



Argentiniains explore Lab, Chicago

Through exchange program, students tour, form bonds

by **KABIR JOSHI**
Assistant Editor

In the pastel orange afternoon glow of the Judd Hall coffee shop, Bianca Allevato says goodbye to barista Ariel Williams, her eyes teary with emotion.

Over the past two weeks of visiting Chicago, Bianca, an exchange student from Argentina, spent a lot of time getting coffee and created a strong relationship with Ms. Williams over her stay.

She said, “We said goodbye to Ariel, and we ended up crying because we enjoyed the trip very much, and we love her.”

Bianca is one of the 20 Argentinian exchange students who made the voyage to Chicago taking place from Oct. 19 to Nov. 4.

They experienced Chicago culture from food to architecture, which is different from the culture of Buenos Aires, where the students are from.

Cultural exploration and immersion is one of the goals of the trip.

Exchange student Julian Dodds got to experience the difference between the school systems in the United States and Argentina. In Argentina, students don’t move from classroom to classroom for different subjects.

Rigid schedules don’t include things such as free and lab periods, and students have fewer options for classes.

“The school system is really different from what we have in Argentina,” Julian said, “so I tried to absorb everything I could, like, everything from the English language to things I could have learned in class too... It was a really enriching experience.”

Lila Rodriguez, another ex-

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Julian Dodds, exchange student

change student, enjoyed her experience with U-High classes. She was also surprised with the tiniest details such as the colorful fall trees.

“You have a lot of subjects that we don’t have, like journalism, and we’ve been surprised by the minute details,” Lila said.

During the stay, the exchange students got to experience Halloween, which is not recognized as a national holiday in Argentina. Students enjoyed costumes, trick-or-treating and other activities with their host families in addition to the activities that were included in the exchange program.

This past summer, 20 U-High students visited Argentina, meeting their exchange students for the first time and experiencing life with them.

In Argentina, U-High students lived with their exchange student’s family and participated in school, museum visits and different cultural visits.

Dina D’Antoni, a Spanish teacher who organizes the exchange program, worked with a partner school in Buenos Aires, Instituto de Enseñanza Superior en Lenguas Vivas, Juan Ramón Fernández, for months to plan the exchange trip.

“For two weeks, we do tons of different cultural visits at the same time. So we visit, we visit museums, we do city tours, we participate in cultural events, we go to the outskirts of Buenos Aires to



Midway photo by Olin Nafziger

EXCHANGE EXPLORATION. Twenty Argentinian exchange students visited Chicago from Oct. 19 to Nov. 4. Over the two-week visit, they attended U-High classes, explored Chicago and lived with Lab students. “It was immersing yourself into the culture and going with the family’s flow of things,” U-High participant Camila Bravo said.

visit the ranches and see the cowboys,” Dr. D’Antoni said.

This exchange program returned after COVID-19. Dr. D’Antoni feels the program is back in full swing after the three-year break, and everything is back to what it was before.

In addition to partaking in the school day, exchange students traveled around Chicago where they participated in tours and vis-

ited historic sites such as some of Chicago’s famous museums.

“Everything was fully back, so we’re excited,” Dr. D’Antoni said.

On Nov. 2, the 20 exchange students spent their last day at U-High saying goodbye to their friends and leaving the school for the last time. On Nov. 4 the students departed for the airport with lifetime memories and experiences.

Sophomore Camila Bravo en-

joyed the experiences the exchange program provided. She learned important life lessons such as adapting to a different type of lifestyle, as well as having fun by spending time with friends during the program.

“I think I learned patience, and flexibility,” Camila said. “It was immersing yourself into the culture and going with the family’s flow of things.”

In response to data, teachers modify classrooms

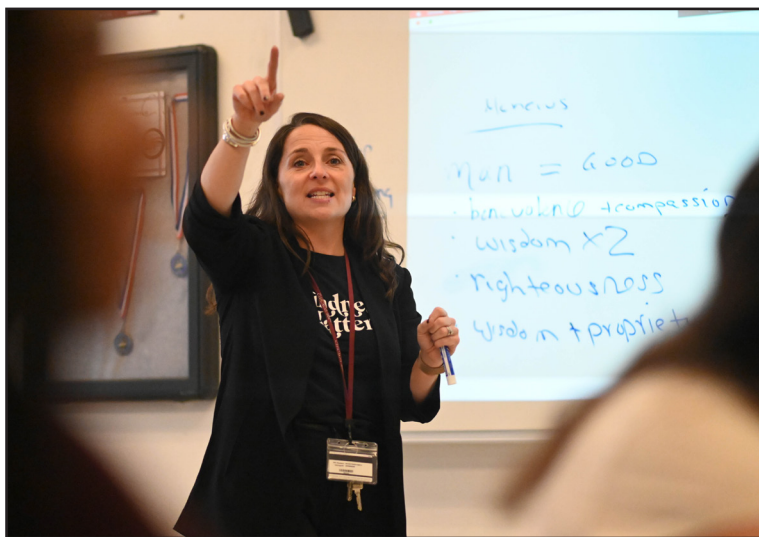
Survey responses inspire increase in support, structure

by **ZARA SIDDIQUE**
Sports & Leisure Editor

In March, Lab’s annual health and wellness survey results showed many students experience feelings of isolation. In the data collected, 30.1% of students reported feeling a low desire to attend school, 5 percentage points higher than the national average of 25%.

Now, in response to the release of the results, U-High teachers have started altering their class environments to promote feelings of belonging and trust.

On Oct. 25, the learning and counseling faculty hosted Balance and Belonging, an event to examine the data from the health and wellness survey and explore ways parents can support students’ academic-life balance. While the event was not well attended, the



Midway photo by Danny Baeza

CLASSROOM CLIMATE. Holly Johnston teaches Modern World Religions. Ms. Johnston adapted her classroom to support students better.

data has been a widespread topic of discussion among both parents and faculty.

Tracy Graham-Santoro, a U-High counselor who led the event and is a part of the Wellness

Council, said that these feelings of isolation come from over-commitment, over-work and feeling unable to confide in anyone. She explained that counselors are helping students who feel this iso-

lation.

“In terms of what we can do, student workload is a constant conversation we need to have,” Ms. Graham-Santoro said. “As an institution it’s important to be self-reflective about why we’re giving assignments, the purpose of those assignments and how long they take.”

History teacher Holly Johnston said that this specific subset of data on the survey stood out to her. She explained that when seeing these students’ feelings reflected in the statistics, she made sure her classes were structured in a way to ensure students feel supported.

“The day-to-day practices that allow kids to feel heard and seen is giving them structure so they can balance everything else going on in their lives,” Ms. Johnston said.

Ms. Johnston explained the many demands U-High students face day-to-day with school and extra-curricular activities. She said that oftentimes students’ schedules are already set, so anything unplanned can set it off balance.

English department chair Mark Krewatch shared Ms. Johnston’s opinion on the importance of day-to-day structure. He also emphasized the importance of a strong and trusting relationship between students and teachers, so students feel like they can reach out when they struggle.

“My hope is that everyone knows when it’s legit you can talk to me,” Mr. Krewatch said. “It’s not always easy to build that trust though.”

With the data of the survey released relatively recently, many teachers are working to make sure each and every student feels seen and heard. This has been done through open gradebooks, designated work periods, weekly and month assignment sheets, as well as conversation and flexibility.

“We want to make sure that every student feels like they are connected to at least one adult in the building,” Ms. Graham-Santoro said. “Just one connection can be enough to be a protective factor for students.”

Weaving artist

Inspired by Black women, Shani Crowe continues to create art

by JAYA ALENGHAT
Assistant Editor

Artist Shani Crowe is collaborating on a new art gallery at the University of Chicago, “Black is the Color of the Cosmos.” The gallery, open Thursdays through Saturdays 1-5 p.m. through Dec. 8, contains a culmination of artwork from Ms. Crowe, Jess Atieno and Gloria Talamantes.

Some might remember the large portraits of intricate corn-row hairstyles that lined the walls of Gordon Parks Arts Hall’s Corvus Gallery in 2020 — Ms. Crowe’s “Braids” exhibit. As seen in this gallery, Ms. Crowe’s work mainly focuses on aspects of traditional African culture, specifically unique hairstyles.

On Nov. 8, Ms. Crowe passionately answered questions from the Midway about her galleries, the meaning behind them and her plans for the future. Some responses have been edited for style, clarity and length.

What did creating the “Braids” exhibit at Lab’s Corvus Gallery mean to you?

It was great to show that body of work at Lab because it was a new audience, an audience of youth — a diverse audience as well. The work was originally shown in 2016, so it had been out for a while, but I got to experience it through new eyes as children of all ages checked it out.

Why is the current exhibit you are collaborating on, “Black is the Color of the Cosmos,” important to you?

That exhibit is a culminating exhibit at a current residency that I have at Arts and Public Life. So, as a part of our residency, we are required to showcase what we have been working on ... I’m excited to show what I’ve been working on for sure, but it’s a part of the residency, it’s not a solo endeavor. It is a requirement, but it is also a pleasure as an artist to be able to showcase what you create.

How is this exhibit different from other exhibits you have worked on?

The body of work that I have on display now is different from the body of work that I showcased at your school. For example,



Midway file photo

ART APPRECIATION. This file photo shows alumna Lusia Austen observing artwork in January 2020 by the artist-in-residence at the time, Shani Crowe. Ms. Crowe had an installation of her art exhibit “Braids” in the Corvus Gallery during the 2019-20 school year.

“Braids,” because it is a color body of work, and it uses a dark background instead of a light background. Usually, when I photograph my hair designs, it is a pretty standard portrait with one strobe light — so I’m using flash lighting. This time, I did a mixture of both of the strobe, and then I also included lighting in the hair itself. So the hair itself was producing light. I was able to capture interesting, otherworldly-looking shots. A lot of them came out looking kind of like they are in outer space, or some void of some sort. So it’s different in its colors, it’s different in its emotion and it’s different technically as well.

Why is your art important to you?

My art is important to me, because as a creative person you understand that it’s a passion that must be pursued, it’s a creative compulsion. So my career and my work on one hand, satiate that need within me as a creative per-

son to have creative output. And my creative output is an expression of my ideas — things that are important to me. I want to share what’s important to me, highlight the beauty in the craft of braiding, the beauty of the natural hair of Black women. It is an outlet for me to celebrate that beauty, inspire other women to feel beautiful in their natural state and also encourage other people to determine the value of their own cultural practices on their own.

Do you have a muse for your work?

Each model that I work with is my muse. Sometimes I take references from different deities, a lot of times from ancient Kemet-ic cultures, or sometimes popular culture, just idols at large. Some things are inspired by a particular person, but in general, each model that I work with, or when I work with groups of models, their personal energy, contributes indelibly to the outcome.

What are your plans for the future?

I am definitely going to keep making art. I have had the pleasure of my career to make both photographic work and traditional, wall art, so to speak. But I also make sculptures, interactive, immersive designs and mixed-media video installations. I would love to create some public art. I have a lot of cool ideas for public art sculpture. I need to find someone who is good at CAD (Computer-aided design), so that we can start to make digital renderings of these drawings and possibly put in some proposals.



Five Nights at Freddy’s keeps its originality

by HALEY MAHARRY
Reporter

The horror game genre was all big fights, big monsters and big developers. But from the vents of the internet, indie developers came out with a completely different game, a unique horror game that would change the genre forever. And now, this beloved game has reached the big screens.

Ever since the Five Nights at Freddy’s game was released in 2014 by Scott Cawthorn, fans have been obsessed. In FNAF you play as a security guard at a Chuck E. Cheese-inspired pizzeria. It’s a point-and-click game with minimal movement. Oh! There are terrifying animatronics that are trying to kill you, and the power runs out fast.

The game was immediately a smash hit with the second game releasing only a few months after the first, and a third only a few months later.

FNAF quickly gained a massive following and a dedicated fanbase. To date, FNAF has eight official games, five spin-off games, 10 books, 11 novellas, five graphic novels and five guides. Along with all of the official products, FNAF has inspired hundreds if not thousands of fan games, songs and stories. Its complicated lore leads



NBC

FREAKY FRIGHTS. The movie adaptation of “Five Nights at Freddy’s” pays homage to the original game while being enjoyable to new explorers.

people to theorize and try to piece together the broader story between the games.

The new movie is a love letter to the original games. Beautiful opening credits in the style of the game’s 8-bit mini-games and hundreds of Easter eggs for FNAF fans. I was delighted by the setup

of the main character, Mike’s, security desk which is almost identical to the desk from the original game, complete with the iconic fan, phone and red-and-white-striped cup. Even the layout of the pizzeria was almost the same.

The movie also features cameos from two YouTubers big in

the FNAF world: Cory aka Coryx-Kenshin and Mathew Patrick aka Game Theory.

The film goes above and beyond what the game had given its fans and focuses on the lore of the games that theorists have been piecing together ever since its release.

The animatronics are enjoyably faithful to the FNAF 1 designs. The movie fleshed out the story of William Afton, the main antagonist of both the movie and the games, and the story of the ghost children possessing the animatronics. The movie makes the complex and confusing story of the games into a digestible and easy-to-understand, but still entertaining, plot.

Since its release in theaters Oct. 27, “Five Nights at Freddy’s” has broken multiple records such as becoming the highest North American opening for a PG-13 horror movie since “The Mummy Returns” over two decades ago.

The “Five Nights at Freddy’s” movie is a blast. It’s a pretty tame horror movie with minimal gore and fewer jump scares than expected. It’s perfect for people who have been invested in the games from the beginning, but it’s also an engaging and interesting story that would be fun to watch even if you’ve never heard of the games.

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Current seniors and some juniors will vote in the election on Nov. 5, 2024. What is an issue you think should be discussed and why?

“I haven’t thought too much about it yet, but I would hope that some of the issues regarding what roles race has to play in everyday life like education and neighborhood investment. I would also like for them to address global warming and people’s rights and freedom of expression.”

— Myles Cobb, senior

“I think an under-discussed issue is the child tax credit. For a year during the pandemic, families got compensated with cash in order to pay household expenses. This would be really transformative for a lot of people and we should bring it back.”

— Simon Lane, junior

“I believe that they should discuss things like abortion and foreign policy. These two issues are very important to voters throughout the country, so having the candidates give their stance on these issues would make the choice of who to vote for much easier.”

— George Ofori-Mante, junior

“I think that we need to focus on the deficit because firehose money government policy hurts poor people the most in society because it prices them out of the market for basic necessities. This would be done by passing a law that says that Congress members are ineligible to run for reelection if the deficit goes over 5% GDP.”

— Alex Ruppel, senior

“I think in the upcoming election we will see a lot of hateful rhetoric, we’ll see anti-trans rhetoric, anti-Black rhetoric and a lot of anti-immigrant rhetoric. Even if I don’t get my leftist values included, if I don’t get Medicare for all pushed, working class rights, even if there’s no push for unions in the Democratic party, which is what I am likely to vote for, I would much rather a candidate that does not espouse racist values.”

— Rathin Shah, senior

“I think that talking about the role that the United States plays in supporting countries going through conflict. I’d like to see [candidates] talk about the role the United States plays because I think it’s been so messy, and there’s been a lot of backlash in how the Biden administration has reacted, and sent funds to Israel.”

— Stella Sturgill, senior

“One issue that is really important is the immigration crisis unfolding currently, especially from countries like Venezuela and Nicaragua. Millions are fleeing and coming to the states, and while it seems like certain policies are being implemented here to help those immigrants, things like DACA are still paused.”

— Zoe Nathwani, senior

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