

Others, like senior Leila Battiste, who identifies as Black, strongly disagree with the decision because of the decrease in diversity it may cause within college campuses.

"Many people think that affirmative action is favoritism," Leila said, "but the system is meant to increase and sustain races and all minority groups at the most disadvantage. The system has, and never will, favor POC and minority groups."

Some students don't find the issue quite as straightforward. Junior Jack Colyer, who identifies as white, disagrees with the ruling but also believes it may benefit his application.

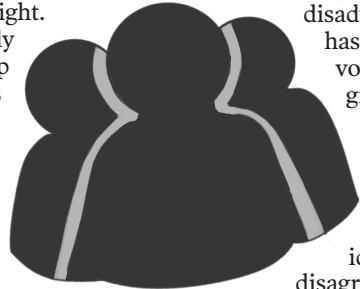
"I mean being realistic, it might help my chances at college," Jack said. "That

being said, I don't think it was necessarily the right thing to do. I mean, I think it

hurt more people than it helped because the people it helped are generally going to get into somewhere anyway, so it doesn't really matter. It's more hurting the people who don't have those opportunities."

Regardless of their opinions about this decision, students wonder what this really means for the college admissions process in the coming years and their own applications.

Katie said, "There's just, like, an unknown future of how that impacts us and our future."



Midway illustrations by Eliza Dearing

## Expert input: Law professor explains case

By AUDREY PARK  
Editor-in-Chief

University of Chicago Law School Professor Geoffrey R. Stone, a former dean, explained what the end of affirmative action means for students entering the college application process in the following interview. As law school dean, he witnessed the effects of affirmative action on the university.

Professor Stone's responses were lightly edited for length, clarity and style.

**How does the decision impact the college admissions process?**

"The decision says that it is impermissible for a college or university to explicitly take race into account in making admissions decisions. In the past, an institution could take into account race as one of the factors to create diversity and to address past discrimination."

tion when looking at its application. And now, they cannot do that."

**How does the decision impact the application process for students?**

"In the essay portion of the application, you can certainly talk about whatever your background is, whether it's a woman or a gay or male, Black or white or Hispanic or whatever. And you can talk about that in the context of the essays. And particularly, if you're from a group that is disadvantaged, you can talk about how you've dealt with that. And the college or university will be aware of that information. The difference is, applications cannot be discussed on the basis of race, but on the basis of the character of the individual and how their race has affected their experiences."

**How can students include race in applications?**

“The difference is, applications cannot be discussed on the basis of race, but on the bases of the character of the individual and how their race has affected their experiences.”

Geoffrey R. Stone, University of Chicago Law School Professor

which themselves have abolished and prohibited affirmative action, like say, California, there has been a significant decline in the number of Black students at these law schools, many major universities. And the negative effect that has had, I think, is both in terms of the experience of the students at those institutions and in terms of the disadvantage imposed upon the progress of Black citizens in our society."

**Will there be a decrease in diversity in higher education?**

"Unless they can find ways to circumvent the decision. You know, one thing they can do in theory is, since they can take character and experience into account, then they can of course say that Black applicants have had a much more difficult time in our society, and therefore, they will likely be the beneficiaries of giving credit to people who've had to overcome those difficulties. Not literally because you're Black, but because with the stories they tell in their applications. So there is some ambiguity in the decision."

**What implications will large institutions witness as a result of the decision?**

"As has been the case in states

## vox pop.

How has the Supreme Court decision to ban affirmative action in higher education admissions affected your college application?



Myles Cobb

"They're still going to be able to figure out what race I am, and who I am. So I'll just try to leverage that, and turn it into the best opportunity for me, which will probably be a lot harder now that affirmative action is gone."



Diana Chaves

"My ethnicity is an important aspect of my identity and I think that because that factor is being taken out of consideration for colleges, it leaves out part of who I am and how I present myself to future opportunities. In my college essay especially, the important events in my life root from significant racial and cultural values, so it's been difficult to decide how to best represent myself when race isn't a factor."



Dante Vairus

"To be honest, I was kind of banking on affirmative action on all my applications because I'm mixed. I'm half Argentine, half Korean. I'm pretty sure Asian countries like both east and south are not helped by the decision. I'm pretty sure Latino benefits a lot. So, it made me a little nervous finding out about the decision."



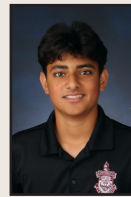
Sofia Niedaszkowski

"I've considered whether I should add my race and ethnicity because I think it is still an option on the application, but I am kind of confused on why it is when they are saying that they are trying to not consider that at all for people and make it kind of blind."



Ross Wilson

"I feel like I haven't done enough research on it personally. I feel like it may discourage me a little bit in terms of the scale of schools I would apply to but it hasn't really affected my plans for school that much."



Sohail Sajdeh

"I think it has made a whole difference on the application process. I think it's a step in the right direction and I'll be interested to see how it affects my applications. I haven't considered it fully yet but I'll definitely take it into consideration when I look at where I am applying."

— compiled by Light Dohrn, Haley Maharry and Milo Platz-Walker

## opinion

# It is now time to end legacy admissions

By CLARE McROBERTS  
Features Editor

In June, when the Supreme Court ruled against affirmative action, it barred race-conscious decisions in college admissions but still permitted universities to practice legacy admissions in a vast sea of applicants. More than 40% of private universities — including many of the most elite schools in the country — indulge in this practice.



Clare McRoberts

The schools say that legacy admissions have their benefits: ensuring that the children of alumni are granted acceptance motivates families to continuously donate, generation after generation. All that money is essential to sustaining the elite status of these institutions, educating one generation and then ushering in the next.

Yet the notion that the descendants of privileged, educated people ought to receive a leg up — in

addition to their inherited advantage — is anti-meritocratic and goes against a supposed tenet of this country and of these institutions: that hard work equalizes.

Let's address the elephant in the room: many of us at U-High are these descendants. We — myself included — are the potential beneficiaries of legacy admissions at top colleges. Many of our parents and even grandparents attended some of the most prestigious universities in the country.

That's why I sympathize with those who might squirm at the thought that legacy admissions could end this year, right now. It's no longer theoretical; it's personal. Many of us deeply believe in the logic behind the need to end legacy admissions. Still, the thought that this would put our own plans, futures and dreams in jeopardy complicates the topic in a way that might blur our vision and our morals. Those plans of college applications and increasingly imminent futures feel devastatingly, earth-shatteringly important.

But to uphold the fundamental values that many of us have formed regarding our privilege,

we must not get tunnel vision. We must come back into focus and see the broader scope of our role in all of this. We must understand that this issue is so much vastly bigger than any of us.

Statistically, the children of those who attended elite colleges come from socioeconomically privileged backgrounds. With that comes the best preschools, top tutoring, artistic enrichment and other expensive educational advantages only available to those who can afford them. These families highly value education and are often more than capable of providing their children with resources necessary to achieve greatness. Their potential is boundless, as are their college résumés.

These are the people — most of us — least in need of an extra edge while applying to universities.

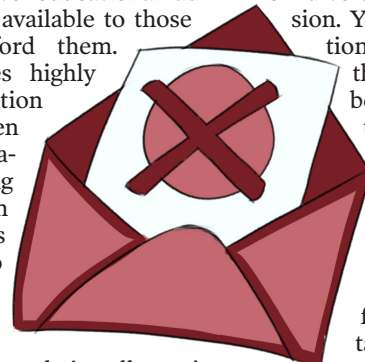
The Supreme Court decision removing affirmative action makes

it even more clear that the use of legacy admissions is intolerable. The consideration of race in college admissions was intended to not only bring diversity for the benefit of entire college campuses but also to provide appropriate opportunities to groups marginalized, mistreated and enslaved over generations.

Many of the country's top universities claim to uphold a focus on diversity, equity and inclusion. Yet, those same institutions perpetuate a system that almost entirely benefits those in positions of socioeconomic privilege.

If admissions officers are barred from being conscious of race, surely they should not consider familial relations in tandem.

It's important to consider one argument in favor of continuing legacy admissions: at this point, the practice has finally begun to benefit a number of previously underrepresented groups, giving those families the



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But to uphold the fundamental values that many of us have formed regarding our privilege, we must not get tunnel vision. We must come back into focus and see the broader scope of our role in all of this.

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opportunity to grow long-term, generational wealth as well. But the amount of those who recently benefit are eclipsed by the number of people who have long benefited from legacy admissions.

Let's admit it: this is hard. It can feel impossible to look past our own self-interest, our own immediate needs, our own ambitions, expectations and lives. But it is time to do so.

It is our responsibility to advocate for what is right. Those of us who could benefit from legacy admission practices must be willing to sacrifice one of our privileges.



# Too Thirsty: *Mindy Kaling's depiction of Indian women in her TV shows isn't a step forward in representation but creates steryotypes*

by SAHANA UNNI  
Editor-in-Chief

In the early and mid-2000s, Disney Channel quickly taught many Indian American children, including me, that all representation is not good representation. Without an exaggerated Indian accent, extreme social anxiety or pet Komodo dragon, it was difficult for me to relate to Ravi in the show “Jessie.” Baljeet, the math-obsessed musical prodigy from “Phineas and Ferb,” was no better.

Instead of feeling excitement at the prospect of seeing faces similar to my own on screen, I was left with only resentment as my peers began to mock the joke that became Indian culture. I came to dread no question more than, “Can you do the accent?”

The Netflix show “Never Have I Ever,” created by Mindy Kaling, was the first popular show for teenagers in which the Indian characters weren't just a fusion of various harmful stereotypes.

However, as Ms. Kaling puts out more shows with Indian representation, like “The Sex Lives of College Girls” and “Velma,” her portrayal of Indian women is creating a whole new set of stereotypes.

Without many Indian characters in Western media, Mindy Kaling has been given the tremendous responsibility of creating the only Indian representation many people will see.

Thus, she should be careful not to give all her main characters similar, unlikeable personalities, due to the risk of unknowingly creating new stereotypes for Indian women — a duty she has not been successful in.

Devi Vishwakumar, the main character in “Never Have I Ever,” and Bela Malhotra, a lead in “The Sex Lives of College Girls,” seem to reflect each other in many negative ways. Most notably, both are self-deprecating, ashamed of their culture and completely boy-obsessed.

who is she?

Mindy Kaling, an American comedian, is best known for her roles in shows like “The Office,” as Kelly Kapoor, and “The Mindy Project,” where she plays Mindy Lahiri.

In recent years, she has written and produced “Never Have I Ever,” on Netflix and “The Sex Lives of College Girls,” on HBO. She has also been the voice of Velma on HBO.

For Devi, a major part of the show is her defying the strict immigrant household she comes from, specifically to pursue a half-white, half-Japanese boy in the grade above her.

Her somewhat desperate and obsessive nature often makes her extremely dislikeable, especially when she's willing to hurt her loved ones just to get her way.

This wasn't a particularly new or offensive way of portraying a teenage girl, but when Ms. Kaling released “The Sex Lives of College Girls” featuring an Indian main character with an equally concerning fixation on boys — particularly white boys — a single toxic character evolved into its own stereotype.

Bela and Devi also share a continued conflict with their cultural identity. Neither attempt to befriend other Indian teens or express their culture in any way.

In fact, Devi goes as far as to actively hurt an Indian girl who transfers to her school and to assume a family friend is some “Indian nerd” before meeting him.

While Bela never appears to have any Indians around her to insult, she does describe herself as a former “Indian loser with cystic acne, sweaty armpits and glasses.”

This internal struggle is very real for many Indian teenagers, but I would think it's less so for those from more progressive areas like Los Angeles or Nutley, New Jersey.



HBO

**PARTICULAR PORTRAYALS.** In her shows, like “The Sex Lives of College Girls,” Mindy Kaling portrays and creates stereotypes of Indian teenagers.

After starting school in Chicago, for example, the cultural acceptance I've experienced has made it easy for me to accept and even celebrate being Indian.

Without stating that either character has faced much prejudice, it seems as if Devi and Bela are the only ones who have such disdain for their culture instead of acknowledging how they may have developed this type of self-loathing.

In the Scooby-Doo spin-off “Velma,” in which Ms. Kaling voices an Indian American Velma, this theme of nerdy, self-deprecating, white-boy-obsessed brown girls is present, though it is less directly

tied to her cultural identity.

Although Ms. Kaling did not directly write “Velma,” the disappointing portrayal of Indian women seems to follow the example she set in her previous shows.

This is not to say Ms. Kaling should not be recognized for the work she has done to incorporate Indian culture into Western media.

With flawed and complex characters like Devi, Bela and Velma, she has single-handedly picked apart the model-minority myth Indian people are constantly portrayed as.

However, the many similarities between the three have in turn

hurtfully categorized Indian women as desperate, self-loathing and boy-crazy.

It seems likely that Ms. Kaling is simply expressing her own experience as an Indian American woman in these shows, which is understandable, but it should also be recognized that the lack of other Indian representation has caused the more negative aspects of her personality to be unwillingly hoisted upon the shoulders of Indian teenagers.

As South Asian representation is further incorporated into Western television, I can only hope there are characters Indian Americans finally feel excited to see.

# Doja Cat's demonic persona, new music elicits opinions

by KATIE SASAMOTO-KURISU  
Editor-in-Chief

Devil homages. Demonic tattoos. Tweets embracing Satan. All of these encompass popular rapper Doja Cat's recent persona, one that has both stirred controversy and boosted engagement among fans and people throughout the music world. The eccentric artist's unorthodox demeanor has led some fans to appreciate her music for its increased authenticity — and leave others angry and denouncing the hatred expressed in her actions.

While in the past some music artists have been criticized for problematic themes in their public personas, Doja Cat's recent behavior, despite slamming her own fans, has allowed her to amass a surge of support. Her recent single “Paint The Town Red” from her upcoming fourth studio album “Scarlet” has made history as the first female solo rap song to top Spotify's Global and U.S. Top 50 Chart, and the fastest to reach 100 million streams, even after her controversial comments toward fans.

Since her departure from her traditional style of the pop-rap genre this past summer, the singer has dedicated herself to producing music that is less tailored to mainstream trends and more to what she believes is her authentic self. Her behavior has led some of her fans to question her music and behavior while also testing their fandom.

“I used to really like her music in 2020 when it was really popular. It kind of had a pop vibe to it,



Screenshot from “Demons”

**DEMONIC DEPICTIONS.** Doja Cat's most recent music seemingly expresses her ‘authentic self,’ and her actions have people wondering if she's genuinely showing her true self or if it's an act for publicity.

and a little bit of rap. It was enjoyable because it didn't have crazy themes in it,” junior Kaavya Peddinti said. “Her more recent music is kind of demonic, and the way she presents her music as well is also kind of concerning.”

Other fans have observed a noticeable change in both the effect and sound of Doja Cat's music. Sophomore Maya Livni appreciates the artist's enduring skill in crafting bold verses and sounds.

“In her new music, specifical-

ly ‘Attention’ and ‘Paint The Town Red,’ you can see her start going more into classic rap with good flow and lyricism,” Maya said. “I'm a big fan of her music, and her recent controversy has not really taken away from that at all.”

Sophomore Adelina Mejia is a listener who believes Doja Cat's new music is appealing because of the statement it makes.

“I feel like her music has been a lot more vocal and opinionated about her own life. It just feels

very confident to me,” Adelina said, adding she enjoys Doja Cat's nonchalance and message in the lyrics.

The message the artist has conveyed in her music has also extended into her public presence, leading to feelings of betrayal of her most loyal supporters. After publicly attacking hardcore fans on social media for their allegiance to her in July, she lost over 500,000 followers on Instagram and several thousand on other

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I feel like her music has been a lot more vocal and opinionated about her own life. It just feels very confident to me.

Adelina Mejia, sophomore

”

platforms. Her public response to the situation expressed personal liberation and relief, sharing sentiments of not needing her fans nor caring what they think.

“In my opinion,” Maya said, “I think she's trying to spite people and lean against that sexuality image, but there's a way to do that without being overly inflammatory and purposely trying to be negative toward people who don't deserve it.”

Some fans believe Doja Cat's public persona embracing Satanism and worshipping the devil is an act. They believe her pledge of personal authenticity has turned into a vessel for capturing attention. Listeners like Adelina recognize that though unconventional, the artist's recent behavior seems to be working.

“It feels like she's playing a character. She's definitely trying to get her name out there. It's like the phrase ‘any publicity is good publicity,’” Adelina said. “At least from what I'm seeing, I think that's something that she's definitely trying to do, and I don't think that's overtly something that makes a bad person. I think she's doing what's going to get a reaction.”



# Stop scrolling and get creative

Students find inspiration for various activities in each TikTok scroll

**By LIGHT DOHRN**  
*Reporter*

In a world where short attention spans are prevalent, inspiration and motivation can be hard to find. Extra free time, handy materials or crafty ideas are especially scarce, and it can be difficult to take your two hands and actively create something rather than passively consume online content.

TikTok, one of the most widely used social media platforms with a crisp 1.677 billion users, is not exactly considered educational. Its short-form video format is widely seen as detrimental to the attention span and social capabilities of adolescents.

But the app may actually be a source of inspiration for teenagers to cook new recipes, learn dances and even customize and create clothing. It allows creators to share concise, engaging content on a wide range of topics, from science and math to crafts and cooking.

Sophomore Lydia Gilbert often wears a pair of jeans with small flowers embroidered near the knee. She did the embroidery herself to fix a hole in the fabric, having first been introduced to the idea by a creator on TikTok.

“I think it went pretty well,” Lydia said. “I still need to do it a few more times and practice, but I think it’s something I’m gonna do for a while, like it’s a conscious practice — if I get a hole in my pants, I will do the craft on it.”

Lydia believes the side of TikTok that’s inspiring, if not quite educational, should be considered more thoroughly before any real opinions or arguments are crafted about the platform.

“It brings different artistic options to the user — for example, a specific type of embroidery for clothing repair. It teaches young people how to use art as expression in their clothing as well as fix something that’s broken.”

TikTok has also become a sort

**trending.**

*The Midway tested two popular TikTok trends: one snack and one craft. The steps and materials are both simple. For more specific steps, watch the video tutorial.*

**Sorbet Rolls**  
Ingredients: fruit roll-up, sorbet

Lay out the fruit roll-up flat.

Scoop the sorbet onto one side of the fruit roll-up .

Roll it up and enjoy!

**Cut-collar Crew Neck**  
Supplies: crewneck, scissors, pencil

Turn the crewneck inside out and lay out flat.

Draw a pencil line around the seam of the collar.

Pull the fabric taut and cut around your line.

Stretch the fabric after you’ve cut it to fold the edges

— compiled by Zara Siddique

of playground for artistic expression, where users can explore new ideas, collaborate and inspire one another, making it a digital hub for creative discovery.

“I think it’s kind of 50/50. I do agree, like, I wish I wasn’t on my phone so much, so I could go and do more real stuff, and it is kind of addictive, but also, I’m on there for a reason — and the reason is exploration,” Lydia said.


Ninth grader Mira Reddy doesn’t have TikTok due to parental restrictions. If it were up to her, though, she’d download it, no



Midway photo by Danny Baeza

**SEEKING INSPIRATION.** TikTok may actually be a source of inspiration for teenagers, as it allows creators to share concise, engaging content on a wide range of topics, from science and math to crafts and cooking.

**for more**



Scan this QR code to watch two members of the Midway staff test and review the sorbet roll and cut-collar crew neck, two popular TikTok trends, to see if they earn the Midway’s stamp of approval, as successful, creative and compelling activities.

question.

“I’d like to be able to stay up to date on what people are doing,” Mira said. “I know my friends do have TikTok definitely know what’s going on in other people’s lives a little bit more.”

Mira is sent TikTok videos by her friends frequently enough that she has tried the occasional TikTok recipe, despite not having the app. Her most memorable dish was what she described as a sandwich and then an omelet in the sandwich — the recipe includes putting two pieces of bread on top

of a cooking egg and filling it with sandwich accoutrements before folding it over on itself to create a sort of omelet-sandwich hybrid.

Whether it’s learning a new skill, gaining insights into current events, or simply broadening

one’s horizons, TikTok has proven its potential as a platform that inspires creative and productive uses of time.

“I think it’s, like, a social thing,” Mira said, “It’s kind of a way to see what’s going on in your life.”

# Online chess allows students to have fun, play easily

**by AUDREY PARK**  
*Editor-in-Chief*

In groups, students can be seen on their computers deeply engaged. Playing against each other and with strangers across the world, the students strategize and bond over online chess, a game they all enjoy.

“There is a lot of camaraderie when playing chess,” said Sam Pastor, the president of U-High’s chess club. “It’s just a fun way to spend time together and hang out. Having a game that is convenient and can bond us all together has created some pretty strong friendships.”

According to the New York Times, chess boomed in popularity due to the Netflix show “The Queen’s Gambit” and the pandemic.

U-High students make up some of the 100 million users on the No. 1 online chess platform, chess.com.



Midway photo by Peyton Palmer

**VIRTUAL CONVENIENCE.** Some students play online chess to spend time and engage with friends in and out of school. The virtual game allows students to play chess without bringing a physical chess board with them.

and his friends enjoy the game because of the community it has created.

“Sometimes we play mini chess tournaments during lunch,” he said, “or we have a team account where we play against other play-

ers as a team.”

He said online chess allows for a fun game with flexibility for him and his friends.

“If you’re playing over the board, I have to go to Harold Washington Park or out to 53rd Street. If you’re

playing online, you get to stay in your own house,” James said. “You can put on some music and play with people all around the world.”

James said he also enjoys playing online chess because platforms like chess.com track his progress

and skill level. Chess.com uses an Elo rating system that calculates players’ skill levels depending on how many games they win or lose. Users are matched with similarly ranked players. While chess club member William Zhang prefers playing with a board, he said online chess offers a number of advantages.

“With online chess, you can play wherever you want, and you don’t constantly have to have someone next to you, which is not possible all the time,” William said.

Sam said there are not enough physical chess boards for the 10- to 15-member club to use, and online chess accommodates the entire club with a fun game that they all enjoy.

Sam said, “When you get that many people in a room focusing on one thing, there is a whole lot to learn from everyone, and online chess allows for that.”

“

It’s just a fun way to spend time together and hang out. Having a game that is convenient and can bond us all together has created some pretty strong friendships.

Sam Pastor, chess club president

”



# Soccer player returns after injury

Mahin Schneider shows fearlessness despite fracture

By JAYA ALENGHAT  
Reporter

Fearlessly seizing the opportunity to take control of the ball, Mahin Schneider races into a hard tackle with his opponent, but instead of coming out victorious, he is left on the midfield, unable to move. After raising his hand for the trainer, his coaches and teammates surround him, carrying him off the field, worried if he would play again.

That was June 29, 2022. Seven months later, Mahin was able to return to the field.

After suffering a tibial tubular fracture during a preseason game, Mahin, a central defensive midfielder, was able to recover through offseason club soccer and the futsal league — just in time for his senior U-High soccer season this fall.

Despite having to watch from the sidelines during the 2022 season, Mahin's head was always in the game, and once he returned, it has become obvious that facing such a serious injury has not put a dent in Mahin's bravery.

"Mahin has done a tremendous job of not playing with fear, of not allowing that to inhibit his ability to play with courage and confidence," David Vadeboncoeur, assistant varsity soccer coach, said.

From strengthening his knee in the gym to working with his physical therapist and meeting with the athletic trainer, Mahin aimed to get back on his feet as quickly

“I always think, like, what if this didn’t happen, would I be a better player? But, you know, things happen, and you just have to get over them, and I understand that.”

Mahin Schneider, senior

as possible.

"I'm a pretty calm and patient person," Mahin said, "so I think I was able to be really focused on my goals and have the mindset to get better and not be super emotional about it."

While he was mostly able to avoid it, Mahin occasionally faces negativity.

"I always think, like, what if this didn't happen, would I be a better player?" Mahin said. "But, you know, things happen, and you just have to get over them, and I understand that."

Mahin not only understands that accidents like these happen, but also does not allow them to affect his playing.

"Most people, after such a serious injury like that, become a little scared on the field," teammate Luca Todorov said. "But that's not happening with Mahin. He goes into tackles like he has no fear at all."

Despite not being able to play for a whole season, Mahin's skills have not disappointed his team.

Mr. Vadeboncoeur and head coach Josh Potter have recognized his talent and believe that even after his injury, Mahin has a chance at playing collegiate level soccer.



Midway photo by Kaden Moubayed

**PRACTICE PERSEVERANCE.** In June 2022, Mahin Schneider fractured his shin, causing him to take a seven-month break from playing soccer. Now, he has returned for the 2023 soccer season after a lot of perseverance. He said, "It's made me a stronger person and taught me values about patience and community support."

Part of his smooth transition back to the sport might result from his dedication to the team. Even though he could not play last season, Mahin was always there. He set up drills, gathered balls, participated in team spirit days, and was always present at training, practice and games.

"It honestly felt he was still a member of the team without playing, just because of how involved he was at every practice while being injured," teammate Danny Arohnsen said.

Along with his teammates, Mahin's coaches were impressed by his commitment.

"He was always incredibly dedicated but it wasn't something that we as coaches had to prompt him to do," Mr. Vadeboncoeur said. "It was just something that he'd intrinsically wanted to do, which was just being an incredible teammate and member of our program."

Supporting the team also helped Mahin stay positive when faced with periods of isolation.

"Just being able to be around the team, like the team aspect after I was able to walk again, it was really helpful," Mahin said.

Mahin's journey also inspired his other teammates.

"Seeing how Mahin recovered and came back the next year, and now is playing so well, makes me feel confident that if I did suffer an injury like Mahin's I'd be able to come back like he did," Danny said.

As Mahin reunites with his team on the field this season, he will not only remember the hardships he faced, but rather the growth and perspective he gained.

"It's not just about scoring a ton of goals and bringing your team the championship," Mahin said. "It's made me a stronger person and taught me values about patience and community support."

## Former athletes will be honored

by ZARA SIDDIQUE  
Sports and Leisure Editor

Five former U-High athletes will be inducted into the Lab Athletics Hall of Fame on Oct. 14. The reception and ceremony will take place for its fifth year in Upper Kovler gym at 6 p.m. The entire Lab community is invited and encouraged to attend.

The Lab Athletics Hall of Fame

was established as a way to "honor and celebrate alumni athletes, outstanding contributions to the Lab athletics program, and the Schools' rich athletics history," according to the Lab Athletics Hall of Fame website.

Athletics Director Matthew Manley said, "It's a way to highlight all the great things that have happened here, but also all the

great history. So many really exciting things have happened in our history, and you know if you've just come in you might not know them."

Mr. Manley explained that the hall of fame is designed to not only carry on the legacy of athletes who thrived during their years at U-High, but also to inspire the current generation.



### Rebecca Diamond, 2003

Ms. Diamond played as a member of the starting volleyball team, winning the ISL four years in a row. She won ISL Player of the Year for two of the championships. Her demonstrations of determination, perseverance and grace as she led the team to victory were apparent both on and off the field as she demonstrated what it means to be an exceptional student athlete.



### Lars Nelson, 1995

Mr. Nelson was a four-year varsity tennis player in addition to playing soccer and basketball. He was named ISL Player of the Year and placed fourth in singles in the Illinois State Championships his senior year. He continued his tennis career at Santa Clara University. At SCU, Lars ranked No. 1 in singles and helped the team in achieving their national ranking of No. 57.



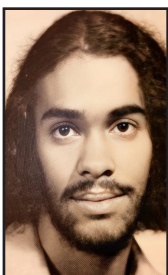
### Jef Fish, 1976

Mr. Fish played as a three-sport athlete, participating in a varsity sport for every athletic season of the school year. He competed as a four-year varsity swimmer leading the team to three ISL championships, a four-year varsity tennis player winning two ISL championships, as well as a three-year varsity soccer player, named all-conference two years in a row, leading the team to three ISL championships.



### John Oxtoby, 2003

Mr. Oxtoby participated on both soccer and baseball teams. Playing soccer, he was a two-time ISL Conference Player of the Year, four-time ISL all-conference, two-time captain, and won IHSA all-state honors his senior year. His total career goals was the fifth-highest all-time in IHSA boys soccer history. He was captain of the baseball team in 2003, four-time ISL all-conference. He continued to play soccer at Harvard for four years.



### James Fleming, 1975

Mr. Fleming played as a four-year varsity basketball player, and earned the title of Top 50 Chicagoland basketball player twice in his four years on the team. He was named all-conference three times and was awarded Conference Player of the Year. During his time as the team captain, they only lost six games in three years. He later returned to the team as a coach, mentoring future Hall of Fame inductees.

for more



Scan this QR code for more about these Athletic Hall of Fame honorees. The reception will be Oct. 14 in Upper Kovler gym at 6 p.m.

### season snapshot



Midway photo by Olin Nafziger

**SWING INTO ACTION.** Sophomore Daniel Chang watches his ball at a boy's golf team practice earlier this month. "Our season has been productive in terms of how our team is improving and we have drastically improved since the beginning of the season and are looking to keep making improvements in order to qualify for state," Daniel said. The team most recently finished second at ISL Conference with an overall score of 313. The team played at White Pines on Sept. 27 for regionals.



# Mindset confronts COVID wave

Conversation takes place while new wave hits

By TAARIQ AHMED  
Digital Editor

The World Health Organization officially declassified COVID-19 as a public health emergency months ago. The debate over mask and vaccine mandates is no longer a hot topic. Virtual Zoom meetings are a thing of the past for U-High. But as schools are back in session, a new wave of COVID-19 cases is arriving, including at Lab.

More than three years after the COVID-19 pandemic began, new strains of the virus continue to evolve and circulate, and hospitalizations are rising nationally. But the new wave, along with its recommendations, come at a different juncture than before — one where many are weary of talking about COVID and the subject has faded from daily conversation.

Senior Cameron Grant said there doesn't seem to be much public discussion of the new wave. After seeing family members infected recently, he wishes to see more awareness.

"I know a significant amount of people who are currently out with COVID, both teachers and non-teachers, throughout Lab," Cameron said. "I would like to hear more from the administration. The only place that I heard about it, before my parents became ill, was through TikTok."

The Food and Drug Administration approved new COVID-19 booster shots on Sept. 11, and on Sept. 12 the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommended the shots for Americans aged 6 months and older.

Renuga Vivekanandan, the division chief of infectious diseases at Creighton University School of Medicine, said pandemic-era applications continue to be effective ways to slow the spread.

"Getting vaccinated is really important because we know vaccines are effective," Dr. Vivekanandan said. "If you're ill and have a runny nose, coughing or a fever, stay home and get better before you go back to school. We should be using



Midway photo by Carter Chang

**COVID CAUTION.** Ketan Kandula, wearing a mask, converses with Oliver Go and George Ofori-Mante in one of the library rooms. Some people choose to continue to wear masks especially as the new wave of COVID-19 hits, despite less attention about it.

cough etiquette and good hand hygiene as well."

Dr. Vivekanandan said she doesn't predict a return in mask or vaccine mandates, one of the more controversial topics during the pandemic. Still, she believes wearing masks is still important when one is sick or is trying to protect susceptible loved ones.

"If somebody in your family is immunocompromised or has a high risk health condition," Dr. Vivekanandan said, "be careful around them and if you're sick, wear a mask, because you want to protect your grandma or grandpa."

Dr. Vivekanandan echoed the idea that COVID-19 will likely become endemic, similar to influenza, in the way it recurs every season.

“  
Flu season starts in the fall time, and COVID is going to take a similar pattern.  
Renuga Vivekanandan, infectious disease expert  
”

"Flu season starts in the fall time, and COVID is going to take a similar pattern," Dr. Vivekanandan said. "Kids are back in school and once the weather gets colder, they will be indoors more, and there will be more transmission of the virus. Unfortunately, COVID is not going to go away. I think of COVID as another winter virus."  
U-High science teacher Matt

Martino said he believes the community should revisit basic practices when it comes to slowing the spread at school. Dr. Martino also emphasized the importance of booster shots.

"Everybody should take the opportunity to go to those vaccine clinics that are coming up in October," Dr. Martino said. "I know I'm signing my family up for them all, very soon. It can't hurt to remind people about it."

Like some other U-High students, sophomore Zoe Alphonse said that she was not aware of this upticking in cases. Still, she believes the U-High community is better prepared for one this time.

"We now know what to do when a new wave strikes or when we see a spike in cases," Zoe said. "I have

confidence that we, in a community sense, will deal with it better. I would be interested in what the school has to say or any changes in protocols if they have any in mind."

For those who do get sick, Dr. Martino said he strongly encourages students to take time off to recover when infected with COVID-19 or any other illness.

"It's one of those compounding things in which if you don't rest, then you only get worse," Dr. Martino said. "You miss more than if you had just rested, and now you're losing sleep because you stayed up way too late to try to catch up on stuff, and now your quality of work the next day is terrible, and now you're falling behind again — get better and rest first."

## Nurse's office stocks Narcan, antidote to opioid overdose



Midway photo by Elspeth LaCroix-Birdthistle

**NARCAN NEWS.** Narcan, an opioid antagonist designed to prevent overdoses, is now available in the U-High nurse's office. "As a measure of protecting public health, we want to be prepared to treat anything that comes our way," Laboratory Schools lead nurse Kristen Szewczyk said.

Newly authorized nasal spray could be life saving

by MIA LIPSON  
News Editor

In the nurse's office, a small white box with bright fuschia lettering rests in a clear bag on the corner of the medical supplies cabinet. But this box, no bigger than one made for bandages, reads "Narcan" and contains a medication with the potential to save lives.

As defined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Narcan, the nasal spray form of naloxone, is a life-saving medication which blocks or reverses the effects of opioid overdose within minutes of the crisis, and is now supplied in the three nurses offices around Lab's campus as a backup tool in case of an urgent, drug-related emergency.

In 2015, the Illinois Department of Public Health enacted Public Act 99-0480, expanding access to naloxone and requiring entities administering the medication to be trained in opioid overdose reversal. From there, access to the medication has grown to schools and public libraries.

According to Laboratory Schools lead nurse Kristen Szewczyk, the Public Health Department's authorization of naloxone within schools prompted the nurse's office to add it this year to their approach to overdose.

"After that, we decided to stock it, just to have another tool in our emergency medication toolkit that's already available to treat anyone that we have that is suspected of having an overdose on opioids," Ms. Szewczyk said. "It's already free and readily accessible to the public near us, even at Blackstone library in Hyde Park, and now it's available on campus, too."

Narcan can be found in the lower school, high school and early childhood nurses offices. Though Ms. Szewczyk believes use of the medication is unlikely at Lab, every nurse is trained to administer it if overdose symptoms are present, such as shallow breathing and small pupils.

"It's another way for us nurses to be prepared. I mean, that is a big part of our job, in addition to seeing ourselves as one of the big advocates of public health," Ms. Szewczyk said. "As a measure of protecting public health, we want to be prepared to treat anything that comes our way."

### nalaxone...

- ... is an "opioid receptor antagonist," is a life-saving medicine that is used to rapidly reverse the effects of an opioid overdose, and can quickly restore breathing to someone who has overdosed.
- ... has recently been approved for over-the-counter purchase in drug stores through a nasal-spray version called Narcan.
- ... can be used fairly easily by people who have taken a brief time to learn how.
- ... is relatively safe, federal officials say. They say it will not harm people who turn out not to have been overdosing on an opioid in the first place.
- ... is typically administered by doctors, nurses, law enforcement officers, emergency medical workers and ordinary residents.

— compiled by  
Clare McRoberts



# Immigrant Influx

*As the city accommodates waves of new migrants, the local government, community organizations and individuals work together to provide support*

South, West side residents criticize city's approach

by KATIE SASAMOTO-KURISU

Editor-in-Chief

**A** bit over a year ago, 75 migrants arrived by bus in Chicago on the order of Texas Gov. Greg Abbott, part of Operation Lone Star, a response to the Biden administration's border policy. After a year of the busing program, nearly 15,000 migrants have settled into Chicago neighborhoods, causing resident push-back on the city's South and West sides and requiring community organizations and city leaders in the Hyde Park, Kenwood and Woodlawn neighborhoods to address both local concerns and how to accommodate these new families.

Given new migrants have to wait at least 150 days before obtaining a work permit once applying for asylum, both the local government and community organizations have had to step in to provide mutual aid.

"Now our cities are struggling to try and figure out housing, how to provide food, shelter, medical, all the basic needs that they have," Lisa Jenschke, executive director of the Hyde Park Refugee Project, said. "There are people in the shelters, but then there are a lot of people who are living basically homeless outside of police stations."

During the previous school year, Chicago Public Schools saw an increase of over 5,400 English learners, according to district enrollment data. This academic year nearly 1,500 English learners enrolled in July, August and the first few days of September, according to a statement from the CPS Office of Communication.

"This is a very fluid situation, but our principals, staff and families have been working hard with our District and City leaders to welcome each and every new student into our schools as we have done for more than a century," the CPS statement said.

Chicago's influx of migrants has placed a strain on city resources and exacerbated cultural tensions, especially in historically underserved areas where legacy segregation has caused community schools and shelters to close due to disinvestment.

"Obviously, lots of racial tensions come up because of the way Chicago has treated its Black and brown populations specifically living on the South and West sides in the past," said Pooja Ravindran, chief of staff for the City of Chicago Council Committee on Immigrant and Refugee Rights.

A recent decision to turn the Lake Shore Hotel into an asylum shelter sparked anger and frustration among Kenwood residents at city officials for their approach to handling the incoming migrants.

"A lot of the Black community was kind of like, 'Hey, we've experienced these problems for a long time. Where's our support?



Midway photo by Estelle Levinson

**HOUSING HOSTILITY.** Local residents in Kenwood and other South Side neighborhoods have expressed resistance against the city's plan to turn the Lake Shore Hotel into a shelter for asylum seekers, citing Chicago's historical disinvestment in traditionally underserved areas for Black and brown communities in the area.

“Obviously, lots of racial tensions come up because of the way Chicago has treated its Black and brown populations specifically living on the South and West sides in the past.”  
Pooja Ravindran, chief of staff for City of Chicago Committee on Immigrant and Refugee Rights

Where's our where's our help? Why are we going out of our way to support these folks, whereas we've lived here forever, and we have not experienced even a small percentage of this generosity," Ravindran said.

The contention sparked by the city's response to the needs of the incoming newcomers has led local organizations to seek external assistance, particularly with city officials and neighborhood leadership.

"Here on the South Side especially we have a real mix of socio-economic groups. Some people are doing really well and some people are struggling. What I think we've seen in the work we've done with refugees and asylum seekers is that the help that we're able to give them is also the same help that a lot of people in our community need," Ms. Jenschke said. "I think there will be competition for those resources, and it's one of the reasons I'm hoping that the government is going to be able to step in and provide more for people."

A low supply of resources has compelled individual and community efforts to work together in

## how to help

The topic of immigration has been fought over in the United States for generations – so long that it can feel like there's little one person can do to help affect change. But any U-High student who wants to make a difference has numerous opportunities close to home. Here are a few:

**Donate basic supplies:** The City of Chicago has identified several organizations that are gathering essentials for new arrivals, including clothing and shoes. To find dropoff locations and what to give, visit the Donations tab at the City of Chicago website, [chicago.gov](http://chicago.gov). Community organizations also host their own donation drives, such as the Little Village Community Council located at 3610 W 26th St.

**Give to food pantries serving migrants:** Examples include the Pilsen Food Pantry at [pilsenfoodpantry.com](http://pilsenfoodpantry.com), Nourishing Hope at [nourishinghopechi.org](http://nourishinghopechi.org) and the Greater Chicago Food Depository at [chicagosfoodbank.org](http://chicagosfoodbank.org).

**Donate to the Chicago police stations nearby:** Some Lab parents have set up a Facebook page to help migrants being housed at stations at 51st & Wentworth and 71st & Cottage Grove. The City of Chicago website also has a wishlist helpers can contribute to clothe those in need in the Donations section.

— Compiled by Clare McRoberts

providing support for the migrants as they settle into Chicago or beyond.

"What is happening instead is that a lot of nonprofits, individuals, mutual aid and just anyone who wants to help is kind of jumping in and doing that work of signing up to bring meals, taking clothes that people need or registering the kids for school," Ms. Jenschke said.

While tensions throughout Chicago communities remain prevalent as more migrants enter the city, officials are urging local organizations and individuals to become involved and contribute to the greater effort.

"Mayor Harold Washington, who was Chicago's first Black mayor, made it a priority to be a welcoming city," Ravindran said. "He fought for that and made that

## by the numbers

50

migrants on each bus

3-5

buses arriving daily

14,000

migrants arrived in Chicago since August 2022

— Source WTTW Chicago

categorically what Chicago is, and we've got to stick to that and we're interested in sticking to that, but everyone needs to step up and assist."

vox pop.

*With an unprecedented number of migrants arriving in Chicago, Mayor Brandon Johnson's administration is planning to house many of them in winterized tents instead of schools and police stations. How do you think the city could improve its response to this historic influx of migrants?*

Ninth grader **Laurel Farmer** thinks in order to accommodate the new migrant families they should be housed in shelters. She thinks "a legitimate shelter with four walls will just provide so much more comfort."

**Theodore Lach**, ninth grader, says if the only housing available to the migrants are the tents and camps provided by the city, they should have a good food and water supply as well as good medical care for all the newcomers coming to the city.

**Arjun Sawhney** believes tents during the winter seem like a cheap solution that fit the city's budget and also house many people. He thinks if better housing were to be implemented, more migrants would be excluded.

Given winter is around the corner, sophomore **Annabelle McCormick** thinks the plan seems like a "quick fix," rather than a practical solution. She thinks they need to put more effort into finding a "realistic and more long-term solution."

**Mulan Wu**, sophomore, thinks for the country as a whole, cities like Chicago should accept them and push them into the workforce.

Junior **Elizabeth Sharp** thinks that in order for people of Chicago to best welcome immigrants, the city has to be deliberate in its priorities and plans. She believes "we have to be more prepared and more realistic about how many immigrants our city can support financially."

Junior **Eli Raikhel** said he doesn't believe putting the migrants in tents doesn't seem like a viable option, making it more difficult for them to build their own life. He believes the city should invest in "more long-term solutions" so they can "get back on their feet."

**Helen Kraemer**, junior, believes safety protocols should be implemented within the tents to ensure the safety of the migrants.

Senior **Adam Cheema** thinks the housing project is "inhumane," saying he doesn't think people should be used as "political footballs," especially for people seeking asylum.

For senior **Areen Khan**, other housing solutions like large public facilities such as libraries, pools and areas like McCormick place would be a better way to house the migrants.

— Compiled by Zara Siddique