

Picasso's untitled sculpture in Daley Plaza. Yoko Ono's "Skylanding." "Two Orchids" by Isa Genzken. Wherever you look in Chicago, there is always beautiful public art.



The quality of available resources for the homeless in Chicago is often abysmal. Homeless Chicagoans share their experiences.



Bringing "taking a knee" to Lab, members of the boys basketball team decided to kneel before their games in order to protest racism and police brutality.



University Of Chicago Laboratory High School

U-HIGH MIDWAY

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Donations fund Jackman turf, makerspaces

Anonymous donors give \$4.3 million to fund multiple projects

by **MICHAEL RUBIN**
MANAGING EDITOR

Two donations totaling \$4.3 million will be allocated toward three areas of student life at Lab: two new makerspaces, an updated computer science curriculum, and renovations to Jackman Field.

On Nov. 21, the Director's Office announced two anonymous donations, one \$2.3 million gift from a Lab family and a \$2 million gift from a Lab parent.

The gifts will be specifically allocated to provide funds for initially equipping two makerspaces on the Historic Campus, designing mobile maker carts with design resources, and connecting Lab to a network of external experts on makerspaces. The money will also provide teacher innovation grants, which will allow for more interdisciplinary projects at Lab.

The \$2.3 million gift is mainly geared toward jump-starting experiential learning at Lab through makerspaces and resources for hands-on creation.

"So there's one family who gave a gift to what I'm calling the 'art of making,' which is inspired by learning by doing and the belief in

Allocation of Donations:

\$2.3 million: Among other projects, will equip makerspaces, including the addition of mobile maker carts.

\$2 million: Among other projects, will redesign computer science curriculum, including adding a new faculty member.

Both: Will fund the renovation of Jackman turf and teacher innovation grants.

experiential education," Laboratory Schools Director Charlie Abelman said. "If you jump forward to today, that translates in part to how students learn design thinking and how students learn how to make things."

The \$2 million gift will sponsor a redesign effort to add different levels to the computer science curriculum at Lab and to update the classes offered to better fit students' needs.

"Lab was one of the first in the country to have a ninth grade curriculum for computer science a long time ago, but we need to stay current and ask ourselves what that curriculum should be today," Dr. Abelman said. "That curriculum today can't really be one curriculum because our ninth graders are in all different spots."

Dr. Abelman plans to strengthen the connection between Lab and the University by creating a



MIDWAY PHOTO BY SAM FLEMING

OUT WITH THE OLD, IN WITH THE NEW. Both anonymous donations will be used to convert Jackman Field to a turf field and to add a practice track. The conversion of the field will allow for a wider variety of uses and extended seasons for athletics. The administration hopes to get the renovations done by fall 2018.

new position in the Lab faculty. The second donation will support a post-doctoral student who will work with a teacher in Lab's computer science department.

Both gifts will also support an Innovation Fund, which will allow teachers at Lab to explore interdisciplinary projects more than in years past.

"The premise of the Innovation

Fund is we should be supporting teachers who have interesting ideas but teachers who want to work with other teachers," Dr. Abelman said. "So if they're willing to collaborate with a teacher in a different division, a different school, and they're willing to collaborate with people at the University, there's going to be a fund of resources that has been seeded by

this gift."

The gifts will be focused in part in accomplishing the objective of converting Jackman Field to turf and installing a new practice track.

"Both parties are contributing to what we need to upgrade Jackman Field," Dr. Abelman said. "The goal is to try and have it be open by next fall, but there's permitting issues, so that can delay it."

HOLIDAY CRAFTS



MIDWAY PHOTO BY EMERSON WRIGHT

CATCHING THE GINGERBREAD MAN. Freshmen Maddie Kolb and Carly McClear work on a gingerbread house together as part of a competition during advisory Dec. 12. Maddie and Carly are in fine arts teacher Brian Wildeman's advisory.

School promotes diversity with POC conference, advisory council

by **GRACE ZHANG**
ASSISTANT EDITOR

Lab is demonstrating commitment to diversity in two ways this month, with student involvement in the Diversity Advisory Committee and the annual Student Diversity and Leadership Conference.

According to Dean of Students Ana Campos, after a survey was conducted among Lab families nearly a decade ago, the committee was created to talk about diversity issues from perspectives of people from all schools.

Prior to this year, students who attended the Student Diversity Leadership Conference, or had otherwise been engaged in diversity, equity and inclusion work in the high school were added to the committee. But this year, Lab Schools Director Charlie Abelman opened the student positions for any U-High student to apply. Five students were selected from 18 applicants: Veronica Godina, Mayher Kaur, Sammer Marzouk, Stephanie Miller and Saige Porter.

The DAC also includes faculty, staff, administration and parents, and it is facilitated by Dr. Abelman and Director of All-Schools Programs and Partnerships Nicole Hood. The process to fill faculty and staff positions is underway.

Dr. Hood said that the group

"This conference showed me what I can improve on as an individual. I plan to do a workshop for Social Justice Week, and just improve my daily interactions."

— DAVID RUNESHA, SENIOR

is intended to reach across all schools and constituencies to take in as many perspectives as possible.

The DAC is planning to review and be involved in the selection process to fill the vacant diversity and equity coordinator position and will think about procedures, policies, practices, staffing and strategies around diversity issues. Ci3 Design Thinking Lab, a group involved with diversity work at the University of Chicago, will work with the committee to develop a strategic plan for diversity at Lab, and add an outside opinion.

Attending an annual conference hosted by the National Association of Independent Schools also encourages student involvement in diversity issues. Students who attend the conference are expected to bring the information and integrate it into Lab life. Options include running workshops during middle school Diversity Day or

high school Social Justice Week, and presenting to faculty.

"This conference showed me what I can improve on as an individual," attendee David Runesha said. "[I plan to] do a workshop for Social Justice Week, and just improve my daily interactions with other people and making that small difference."

In addition to David, students Sahar Siddiqui, Emma Trone, Alexis Tyndall, Elizabeth Van Ha and Abraham Zelchenko joined 1,600 total students who attended the Student Diversity Leadership Conference, while Mr. Abelman, Ms. Campos, counselor Aria Choi, nurse Mary Toledo-Treviño and 10 other faculty members from the lower and middle schools attended the People of Color Conference both held Nov. 30-Dec. 2 in Anaheim, California, with a theme of "Voices for Equity and Justice Now and in Every Generation: Lead, Learn, Rededicate, and Deliver."

"Meeting a lot of people who look like me and who think like me and who I can relate to," David said about his favorite part about the conference. "I don't think there's any other time in my life I'll be in a room with 600 intellectual black people, who share ideas about diversity, who are activists in their own right. I don't think I'll ever have that opportunity ever again."

All-Schools Council expands for student input

by **SONNY LEE**
DEPUTY EDITOR

Beginning next quarter, a small group of students will join the All-Schools Council, which has an important role in the improvement and progress of the Laboratory Schools.

The group includes the Lab Schools director, the president of the Faculty Association or the designee, the director of finance, all principals, five divisional faculty chairs elected by their division and an additional faculty member

from each school: nursery to second grade, lower, middle and high.

In the past, the All-Schools Council hasn't functioned well. Lab Schools Director Charlie Abelmann explained that the group is supposed to meet quarterly, but in past years it's met twice a year or not at all. But this year, since Dr. Abelmann arrived, it's already met twice.

One of the ways the All-Schools Council is being revitalized is to increase the council to be more inclusive.

To do this, the administration and Faculty Association have reached an agreement to include students.

High school principal Stephanie Weber explained that after winter break she will post on each grade's Schoology page advertising two informational meetings where students can ask questions they have about the All-Schools Council.

Instead of an essay or application process, Ms. Weber will select four students after holding short meetings with interested candi-

dates.

Dr. Abelmann explained the importance of the students is founded on perspective. In addition to the adult's perspective, students can bring their own views, identifying what is working or what isn't.

He also said the All-Schools Council is an opportunity for students to participate in a group that could make impactful changes around the school, allowing them to grow in critical thinking, to express themselves verbally and to work in a group setting.

Dr. Abelmann has also positioned the group to create a strategy for the school.

He explained that the purpose of a strategic plan is to define where a school is going, acting as a roadmap for the school and identifying what the community believes is important and should work on.

"That group is really the only group that exists in the school that can talk about issues that are happening in Earl Shapiro, the lower school, the middle school, the upper school," Mr. Abelmann said.

PEER LEADING BUDDIES



MIDWAY PHOTO BY TOSYA KHODARKOVSKY

PINT-SIZED HOLIDAY SPIRIT. Reading picture books and drinking hot chocolate, Otto Brown, a junior, reads to his little buddies Nov. 28. All junior peer leaders have buddies at Earl Shapiro Hall and spend some peer leading classes with them in addition to their other duties.

U. of C., BSA commemorate 50-year anniversary of MLK

Discussions, panels will push local activism, nonviolence

by **PRIYANKA SHRIJAY**
OPINION EDITOR

As the 50th anniversary of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s assassination approaches, a University of Chicago educator has launched a plan to expand and enrich programming related to King's work. Through partnership with the RainbowPUSH Coalition, Liberty Baptist Church and others, the initiative will provide activist programs like forums and readings to commemorate and promote King's belief in nonviolence. Events will continue through the spring.

Dr. Bart Schultz, the director of the Civil Knowledge project and senior lecturer in the humanities, started the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Initiative, which began Nov. 4 with an open house and information session. Following that was a "Reading King" event at the Liberty Baptist Church, where attendees read some of King's powerful works.

Dr. Schultz said, "We had a wonderful group of Lab students there,

and talked with students from other schools and various South Side community members about some of Dr. King's writings, particularly 'What is Your Life's Blueprint?'"

Particularly pertinent to students, this reading is a speech King delivered at a Philadelphia high school, which calls to their attention the importance of having a strong sense of self as they consider their plans for their future.

Attendees were also treated to remarks by Rev. Damon Smith and were given the chance to discuss King's legacy with one another.

The discussion about King's philosophies sparked thought for senior Miranda Mireles.

"Something that really stuck with me was one of Dr. King's beliefs, which is everybody is your neighbor," Miranda said. "It's the idea that we are all on this earth together and we should respect and acknowledge everybody and their beliefs and opinions."

Senior Elizabeth Van Ha had the chance to discuss Dr. King's legacy with a senior from Magic Johnson Academy High School — an experience which allowed her to learn from another student's educational experience.

"I did not think about the fact that other high schools located in Chicago, which has had its fair

share of race riots and civil unrest, were not aware of who MLK was besides the fact that he was a hero to many," Elizabeth said. "In the readings and discussions, I had heard some of the opposing perspectives before, but for my partner it was her first exposure. It really opened my understanding to the educational system in Chicago and also got me thinking of the historiography of MLK."

The University and Lab communities have and are encouraged to take part in the Initiative's events. On Jan. 13, there will be a "Legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Tour and Discussion," led by Professor Timuel D. Black who worked directly with Dr. King. Other January events include the annual RainbowPUSH MLK Breakfast, the Martin Luther King Jr. Community Service Day, and the U. of C. Martin Luther King Jr. event at Rockefeller Chapel.

On Feb. 24 there will be a panel discussion and historical re-enactment of when Dr. King was heckled by supporters of the Black Power movement at Liberty Baptist Church in August 1966.

At this event, attendees will debate the legacy of Dr. King's non-violent action. The major event — a memorial to Dr. King — will take place on April 4.

NEWS IN BRIEF

MLK assembly theme will focus on history

The theme for the annual Martin Luther King Jr. Assembly Jan. 11, 2018, is "The Path We Are On: Civil Rights 1969-2017." Next year marks the 50th anniversary of King's assassination, and the upcoming anniversary inspired this year's theme, which will focus on activism over the past 50 years.

The Black Students' Association will host auditions for performances Dec. 14-15. The club is looking for acts that have clear connections to the civil rights movement.

Saige Porter, president of BSA and a member of the assembly planning committee, wants student to understand the work that the community has to participate in to attain equality.

"We hope students get an understanding of activism in different cultures and what that looks like and what we can do as a community," Saige said.

— NATALIE GLICK

High school Green Team looks locally for partners

The U-High Green Team is partnering with the middle school environmental club and members of the Earl Shapiro Hall, lower and middle school faculty to create a Green Team board which will advocate for better environmental representation throughout the school.

"It's important to remember that Lab school is one entity," high school Green Team president Victoria Gin said. "It's much easier to make change when you have a larger team, branched out across grades and schools."

Specifically, the Green Team is planning on beginning an initiative to promote plastic recycling throughout the schools.

"We are collecting plastic and giving it to a company called Trex. They use recycled plastic and create it into decks and many other outdoor things," Victoria said.

— SAM FLEMING

Debate team falls short at Glenbrook competition

At the Glenbrook North High School debate tournament, seniors Michael Hellie and Dheven Unni placed 21st out of 177 teams, going 5-2 in preliminary rounds and losing their bid round. The other varsity team, juniors Elena Liao and Roshni Padhi, went 4-3.

The Glenbrook competition is considered the hardest competition of the year.

"The Glenbrook is one of the largest competitive speech and debate tournaments in the country," debate coach Sonny Patel said. "The longevity, quality, and size, determine what elimination

bracket tier a tournament awards a bid to the Tournament of Champions. The Glenbrook is the only public school to offer an octofinals TOC qualifier."

This tournament does not affect the U-High team's ability to participate in the Tournament of Champions, as they have already received the required bids.

The team matched Lab's record at the Glenbrook competition.

"So far the furthest any Lab team has ever gotten is the bid round, also known as the sextofinals, which is where we lost as well," Michael said.

— KATERINA LOPEZ

Model UN faces tough loss returning to Princeton

Though the Model United Nations team won the golden tiger, the highest award at Princeton University's conference, last year, this year they did not.

Of the 18 U-High students who attended the Princeton University's on Nov. 16-19, seniors Michael Rubin and Harrison Shapiro placed first on their committees, and senior Teresa Xie and junior Jamal Nimer placed second on their committees.

Teresa, who is a secretary general, said that Princeton is a really tough conference, and while the team won last year, they did not do as well this year.

"We are trying to revamp our strategy so we can do better next year against other competitive MUN schools," Teresa said.

The next MUN conference is Harvard MUN Jan. 25-28.

— KATERINA LOPEZ

Math Team finds further success at competitions

According to coach Joseph Scroll, the Math Team went to two competitions this month: an Illinois Math League competition on Dec. 12 for which scores have not yet been released and a North Suburban Math League competition on Dec. 7 where the team took eighth place. They also went to two competitions in November: the IML competition Nov. 7, where the team tied for first place out of about 60 teams and the NSML competition Nov. 1, where the team took eighth place overall.

There are five NSML competitions over the course of the school year. The competition on Dec. 7 was the third. The Math Team ranked in 12th place for their orals, a competition where students are given a complicated problem and are required to present their solutions.

The freshman team took fifth place, the sophomores secured 13th place, the juniors earned 12th place and the seniors took 10th place

— PRIYANKA SHRIJAY

P.E. wellness classes teach self-care

Teachers add core fitness class, offer mala bead therapy

by **ABBY SLIMMON**
MIDWAY REPORTER

U-High students are notorious for choosing to study rather than sleep and stumbling through the school day stressed about an upcoming test or a growing pile of homework. Thanks to three physical education teachers, stress relief is on the way.

Debbie Ribbens, Megan Janda and Nichole Magliocco have worked together to incorporate more wellness classes into the P.E. curriculum, including a new core strengthening class to help students find stress relief through simple exercises such as meditation, yoga and fitness.

“When students graduate, we want them to have a good idea of how to keep healthy in doing things not only for your body but for your mind,” Ms. Magliocco said.

The Core Strengthening class was added this year because teachers noticed through fitness testing results that students were

not performing as well as in previous years in the push-ups and sit-ups categories.

“We want to give students tools to deal with their day to day stress,” Ms. Ribbens, who taught the class, said.

Core Strengthening ended up being a huge success with lots of positive feedback from the students, Ms. Ribbens said. The P.E. department plans to offer it again at least once during the 2018-19 school year.

“I loved Core because my teacher was so energetic and the exercises were so fun,” sophomore Sara Gregg, who took the class earlier this year, said. “The class really fueled my morning and helped me start the day with a better attitude.”

The department offered Stress Redux earlier in the quarter and is currently offering Yoga/Pilates.

Stress Redux is being offered for the seventh year in a row and is always very popular among the students, said Ms. Ribbens. In Stress Redux classes, students practice different types of meditation to figure out what helps them the most, whether that is through breathing, walking or even coloring.

Over the past few years, students have colored mandala coloring sheets in Stress Redux, but this year, Ms. Janda, Ms. Maglioc-



MIDWAY PHOTO BY ISABELLA KELLERMEIER

GETTING CENTERED. Freshmen Lea Rebollo Baum does yoga with her classmates in Ms. Greene’s yoga and pilates class.

co and Ms. Ribbens wanted to add something new. They decided give students the opportunity to make mala bracelets, which are bracelets made with colorful beads that help students set goals for how they want to treat themselves and others as they are making them.

Each bead color has a different meaning, so when students make their bracelet, the colors they pick help them find a focus. For exam-

ple, red represent love and energy, pink represents health and happiness, and gray represent security and reliability.

“There are also lava beads, which hold a scent, so you can put essential oil on it to help the students with relaxation and destressing through different scents,” Ms. Magliocco said.

P.E. teachers encourage students to suggest new wellness classes.

Middle schoolers provided with laptops

by **SAM FLEMING**
MIDWAY REPORTER

On a Monday morning, before school begins, the middle school hallway is lined with glowing Apple logos as the top of pre-teen students’ heads peek over the lids of their laptops. The hallway is abuzz as students scramble to finish last-minute assignments or laugh together at YouTube videos.

Beginning this quarter, middle schoolers were provided with MacBook Air laptops that they can take home throughout the school year. The laptops are a new addition to the middle school, and according to Ryan Allen, middle school dean of students, a much needed one.

“We had come to the point

where the middle school had more computers than students,” Mr. Allen said. “We would have a computer cart for science and a cart for humanities, which wasn’t an efficient use of time or money.”

Mr. Allen was part of the committee of teachers, staff and administrators who helped implement the new laptop policy. So far, it has been a success with both students and teachers slowly welcoming the change.

The laptops are already challenging teachers to develop new ways of utilizing technology in the classroom.

“They have already changed how we address grammar,” sixth grade teacher Kelly Storm said. “We have a new program that al-

lows students to get extra grammar help and practice outside of the classroom.”

The group happiest about the change seems to be the students.

“A lot of people have siblings at home who get priority over the computer,” eighth grader Yuan Zhuang said. “But now with these laptops it is much easier to access school work.”

Other students enjoy having the freedom to do their work during long car rides or while at sports practice.

Although there is currently no plan to give laptops to high schoolers, according to the Lab IS staff, high school administrators are keeping a close eye on the example the middle school is setting.



MIDWAY PHOTO BY YANNI SIMMONS

HARD AT WORK. Middle schoolers in Sam Nekrosius’s work on their laptops during humanities.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Two staff members retire, one leaves Lab for new job

Three staff members will have departed Lab by the end of this month. Yolanda Corona will retire after 34 years at Lab. Nancy Withrow, the procurement and finance manager in the business office, will retire Dec. 19 after working at Lab for 30 years. Devin Wideman, a development associate in the alumni relations and development office, has taken a new role as assistant director of digital communications at the University of Chicago.

“I’ll miss so many people, too many to even list,” Ms. Withrow said. Her future plans are “not to wake up too early to an alarm clock, that’s number one. Maybe to travel a lit-



Nancy Withrow



Yolanda Corona



Devin Wideman

tle bit, go to an exercise class because I have time to do that, and just take my day, day-by-day and plan some vacations.”

Ms. Corona has served different roles at Lab, including assisting the fine arts, world language and music departments. She is currently working in the music office.

Mr. Wideman departed Nov. 30 and had been coordinating Lab’s social media and assisting with marketing. He said that what he will miss most is that each day is different and unpredictable.

— GRACE ZHANG

Student Council proposes sports to count for P.E.

Student Council has initiated a discussion with the administration about whether participation in a sport could replace a P.E. unit.

On behalf of the Student Council, Michael Rubin met with Athletics Director David Ribbens to explain that some students see P.E. as a disruption to sports training and to explore the feasibility for a student to get excused from P.E. during sports seasons.

While Mr. Ribbens said he has not had much of a role in this discussion, Michael wanted an opinion from the Athletics Department. Mr. Ribbens said P.E. provides a wider range of exercises

and training, so one cannot replace another.

“You’re looking at two entirely different programs — that are not alike — but are similar in a few ways. Because, for instance, if someone plays ice hockey, they’re practicing, it’s cardiovascular, there’s strength training, there’s other things involved, but it’s a more specific behavior than physical education,” Mr. Ribbens said.

Michael said he plans to meet with others who have a more administrative role in this decision, including P.E. Department Chair Deborah Ribbens and other P.E. teachers as well as Lab Schools Director Charlie Abelman.

— JACOB POSNER

Lab plans to fund student educational, service trips

Have you ever wanted to take a trip with your fellow classmates to see, do or learn about something educational? Here is your chance.

Ned Reece, Lab’s director of auxiliary services, wants U-High students to know that if they have an idea for a trip over summer break, he will try to make it happen.

“We want to give students the opportunity to go and explore new places,” Mr. Reece said.

Students will first have to come up with an idea and should write

out a brief description of what they would want to do. In the past, a student wanted to take a trip to Italy to look at the art, so art teacher Brian Wildeman ended up taking 15 students to Rome and Florence.

Students should then find a teacher who would be willing to chaperone the trip and a group of interested students before having a meeting with Mr. Reece. After that, Mr. Reece can work on the overall details of the trip including what tour companies to use.

“Then, we determine how much it will cost, usually in conjunction with a student travel organization such as EF Tours or ACIS,” Mr. Reece said. ACIS is the American Council for International Studies. “Making this determination includes assumptions about how many students will go on the trip, how many chaperones, how long the trip is, etc.”

After Mr. Reece and the administration have decided the cost, the trip will be offered to interested students. The trip is funded by families of the students going on the trip, but in the past, financial assistance has been provided to some students.

“If people have ideas, by all means bring them here and we will try to make them happen,” Mr. Reece said. “We want our students to be able to go out and see or do

StudCo aims to improve student life

by **ABBY SLIMMON**
MIDWAY REPORTER

Student Council has been busy this quarter extending ID privileges, putting speakers in the cafeteria and making a pamphlet that lists all the clubs to improve the overall student environment.

Sophomore class president Ben Cifu worked with Director of Security Craig Nance to get student access to the high school entrance extended from 5:45 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. While this privilege does not extend to the gym building, a security guard will be in the gym entrance from 8 a.m. to 8p.m. to let students in.

All-School Cultural Union President Florence Almeda has been working to install speakers in Café Lab to play music on Fridays during lunch. She was inspired to initiate the bill by the music in the cafeteria during Spirit Week.

“Having music playing completely changed the vibe of the cafeteria,” Florence said about her proposed bill. “The hope of having speakers in the café each Friday is to bring the U-High community closer together and celebrate the student body for making it to Friday.”

Florence and other Student Council members developed a bill to make a playlist of songs previously played at school dances and other approved, school-appropriate songs that students could request through a Google form.

“In addition, we plan to download the playlist on a computer and turn off the Wi-Fi so students can access all the songs on the playlist, but can’t search their own music,” Florence said.

Florence said she hopes to get the speakers in the café by the start of winter quarter.

Junior Class President Shiva Menta and Director of Student Technological Services, Campbell Phalen, a junior, printed a pamphlet describing all the clubs at U-High, which will be distributed to the admissions office and high school office for new students and families.

what interests them.”

— ABBY SLIMMON

Violinist qualifies for state music competition

Sophomore Jessica Huang qualified for the Illinois Music Educators Association’s All-State Orchestra for violin.

Jessica will rehearse with the orchestra for three days in Peoria, then will perform with the group on Jan. 27, 2018.

On Oct. 11, U-High orchestra, band and choir students auditioned for the Illinois Music Educators Association District Music Festival. Students began preparing for the auditions in September by practicing excerpts and scales.

Seven U-High students qualified for the district ensemble but did not advance to the state competition. They are junior Sam DuBose for piano; freshmen Miles Warshawer, William Greenstone, Stella Heon and Michelle Tkachenko Weaver for 9/10 chorus; seniors Nicole Horio and Jacob Shkrob for senior chorus and sophomore Jessica Huang for violin.

The top 10 performers from each instrument or major category in choir for the October audition performed at the District 1 Senior Festival on Nov. 1.

— LEAH EMANUEL

the Winter Binge List

With three long, cold winter months ahead, beat the snow by staying in to watch full seasons of these addicting TV shows available online

New drama ‘Riverdale’ quickly gains devoted fans

by KATERINA LOPEZ
MIDWAY REPORTER

Milkshakes and burgers scatter the tables in the old-fashioned diner. Conversations of Jason Blossom’s death are heard at every table. In one booth by the window, five teenagers sit nervously discussing the intensifying tension within their small town. This is no ordinary get-together in Hyde Park. This is a typical day in the life of the fictional Riverdale High School characters. Based on the Archie comics,

Season 2 of the popular show “Riverdale” premiered Oct. 11 on The CW. After the murder of Jason Blossom on the Fourth of July, four local teens — Veronica Lodge, Betty Cooper, Archie Andrews and Jughead Jones — work together to figure out who did it. The show puts a darker twist on the already-popular Archie comics, with the plot based around a murder, a new addition not from the plot of the comic. Sophomore Nikita Sekhar said he really enjoys the change.

“I love that it tells an alternate story to the comics,” Nikita said. “I love that it is darker than the comics are, which makes it more interesting. I was a huge fan of the Archie comics when I was a kid, so when I heard the show was good and it showed up on my Netflix recommendations, I had to watch it.” Appearing on Netflix last May, Season 1 quickly attracted a strong fan base. “I watched the first season in two days,” junior Isha Singh said. “I watched it so fast because every

episode ended with a cliffhanger, it made you want to keep watching. I also grew emotionally attached to the characters throughout the show and loved to see their development.” Fans not only watch the show for the plot but also for their favorite characters. “My favorite characters are Jughead because he is angsty, which is amusing, and Veronica because she is very extra,” senior Jessica Franks said. Fans are excited about the new upcoming season and have high

expectations for it. “I’m expecting more drama and romance but not just high school drama. I’m also hoping for some more of the dark interesting parts of the plot to come through again,” Jessica said. The students who have begun watching it have become obsessed. “Actually, I’m kind of blown away,” Nikita said. “This season has kind of exceeded all my expectations. I thought it wouldn’t be as good because there’s no murder mystery, but it’s amazing!”

‘Game of Thrones’



HBO

“Winter is Coming,” bringing along with it a “Game of Thrones” binge. Between dashing sword fights, the fight to be the ultimate ruler and fire-breathing dragons, “Game of Thrones” has something for everyone. For fans of “Lord of the Rings” and “Outlander,” this show is binge-worthy for winter. The traditional holiday familial troubles will not measure up to the murderous family troubles in this show, which lead to countless murders. Now in its eighth and final season, “Game of Thrones” gained a cult-like following for its depictions of power and control in the mythical land of Westeros, where nine “Great Houses” rule the land. The show centers on who has the rightful claim to sit on the Iron Throne, where the ruler of Westeros comes from one of the nine Great Houses, each ruling a different geographical area. For those with wanderlust over the break, locations from Dubrovnik, Croatia to Giant’s Causeway in Scotland take viewers all over the mythical world of Westeros. Lovers of blood and gore can anticipate more than 5,000 deaths — just in the first seven seasons. Novelist George R.R. Martin wrote five “Game of Thrones” books and will release two more. The show is available to stream through HBO Go and HBO Now services, and has seven seasons and 67 episodes, with running times from 45-80 minutes, and an eighth season will be released next summer.

— TALIA GOERGE-KARRON

‘Stranger Things’



NETFLIX

The sound of a spinning bike wheel rattles through the tall, dark trees which loom above as a young boy furiously runs through the forest — running from something he can’t even begin to understand. And this is just the beginning. Inspired by the famous board game “Dungeons and Dragons,” “Stranger Things” takes place in the 1980s in the fictional town of Hawkins, Indiana. The story begins when an 11-year-old boy, Will Byers, goes missing, and the search for him, led by his friends, mother and police, transpires. Meanwhile, there is the underlying presence of a Department of Energy science lab — whose discoveries and findings are mostly unknown — and the mysterious appearance of a girl, Eleven, whose supernatural capabilities include telekinesis and magically communicating with others. The disappearance of another Hawkins citizen escalates the search for Will, and the discovery of monsters, magic and other realms puts the people of Hawkins in grave danger. “Stranger Things” premiered in July 2016, and Season 2 debuted Oct. 27. With 17 episodes each about 50 minutes long, and currently one of the most popular shows on Netflix, both seasons provide an engrossing, accessible and thrilling show to binge-watch this winter. The principal characters are fun and relatable, the plot is compelling, and the culture references add further interesting components, making the entire show engrossing to watch. Catch up before the third season comes out.

— IVÁN BECK

‘Jane the Virgin’



CW

Deriving its premise from a Venezuelan telenovela, Jane Villanueva, a young aspiring writer, is accidentally artificially inseminated and falls pregnant despite her religious commitment to staying a virgin. Her pregnancy throws her into the world of her baby’s father; the ultra-rich, and married, Rafael Solano. Rife with organized crime, the hotel that is run by the Solano family provides endlessly entertaining, addictively twisty plot developments that makes the show as bingeable as it is, especially in the show’s soap-opera style of storytelling. But Jane’s modest home, that she shares with her mother and grandmother, also hosts more grounded drama, that explores issues from abortion to the immigrant experience. “Jane the Virgin” manages to add a heaping dose of emotional realism into the intentionally over-dramatic plot, which can make the show’s tone heavy at times. But comedic relief, in the form of whimsical glimpses into the minds of characters, and the genuine relationships that Jane shares with her mother and grandmother lighten the mood enough to avoid making watching a chore. The show also blends excellent writing with gorgeous stylistic touches. Attentive viewers can expect to be rewarded with plot points and callbacks from past episodes that make a richer viewing experience. With 66 hour-long episodes on Netflix and a fourth season in progress, viewers have a lot of twisty, heartfelt and addictive material to dive into.

— EMMA TRONE

With ‘Transparent’ can we separate art from artist?

by MICHAEL RUBIN
MANAGING EDITOR

Uncertainty. Unresolved tension. Chaos. As sexual harassment allegations against members of the entertainment industry mount, producers for affected movies and shows need to set aside the previously positive buzz surrounding their shows and accept the pending prosecutions of their star performers. It will undoubtedly be hard to enjoy these shows knowing these actors are accused criminals and predators, and many will choose to end their viewership. Can we separate the art from the artist? Since multiple sexual harassment claims against producer Harvey Weinstein were made public, a flurry of sexual harassment claims have been filed against other actors and we have seen increased social acceptance of victims sharing experiences. As star actors Kevin Spacey, from Netflix’s “House of

Analysis

Cards,” and Jeffrey Tambor, from Amazon Studios’ “Transparent,” face individual allegations of misconduct, the future of their respective television shows have been severely jeopardized. Fans of these shows will face a difficult choice: ending support for the television shows in protest against the fallen stars, or finding a way to continue enjoying these shows without recognizing the disturbing crimes their actors have made. It is crucial for fans to object to misconduct of this nature by refusing to support the individual actors, rather than refusing to support the shows themselves. Considering the undeniable connection between the alleged perpetrators of these crimes and the art they helped create, some believe that supporting their television shows is an extension of

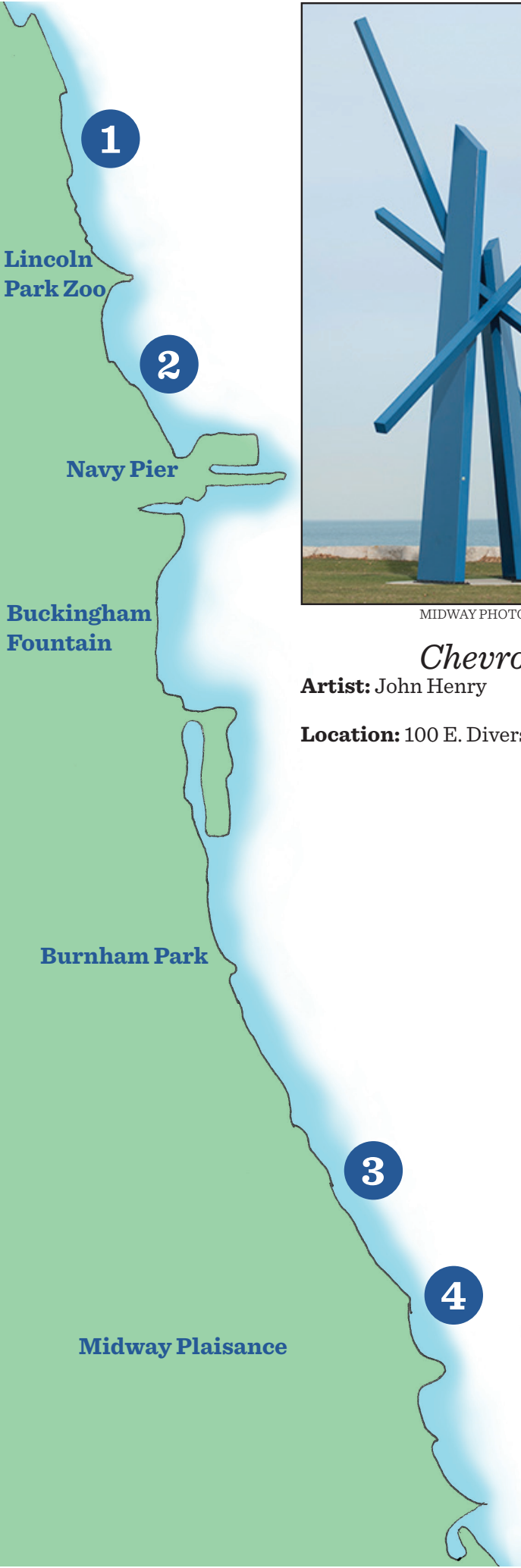
supporting those individuals. Netflix initially released a statement claiming that the show would not continue production due to Mr. Spacey’s actions, but on Dec. 4, Netflix content chief Ted Sarandos announced that the show would continue production on a sixth season without Mr. Spacey. On Nov. 19, Mr. Tambor, who plays Mort Pfefferman on “Transparent,” a professor of political science and parent of three who comes out as transgender, was accused of sexual misconduct by fellow cast member, Trace Lysette, as well as his former assistant. Although I believe television shows whose actors are involved in sexual harassment scandals should cancel further production, “Transparent” is the exception. “Transparent” is a pioneer TV show unlike any other. By telling the narrative of a transgender woman, the show’s producers intended to help acclimate viewers to the difficulties and road-

blocks transgender people face in American society. However, now that Tambor is under public scrutiny and investigation, many viewers may begin to pull away from the show, unable to continue supporting it based on his involvement. Before accusations against Tambor were made public, Amazon Studios renewed the series for a fifth season in August. However, the show’s once-certain future is now in question due to Tambor’s inappropriate and selfish conduct. Amazon will face the difficult choice of replacing the lead actor to attempt salvaging the show or cancelling the show altogether. Fans of “Transparent” must continue supporting the show after Tambor’s exit for the sake of spreading awareness and acceptance for the transgender community. Although viewers should not support Tambor as an individual if the allegations against him are accurate, the show’s cause is import-

ant to continue supporting. The message conveyed by “Transparent” should not be overshadowed by Tambor’s actions. Unlike other shows which are by-products of American consumerism, “Transparent” positively affects the LGBTQ+ community. “Transparent” producers must find a way to further the show’s agenda rather than allowing the transgender community to lose one of their most far-reaching narratives. Producers should hire a transgender lead actor, which could be more effective than Tambor’s initial position. Although some may feel uneasy supporting shows that contributed to unsafe work environments and benefited sexual predators, viewers must separate art from artist. Kevin Spacey is not Frank Underwood, nor is Jeffrey Tambor Mort Pfefferman, and it is crucial for the viewership to make this distinction.

Changing the idea of public art

Designating 2017 as the year of public art, city officials bring art to neighborhoods across Chicago’s 50 wards



by **LEAH EMANUEL**
ARTS EDITOR
Elongated steel pieces fixed together in Daley Plaza. Metal petals carefully placed in Jackson Park. Two large white orchids standing side by side.

Whether Picasso's iconic untitled sculpture in Daley Plaza, Yoko Ono's "Skylanding" located in Jackson Park, or the "Two Orchids" by Isa Genzken in Buckingham Plaza, wherever you are in Chicago, you are surrounded by incredible public art.

Chicago already had one of the greatest public art collections, yet it soared to new heights since 2017 was designated the Year of Public Art by the mayor and the city's cultural affairs department.

The city aimed to bring public art to all 50 wards across Chicago through a new public art festival, the 50x50 Neighborhood Arts Project, performances, exhibitions and more.

"This is changing the idea of what public art is, where it shows up," Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Projects Commissioner Mark Kelly said. "So it's not

"To be a great city, to be a great civilization, to honor who we are as a species, there should be creative work that surrounds us all the time."
— MARK KELLY

just in the expected places like in Millennium Park or along the lakefront, but it's starting to fill every neighborhood across the city."

The public art plan offers matching funds to every alderman, so if the alderman dedicates a portion of the budget set aside for infrastructure maintenance and improvements, to the creation of public art in their ward, the city will match it.

The momentum grew rapidly in the city, and virtually every alderman signed up, Mr. Kelly said.

"One of the defining characteristics of us as a species I think is the creative impulse," Mr. Kelly said. "Public art reminds us of who we are. To be a great city, to be a great civilization, to honor who we are as a species, there should be cre-

ative work that surrounds us all the time."

Through the heightened attention on public art in 2017, Mr. Kelly wants the definition of public art to begin to transform.

"We all get caught in a trap of what we think public art is, and by definition art should be escaping any definition. It is not a script — it defies expectations, it surprised us, it juxtaposes, it contradicts, it mashes up and the forms it will take should ever change," he said.

Mr. Kelly believes this is the year that public art should truly become a defining characteristic of the city and how everyone lives in it. Art should be in every public space throughout Chicago.

He said, "I think if it was 25 years from now and someone were to do the next iteration of this timeline, 2017 would be this watershed moment for the city, where already with a great public art history collection but with the public art plan and the year of public art, new energy, new ideas, new visions about what public art is and where it shows up and how it impacts the life of the city."



MIDWAY PHOTO BY JANIE INGRASSIA

Chevron
Artist: John Henry
Location: 100 E. Diversey Parkway



MIDWAY PHOTO BY YANNI SIMMONS

Architect's Handkerchief
Artist: Claes Oldenburg
Location: 880 N. Inner Lake Shore Dr.



MIDWAY PHOTO BY AMANDA LEVITT

Looking Up
Artist: Tom Friedman
Location: East 47th Street



MIDWAY PHOTO BY TOMÁS LINQUIST

Destino
Artist: Mark di Suvero
Location: 53rd Street and the Lakefront Path

"All of our spaces need to be filled with public art but the power of our lakefront demands powerful art that is equal to the weight of the space itself."
— Mark Kelly, Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Projects Commissioner

Cold Winter Warm Hearts

Thousands of Chicago homeless people struggle to get access to essential health, housing resources

by **SAM FLEMING**
CHICAGO LIFE EDITOR

J.C. gets out of bed at 5 each morning in the Pacific Garden Mission on 14th and Canal streets. He makes his bed, shaves and takes a quick shower, while waiting for breakfast to be ready at 6:30 a.m.

He hangs out with some friends, watching “Gunsmoke” and “Rocket Man” on TV until 8 a.m., when he heads out to make the \$2.50 journey by bus to Hyde Park. He perches himself by his church, on the corner of 53rd Street and Blackstone Avenue, and greets everyone who walks by with a big smile and a comment.

“I’m a social worker. You know what that means? I do the social thing. I talk to at least 70 to 100 people every day, you can count,” J.C. said.

He is just one of Chicago’s homeless residents — between 5,000 to 128,000 depending on the source.

Although citywide spending on homelessness recently increased to \$6.89 million per year, homeless people and advocates say the quality and availability of the city’s re-

sources can be incredibly poor. For somebody like J.C., who is not actively looking to find a home, this has become a part of life, but for those more actively trying to secure a home outside of a shelter, Chicago’s system consistently lets them down.

J.C., real name Jeffrey Campbell, has kept this routine for 35 years. He has become part of the Hyde Park community. He spends his days laughing, talking and helping with anything the church may need before heading back to the Mission by 8 p.m., where he’ll spend the night.

“I have not bought a meal in 10 years,” he said. “Boston Market, Nando’s, all these places take care of me, but I never ask to borrow nothing from nobody.”

J.C. stresses that for him, being homeless in Chicago sometimes, “isn’t even like being homeless.”

But he also admits that with his years of experience in the city he has learned to take advantage of all that it has to offer.

“You have to know what resources are out there,” J.C. said, “because

the city ain’t gonna let you know.”

Homelessness statistics show Chicago to be a city that effectively uses available resources for those experiencing homelessness. According to the City of Chicago’s 2017 Homeless Point-in-Time Count, each night 80 percent of the city’s homeless population is sheltered — which includes those living with friends or relatives — far outpacing most other major American cities.

Homelessness within the city is at the lowest point it has been in the last 10 years, according to WBEZ news.

Chicago is far below the national averages in almost every homelessness metric. However, the quality of these available resources is often abysmal, so abysmal that many of the 20 percent of unsheltered homeless would rather sleep outside than in a shelter.

Levi, who spends most of his days downtown, would rather spend the night on the CTA train than in any type of shelter.

“The shelters just let in anybody,” he said, sitting by the entrance of

the Van Buren L train station in the Loop. “I don’t think they should discriminate, but you gotta worry about your safety. I don’t wanna be around crazy people and be covered in bugs, but that’s just how it is at a lot of the shelters.”

Jason chooses to camp out at the corner of Randolph Street and Michigan Avenue and has been homeless on and off for the past three years. He knows the ins-and-outs of the Chicago system, and also chooses to sleep outdoors rather than going to a shelter.

“A lot of the time you will spend money to get all the way out to one of the shelters, and they’re usually full, so you have to get there super early,” he said, smiling and talking to people who passed by. “You get better food panhandling than you do at most of those places, and there’s bedbugs everywhere.”

The quality of shelters isn’t the only thing which keeps Jason from being happy with the city’s resources.

“Chicago doesn’t make clear what resources are available, when they

are available. They don’t make clear how to go about getting resources,” Jason said. “They need to have a clear-cut thing where you ask somebody and they tell you what resources are available.”

Person after person echoed the same sentiment: Chicago has lots of resources, but they are poor quality and can be hard to find.

Corey, who anxiously shifts his weight back and forth in a flimsy jacket outside the Chipotle on 53rd Street, is dealing with the issue of accessing resources. He became homeless six months ago after a bad car accident left him in the hospital for a month. He was living out of his car before the accident, but after he got out of the hospital, he found himself without a place to sleep and no options. Now, he is desperately looking for a place to live during a winter he is not prepared for.

“The only reason I’m out here is because they wouldn’t give me a Link card,” he said, referring to the city.

With a Link card Corey would be eligible to receive food assistance,

so less of his budget would go toward his next meal.

“I didn’t have my papers ready so I had to leave without it,” Corey said. “But the hospital is all the way out in the suburbs and I don’t have any way to get out there, so I don’t see what I’m supposed to do to get my card at this point.”

Although Chicago offers many short-term resources, many people experiencing homelessness said it falls short in providing access to the most valuable resource for many: assistance finding a permanent home. The city’s system works well for people like J.C. who embrace their situation. But for those striving to find a way out of homelessness, they see little avenue other than getting lucky.

While shelters and missions may be aware of the personal needs of the homeless in Chicago, they are funded directly by the city and are also keenly aware of Chicago’s budgetary struggles and strict limitations.

Shelter employees stress that their goal is not to house people for the long term, but to help people find immediate housing and get people any short-term resources they need.

“Yes, living conditions could be better, but our goal is not to make shelters luxury homes,” said Telly Howard, who works at one of the biggest shelters in Chicago, the San Jose Obrero Mission in Pilsen. “We refer to ourselves as a transitional home, because our goal is to help people make the transition into new lives. We do not want people staying here forever. We always say that shelters are neither the problem with, nor the answer to homelessness. The city’s goal is to end homelessness and there is no way that changing conditions in the shelters could do that.”

Tonya, who works at another of the large shelters in the city, You Can Make It Inc. in Back of the Yards, stresses that shelters provide ample resources for those who are

“We call ourselves a transitional home, because our goal is to help people make the transition into new lives. We do not want people staying here forever. We always say that shelters are neither the problem with, nor the answer to homelessness. The city’s goal is to end homelessness and there is no way that changing conditions in the shelters could do that”

— TELLY HOWARD,
JOSE SAN OBRERO MISSION

willing to come consistently.

“When people come into shelters we have the resources they need,” Tonya said. “We have outreach classes for all who come in, and everyone that stays for more than a night is assigned a case manager to help them get back on their feet. Although there may be problems with the system, the shelters provide assistance to anybody who asks. We want to get as many people into homes as possible.”

A gap remains between the goals of the shelters and the needs of the homeless population. The city looks to end homelessness as an epidemic, while those experiencing homelessness are worried about their individual situation. Looking at the problem as a whole rather than focusing on individuals may be effective for the city, but it causes people experiencing homelessness to feel ignored. This leaves some hoping for a miracle rather than trusting the system.

“You never know,” Jason said as he rocked back and forth staring across the street at the famous “bean” sculpture. “One day everything will be bad and the next it’ll all work out. Miracles happen.”



MIDWAY PHOTO BY YANNI SIMMONS

THE LOOP. Brenda spends her days sitting outside on Michigan Avenue. She is one of the 34 percent of female homeless Chicagoans. Additionally, 56 percent of women in Chicago shelters reported that they had experienced domestic violence, per the Center for Impact Research.



MIDWAY PHOTO BY YANNI SIMMONS

SOUTH LOOP. A man who goes by BC the Black Clown stands laughing with passersby, daring them to read his sign. He prefers to stay away from the craziness of Michigan Avenue. He stands outside every day with his autobiography, “The Many Tears of a Black Clown.” Even though African Americans only account for 32 percent of the city’s population, 76 percent of homeless Chicagoans are African American.



MIDWAY PHOTO BY YANNI SIMMONS

HYDE PARK. J.C. laughs and tries to high five everyone who passes by. He spends most of his time in Hyde Park in front of the United Methodist Church. He’s been coming to Hyde Park for 35 years and has become an integral part of the community.



MIDWAY PHOTO BY SAM FLEMING

Chicago Homeless by the Numbers

18,117

Students identified as homeless by CPS in 2016

18%

of homeless Chicagoans are employed

661

homeless families live in the city

11%

of homeless persons are eligible to receive Social Security benefits

25.2%

decrease in Chicago’s homeless population between 2009–2016

SOURCES: CHICAGO COALITION FOR THE HOMELESS, 2016 POINT-IN-TIME HOMELESSNESS SURVEY

Making use of their ‘seat at the table’

Students on new Diversity Advisory Council must urge tangible change

As the Midway sees it ...

In almost every facet of life at Lab, student voice prevails. From matters of school-wide policy initiatives to graduation planning, students often strive to influence administrators and to affect the big-picture ideologies within our community. However, in terms of diversity, students have become obsolete in policy making. With a vacancy in the administrative position of diversity, equity and inclusion coordinator, Lab students no longer have as much influence on the highest level of policy making at Lab. Although there is not an administrator devoted to coordinating these issues, one institution at Lab can be: the Diversity Advisory Council. Lab's administration describes the DAC, first created nine years ago, as a group which advocates for diversity, equity and inclusion at Lab. The group provides a platform for strategic work through a collaborative effort of its members representing faculty, staff, administrators, parents, board members — and soon, students.

Lab Schools Director Charlie Abelmann and Director of All-School Programs and Partnerships Nicole Hood lead the committee, which means selected students will have direct access to the highest-ranking administrators. Thus, when selected, student members of the DAC must not waste their opportunity to affect real change within the school. The process of selecting students should be revised moving forward to ensure that the students serving on the committee represent the student body's voice and best interests. Through an election held throughout all divisions of the Lab Schools, students would have more stake in the actions of committee members. Without a replacement for former Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Coordinator Ken Garcia-Gonzalez, the new DAC may have an unclear direction or may have trouble identifying their priorities moving forward. Student representatives must prioritize a focus centered around the community at Lab, with which they host forums and educational workshops for students to learn about diversity



ARTWORK BY AMBER HUO

issues in our community. Students want to have the influence and positioning of those on the DAC because of the unique power they have. Participation in the DAC allows students to get a “seat at the table” with more of a say than strictly faculty-run organizations. Students in the DAC should feel as though their voices are valued, rather than just serving on an auxiliary student body that has no

power to affect change. Students should have leverage among the school's administration since they deserve the right to shape their own educational experiences. Thus far, it seems like the DAC has settled on spending the majority of its time on defining diversity at Lab and discussing internal plans. However, they must move forward on a substantive agenda. If the council is unable to make sig-

nificant changes to the status of diversity at Lab, then it will become more obsolete in future years. Issues relating to diversity pervade every aspect of the Lab experience. Moving forward, students, parents and faculty will need to coalesce and find a way to make tangible change. This editorial represents the opinion of the Midway's Editorial Board.

Asian-Americans deserve to feel empowered, too

by EMMA TRONE
SPORTS EDITOR



I found myself surrounded by 1,600 students, waiting in hopeful anticipation at the opening ceremony the Student Diversity Leadership Conference in Anaheim, California. After I had been selected last June to attend with a delegation off five other Lab students, I had been told this conference would change my life. We had been told by those standing before us on the podium, that SDLC was a space for support, self-love and empowerment. But as one of the Asian-American SDLC board members made remarks to the crowd of attendees, and acknowledged that, “We, as minorities, have so much we can

do within our schools,” I heard a sharp whisper behind me. “What does she mean, *we*?” the voice quipped. That painful comment began a three-day experience that was more confusing than empowering, and more isolating than supportive. Stereotypes were explained through the lens that “Asians are smart” was a “good stereotype,” rather than an assumption that leads Asian students to receive less support from teachers and school systems. The refrain of “black and brown” as beautiful and strong was used as an empowering cry by facilitators and students alike, while students who are people of color but don't fit under that umbrella sat quietly, happy for their friends who felt embraced, loved and empowered, but still waiting to feel that themselves.

I know that for me, as the daughter of a Chinese immigrant, that moment never came. Racial diversity is not binary. Asians in America cannot, and should not, be seen merely as allies rather than people of color in discussions surrounding diversity, equity and justice both in schools or in this country. The Asian community has a longstanding, reprehensible problem about anti-blackness and colorism, and that bias is difficult to accept when attempting unity with those who are considered “black and brown.” It is also unquestionable that some of the power structures that lead to the oppression of other minorities, such as anti-black racism, have deeper and more pervasive roots than anti-Asian racism. But casting Asians out of the person-of-color label, and conse-

quently out of the discussion of what it means for a school or an institution to be truly diverse, ignores that Asians in America are not and have never been considered white, nor have they ever reaped the benefits of white privilege. From the moment people from across Asia began to immigrate to the United States, they have never escaped the perception of perpetual foreignness even after generations in this country. From working on the railroad in California during the gold rush to the present fear of globalization, Asians have been portrayed politically as a malevolent force, hellbent on destroying the American economy and the lives of working, white Americans. Violent, murderous attacks on Asian-Americans, from the murder of Vincent Chin by laid-off Detroit autoworkers in 1982,

to Srinivas Kuchibhotla in a Kansas restaurant just this year, are driven by economic fear that has also created housing discrimination and the model minority myth that plagues Asian communities in America. Asians have faced and continue to face serious, systematic oppression that stems from the same sources as other racialized oppression: white supremacy and xenophobia. And while the Asian community needs to work on becoming better allies to other communities of color, it is inherently unjust to shut Asians out of conversations about diversity in this country and ignore the racism the community faces. We are minorities, and we are people of color. We deserve to be heard, and we deserve to feel supported, loved and empowered.

Teaching styles must be flexible to support all students

by MAX GARFINKEL
MIDWAY REPORTER



In one recent class, I was doing homework for the lesson being taught that period since I already understood the topic. When I was caught, the teacher ordered me out of the classroom. I was confused about why she threw me out and felt frustrated to be trapped in a lesson

I already knew. Everybody learns in different ways. Some learn through repetition, and some can use a method once and remember that information for life. As a result, it doesn't make sense for everybody to do the same work at the same pace. As students, we need more flexible learning for us to have effective education. The traditional classroom, where the teacher lectures in class and students do homework at home, can be useful, but it is not

optimal for all students. Homework provides practice for classroom material. But if students understand the subject, homework feels like a waste of time, and the lecture becomes an endless drone. Even if students aren't understanding, strict class calendars mean teachers might end up moving on before everyone is ready and students feel lost while doing the homework. But a “flipped” classroom would benefit me and many others. This method has students learn from

the textbook at home and do problem sets with teacher support in class. While this might not be suited for humanities classes centered on reading or writing rather than problem sets, it would be beneficial in world language and STEM classes. Students should be focusing more on their learning needs, rather than on repetition. This style allows prepared students to move ahead, or students who are having trouble to get extra help.

Teachers would appreciate this because they would be able to give more individual help to students. Since many students often excel in one subject while lacking in another, the “flipped” classroom style allows them to save time in the subjects that they are proficient in, so they can spend more time on the ones they are not. We need to embrace this style of teaching in our school so it can be a better learning environment for all of the students.

U-HIGH MIDWAY			
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	CORRECTIONS ISSUE 3, NOV. 16, 2017: • Page 1: Tubist is Alex Bal, not Sebastian Ingersoll. • Page 6: The children and grandchildren of Bernadine Dohrn and Bill Ayers have attended Lab.		



#TAKEAKNEE. Members of the boys varsity basketball team kneel during the national anthem before a home game Dec. 1. Juniors Mohammed Alausa and Johnny Brown led the effort on the team to kneel as a form of protest against police brutality.

KNEEL FOR AWARENESS

Varsity basketball players join protests against institutional racism

by SONNY LEE
DEPUTY EDITOR

At the first home game of the season Dec. 1 almost all members of the boys basketball team joined the national movement to protest the oppression of people of color and ongoing issues with police brutality.

Initially, only two members, juniors Johnny Brown and Mohammed Alausa, were set on kneeling during the anthem, but after a pre-game meeting, most players decided to join.

“Obviously we respect the military and we respect what they do for the country,” Mohammed, a co-captain of the team, said in an interview before the Dec. 1 protest. “But overall, the face of reality is that racism is still blatant, stuff that goes on like police brutality is still blatant. Like, it happens, and when it’s brought up people don’t want to talk about it. They want to brush it aside and be like, ‘Oh, you’re disrespecting the country.’ But I can’t respect a country that doesn’t respect everyone that lives in it.”

Mohammed acknowledged that not everyone may have the same views, which is why not all athletes on the team were required to kneel.

Johnny explained that the social issues are a reality in everyday life for African-Americans, and he said kneeling is a way to raise awareness among people at Lab.

“I feel that it’s important here because we don’t have many blacks here,” Johnny said. “So I feel that other people should know what’s happening with us — they should know how we feel. By kneeling, that’s like bringing attention to the cause.”

Mohammed agrees with Johnny, and sees kneeling as a way to “get to the students.”

“Because the students really feel like this doesn’t apply to them,” Mohammed said. “They’re top 1 percent, they go to Lab, they have money. They just come so carefree, like they understand it, but they don’t think about it, think about the people who have to go through that on a daily basis, they don’t actually think about how it feels for you to get pulled over because of your skin color.”

Though Mohammed acknowledged that his and many other Lab families have comfortable incomes, that doesn’t mean that he, along with others, can’t push to help people who aren’t as fortunate.

“A lot of people are well off,” Mohammed said, “but you have to push for the people that aren’t well off. We’re only as strong as our weakest link.”

Though the team hadn’t kneeled in years past, Mohammed believes this year is as good a year as ever to bring light to the so-



Johnny Brown



Mohammed Alausa

cial issues in America.

Mohammed explained that given the election of Donald Trump and stories on the news lately, he is trying to do whatever he can to help the movement out.

Like former San Francisco 49ers quarterback Colin Kaepernick, who began the movement in 2016, both Johnny and Mohammed agree that as athletes they need to utilize their position, and the attention basketball receives at school, for a good cause.

“As an athlete I think you have more leverage,” Johnny said. “More people looking at you than a normal person, so when people do it on TV, there are millions of people looking at them, so it’s a bigger platform to be on.”

Mohammed agrees and believes that they must kneel, regardless of the possibility of negativity from others.

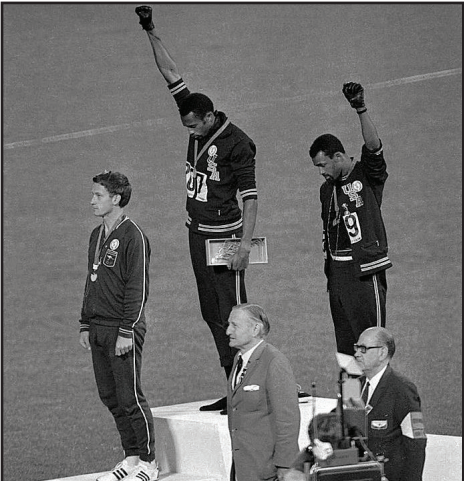
But the responses to their protest weren’t negative. After the game, Mohammed explained that people texted him saying that it was a great way to lead, to stand up and they supported it all the way.

“They were surprised,” Mohammed said. “I saw people on Snapchat taking videos, putting up fists. It was mostly supportive. I didn’t see anything negative.”

A flash from the past...

by EMMA TRONE
SPORTS EDITOR

From the field to the court, sports have a long history as a platform for protest. Athletes have sacrificed sponsorships, their careers, and sometimes their safety to fight for the issues they believe in. From 1968 to 2017, protesting racial injustice during the national anthem is as contentious now as it was then.



© JOHN DOMINIS

1968

Olympians Tommie Smith and John Carlos raised their fists into a Black Power salute during the entirety of the American national anthem at the 1968 Olympics, as a protest against systemic racism. The photograph of their protest, captured by John Dominis, instantly reached iconic status and front pages worldwide, while also instantly subjecting the two athletes to ostracism. Both Smith and Carlos were expelled from the Olympic Games and the U.S. Olympic team, and received numerous death threats in the years following their protest.



KEITH ALLISON, FLICKR, USED WITH PERMISSION

2016-17

Former San Francisco 49ers quarterback Colin Kaepernick first refused to rise during the playing of the national anthem in early August 2016. Kaepernick’s silent protest against police brutality and the deaths of unarmed black men, such as Michael Brown and Eric Garner in preceding years, drew sharp criticism for alleged disrespect towards veterans and police officers. The protests exploded in scale in September 2017 across the NFL after President Trump called for NFL owners to fire players who chose to kneel. Kaepernick, who is currently unsigned, filed a complaint against the NFL in October, alleging that the NFL owners colluded to deny him employment.

TEAM RESULTS

Scores are listed as: U-High-Opponent

Boys Basketball, Varsity

Notable: Junior Mohammed Alausa and senior Christian Brookens have been appointed co-captains. The team is on a three-game winning streak.

Morgan Park	Dec. 8	66-49
Latin	Dec. 6	38-44
Julian	Dec. 1	48-40
Lake Forest	Nov. 25	32-41
Von Steuben	Nov. 22	47-41
Loyola	Nov. 21	46-49
New Trier	Nov. 20	43-71

Boys Basketball, Junior Varsity

Latin	Dec. 6	34-44
Julian	Dec. 1	47-68
Acero Soto	Nov. 28	53-38

Girls Basketball

Notable: Seniors Roxanne Nesbitt and Tia Polite are

co-captains for the third year in a row. Alexis Jenkins, a Lab alumna, has been appointed assistant coach, and former assistant coach Kiara Connors is now head coach.

Northside	Dec. 8	45-42
Elgin	Dec. 5	58-20
North Shore	Dec. 2	47-37
Bremen	Nov. 28	28-36
IMSA	Nov. 17	27-42
Rosary	Nov. 16	19-54
Indian Creek	Nov. 14	23-35

Fencing

Notable: Clemente Figueroa and Jacob Shkrob are co-captains of the foil team, and Tiangang Huang is captain of the sabre team. At the Culver Academy Midwest Open Dec. 9, Clemente placed eighth in Men’s Foil, Jacob placed 15th, and sophomore Tom Ben-Shahar placed 31st in Men’s Sabre.

Scores not provided by team.

Squash

Notable: The squash team, lead by captain John Grissom, won a home game against Beacon Academy Dec. 6, winning all seven matches.

Lake Forest	Dec. 9	1-6
Metrosquash	Dec. 9	3-4
Beacon	Dec. 6	7-0

Boys Swimming

Notable: At the Lincoln Way West Pentathlon Dec. 1, Horace Shew was ranked the first overall swimmer, scoring 149 out of 150 points. The team placed first out of six at the Little Village Relays Dec. 9.

Little Village Relays	Dec. 9	1st
Latin	Dec. 5	Win
Mt. Carmel	Dec. 5	Win
Warrior Pentathlon	Dec. 1	3rd

— COMPILED BY GRACE ZHANG
ILLUSTRATIONS BY NEENA DHANOA



MIDWAY PHOTO BY JANIE INGRASSIA

EN GARDE. Captains Clemente Figueroa, left, and Jacob Shkrob spar during a fencing practice. The expanding team, including several freshmen, has competed in four tournaments in multiple fencing disciplines since the season began in November.

Expanding Education

Education experts identify need for voter involvement, more awareness

by **TALIA GOERGE-KARRON**
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Public education is a public good, meaning that everyone is responsible for staying up-to-date on current issues.

Instead of scapegoating politicians for the problems in Chicago's public education system, Arne Duncan holds voters responsible. Mr. Duncan, who was Chicago Public Schools CEO from 2001-2009 and U.S. Secretary of Education from 2009 to 2015, believes that the key to changing the world is a good education system. A 1982 U-High alumnus, Mr. Duncan began his education career with the Ariel Education Initiative and Ariel Community Academy, a charter school. Today, he is on the board of Communities in Schools, a non-profit that partners community groups to support struggling schools and students. He is also a Lab parent.

Mr. Duncan cites funding as one of the biggest problems with Chicago Public Schools' ability to run properly.

"Historically, the public schools in Chicago have been massively underfunded, so that creates huge disparities and inequities both within Chicago, but also more broadly in the state," Mr. Duncan said. "When you have a property tax-based system for funding education, the children of the wealthy get a lot more than the children of the poor."

Mr. Duncan stressed school choice — the ability to have multiple good schools to choose from —

as the ultimate example of success for the education system.

"The second thing for me is that every child, whether it's in Chicago or Illinois, should have at least one great choice, and ideally, two or three or four good choices," Mr. Duncan said. "If every kid in the city, every kid in the country had access to two or three or four great schools, and could figure out what's the best learning environment for them, then our country could be a better place."

Sari Hernandez, a U-High English teacher who previously taught public school at Simeon Career Academy in Chicago and at New Trier High School in Winnetka, said private schools have a unique obligation to promote income diversity.

"Once you've created this space that is usually great as far as access and what a student can do, the question is whether you continue to maintain this for students that can afford it or open it up to others by providing scholarships or financial aid," Ms. Hernandez said. "The question of diversity in background of students, how much in-



Arne Duncan



Sari Hernandez



MIDWAY ARTWORK BY AMBER HUO

come their family makes, means that these schools shouldn't be homogenous."

The traditional culprit for this system would be the state legislature, but Mr. Duncan points at something closer to home: the voter.

"I would say whenever you have political challenges, I rarely blame the politicians," Mr. Duncan said. "I blame us as voters, across the

political spectrum. I think the challenge is often that people care about their own children, but they don't care about their neighbor's children... Education should be the ultimate bipartisan or nonpartisan issue. We just want to have the best-educated population."

Education matters, according to Mr. Duncan, and people need to be more aware of modern issues. "Education is the best way to

end poverty," Mr. Duncan said. "Education is the best way to have a middle class. It's the best way to build a vibrant, civically engaged democracy, so the stakes are very, very high now. I worry we're not getting better fast enough at education for what a global economy is asking us to do or not asking us to do, demanding us to do."

Dheven Unni contributed to this story.

Voucher policy changes fail to address core issues

Federal, state governments push for reform

by **DHEVEN UNNI**
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Chicago education is undergoing major changes at the federal and state level as President Donald Trump and the Illinois legislature each push public school reforms.

One of the problems with the public school system is the property tax-based method for funding schools, which has created deep inequalities in education, according to former Secretary of Education Arne Duncan.

Sarah Howard, a charter school founder now working for the Network for College Success at University of Chicago, agrees with Mr. Duncan. But she says funding is not the only problem.

"Segregation and inequality are probably the two biggest issues facing the schools in Chicago right now," Ms. Howard said. "I don't have a solution for segregation because it is so driven by the residential segregation that was internally created decades ago. However, a start would be to provide a lot more funding to schools that are providing a education to kids that are struggling."

English teacher Sari Hernandez, who both attended and worked in Chicago Public Schools, believes low funding spirals in-

to overcrowded classrooms and low teacher quality. Underfunded schools produce students who are less prepared to find jobs after graduation.

One of the biggest factors affecting CPS is its pension debt. Money for schools is diverted to support retired employees.

Current Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos is pushing school vouchers as a solution, which would be a drastic change for Chicago schools. Vouchers give families school options by allowing parents to redirect money the state would have used for their public school toward another type of school.

The voucher system is emerging in Chicago through the Invest in Kids Act, a five-year scholarship program approved in October allowing \$75 million in tax credits to fund private schools.

While considered a scholarship program, it moves public funds into private and predominantly religious Illinois schools much like vouchers.

While vouchers increase funding for private and charter schools, the University of Pennsylvania's public policy research shows that vouchers ultimately cause public schools to close as parents remove their children. The Chicago Teachers Union called vouchers an attack on public schools that pro-

motes privatization of education.

University of Pennsylvania research also noted that public school budget cuts can create nutritional declines for students relying on school breakfasts and lunches. Defunded schools also face cuts in special education, as they still pay the same utility, maintenance and transportation costs.

Stanford University's Center for Research on Education Outcomes has shown that vouchers and charter schools have not helped student academic performance.

Vouchers can interfere with federal programs, creating unforeseen problems.

"If you have a child with a disability, the federal government has to ensure certain standards are met for your child," Ms. Hernandez continued. "The voucher system often is used for private schools who don't have to meet those requirements, and that gets into really nebulous ground."

Secretary DeVos also champions charter schools, like the UChicago Woodlawn Charter School. Her support for school choice in Michigan led her to support renewal of charter schools, built on the idea that schools where students perform well will remain open. However, according to The Washington Post, DeVos's actions have created some of the lowest-performing charter schools in the country in Michigan.

Natalie Glick, Talia Goerge-Karron and Priyanka Shriyay contributed.

VOUCHERS AT A GLANCE

By moving money that would have been used for public schools into other schools, vouchers give parents a variety of choices for which school their child will attend. This is currently a fiercely debated policy option to rectify funding issues, with politicians from different parties offering arguments in support and against. Here are their main points.

Why Vouchers?

Vouchers allow parents the right to choose their child's school, which includes the choice of a private or religious education. This allows for increased school choice, which is a platform for many of the politicians who support it.

Vouchers can provide students in low-income neighborhoods the opportunity to a better education. With the voucher system, students from low-income neighborhoods would no longer be forced to attend the poorly-funded schools in their district.

By creating more competition through granting students more options, vouchers aim to lead public schools to improve.

Why Not?

The voucher system violates the separation between church and state. Since most of the alternate private schools that parents choose to send their children to are religious, some argue that government funds should not be used to fund religious educations.

There is no statistical evidence to support that vouchers provide students with a better education, as both voucher and non-voucher students showed similar results in math and reading.

The voucher system takes money away from already-failing public schools. In the long run, students who attend these public schools will suffer.

— SAMIRA GLAESER-KHAN

Social group provides place to decompress

Jack and Jill gives black students chance to network, learn, discuss

by **SAMIRA GLAESER-KHAN**
NEWS EDITOR

Robert Coats and his team members make eye-contact. Each move is perfectly in sync as they perform their “Matrix”-inspired step routine at the Jack and Jill 2016 regional teen conference. The close friendships that they have built shine through on the dance floor as they complete the final moves of their dance.

The national organization Jack and Jill provides black students, like Robert who is a junior at Lab, with a community of people to fall back on if they feel isolated.

Jack and Jill is a community of black professional women who build connections by hosting events, such as discussion groups and speakers, for their children with the goal of fostering pride in their identity.

While Jack and Jill’s current mission is to instill ethnic pride in black youth, according to the Chicago Tribune, the organization previously focused on helping black children assimilate into white society. However, as the black power movement gained momentum in the 1960s, membership fell off as many black people began to see the organization as elitist. The current mission of Jack and Jill came as a second wind for the organization, which has gained more popularity in recent years.

Robert, who has been involved with the South Suburban chapter of Jack and Jill since third grade, explained that he turns to the Jack and Jill community to talk about his frustrations at school.

“A lot of the time I’m the only black person in the room, or one of the only two black people,” Robert said about his experience at U-High. “Sometimes people will say really insensitive things about race. It’s really valuable to be able to go to Jack and Jill to talk about

what people say and be able to decompress that way.”

Whitney Thomas, senior and Teen Groups Legislative Chair for the windy city chapter of Jack and Jill, can also count on fellow members of Jack and Jill to care about some of the same current events she is interested in.

“One example was last year at a regional meeting, the situation regarding police brutality came up,” she said. “People got very emotional and personal about it. It would have been hard to have that vulnerable conversation somewhere else, but just because we were all affiliated with Jack and Jill, we trusted each other and knew that it was a safe environment.”

Jack and Jill played a similar role in history teacher Naadia Owens’ life. During the time she was in the organization, she said that meeting other black youth helped build her pride in her heritage.

“I was living in an area of Manhattan where there were not a ton of people who looked like me,” Ms. Owens said. “For me and for other people, I’ve spoken with who were part of the organization, it was an opportunity to get to know other young black people and to be proud of your heritage because meetings had a strong emphasis on teaching African American history.”

According to Whitney, most students get involved with the organization through their mothers.

“My mom got my sisters involved, and then later I started attending meetings as well,” Whitney, a member of the Windy City Jack and Jill chapter, said. “As a parent, you can either get referred to the organization through your work, or a friend in the organization can invite you to join.”

She said her chapter hosts monthly meetings where members can socialize, participate in discussions and plan activities. Each month’s activities have a different theme, such as community service, political involvement or education.

Robert’s most memorable experience was attending the region-



LEARNING PROTEST. Whitney Thomas helped organize Marching Matters, a Jack and Jill event in April 2017 to raise awareness about youth issues in a safe and constructive way.

al teen conference, where he competed in and won the step competition with the theme of “step up, raise the bar, be you.” Stepping is a group dance where participants use their bodies to create rhythm.

“I worked for months with my team to learn steps and creating a story that connected to the theme of the conference,” Robert said.

For Whitney, the most memorable activity was a weekend staying in a hotel with other members of Jack and Jill where she participated in discussions and got to know the people in the organization. She said that the trip gave her an opportunity to learn about the experiences of other black youth.

“I got to hear about people who are experiencing the same things as me, which helped us have an automatic connection,” Whitney said. “If there is a problem I’m having, I can’t always find someone at school to talk about it, but I can be sure it’ll be on the minds of someone in Jack and Jill, which is a really nice feeling to have.”



DEFYING GRAVITY. Robert Coats, right, performs a “Matrix”-themed step dance at the Jack and Jill 2016 regional teen conference. Jack and Jill, which has chapters throughout the country, is an organization run by black professional women and designed to cultivate pride in their heritage.

Staff, students brighten each others’ days in the café



PASS THE WALLET. Cashier Cassandra Judkins, at right, smiles as she passes senior Tomás Linquist his wallet and a few kind words. Students and cafeteria workers have close relationships, checking in throughout the day.

by **MAX GARFINKEL**
MIDWAY REPORTER

The scents of fried foods doused in barbecue sauce fill the cafeteria air. Sounds of chattering students permeate the room. Lines form in front of food stations. Students smile as they greet the servers, asking about their days and exchanging banter about food options.

Carrying containers of crispy fried chicken, garlic-covered green beans and soft mashed potatoes, students amble around the Café Lab serving area, picking out sweet or savory snacks and cold drinks.

As students get ready to pay, cashiers give students more than just their change, they give kindness and conversation, too. When a student sees a cashier or server, they see someone who they can talk to, someone who will lift up their spirits. They see a friend.

Kimaya Robinson creates a buoyant atmosphere wherever she goes. She greets regulars by name as they walk into the Starbucks-affiliated coffee shop. When sophomore Charlotte Kistenbroker walks in and sees Kimaya — which is nearly every day — Charlotte sings “hello” at the top of her lungs, often to the surprise of other customers.

“When I see Kimaya in the Starbucks, she makes me smile and makes my day a little better,” Charlotte said.

Ms. Robinson works in the coffee shop and the cafeteria as a cashier, and has worked at Lab for a year. Before Lab, she

“I’ve worked at other restaurants and seen regulars every day, but it’s not as personal as here.”
— CASSANDRA JUDKINS

worked in the CPS Safe Passage program. “I love the students like they are my kids,” Ms. Robinson said. To ensure that the students have a good experience, Ms. Robinson asks what they want stocked and does her best to provide. She put doughnuts in the coffee shop after students requested them, and they are often all eaten by the end of the day.

Similarly to Kimaya, Cassandra Judkins creates an energetic aura around her in Café Lab.

Ms. Judkins has a welcoming presence, radiating warmth. When students are in line, she will often compliment a new haircut or their shoes, and when students walk through the cafeteria, she will always say “Hi.”

She has worked in the cafeteria as a cashier and occasionally as a cook for three years. Before she worked at Lab, she was a stay-at-home mom.

She said that her favorite part of her job is chatting with students every day.

“I’ve worked at other restaurants and seen regulars every day, but it’s not as personal as here,” Ms. Judkins said, praising the students she sees. “It makes my job way more enjoyable.”

Finding Faith

In discovering their identities, students struggle over their faith and explore the traditions of their youth

by JACOB POSNER
FEATURES EDITOR

Two years ago, Miranda Mejia stood in front of her English 2 class, clicker in hand, discussing the Google slideshow on the projector screen. Her Spotify popped up, and the class burst out laughing. She turned around to see the title of a playlist, its white lettering standing out from the green-and-black background: “Jesus Jams.”

Now a senior, Miranda said people continued to bring up the incident throughout the rest of her sophomore year, more than if it had been any other awkward presentation moment. She said the topic of the playlist — its expression of religious faith — encouraged ridicule.

It’s “cool” to be an atheist at Lab, according to Miranda, an Episcopalian, and people who are religious are often too afraid to admit their faith.

Sahar Siddiqui, a senior who is Muslim, agrees.

“I haven’t felt any division based on religion, especially not at this school,” Sahar said. “In other schools it’s definitely more prevalent, but in this school it’s not — it’s not really a topic of conversation. Everyone kind of ignores it.”

While religious data is not available for Generation Z, which includes current U-High students, a 2014 Pew Research Center study showed that Millennials are rejecting organized religion more than older generations. But, for some U-High students, religion is still an important factor in figuring out their identity.

Beliefs in God

Raised in a family with a Catholic mother and atheist father, senior Isabella Light, a Catholic, has been a part of discussions about religion for most of her life. For example, she is pro-life like her mother, which she said causes arguments with her father.



Isabella Light

She said she is constantly questioning her own beliefs because of the conversations in her house, but has, as of today, always come to the conclusion that she identifies as a Catholic and will be Catholic for the rest of her life. She concluded that the earth is too beautiful to have come from nothing and finds comfort from the order and direction Catholicism provides her. It gives her a goal: salvation.

Sahar has a similar reason for believing in God. She said she believes the world is “way too complex for there not to be something greater.”

“It’s impossible to live your life without believing that there’s something — I don’t know, it just gives me a reason for why we are alive because without God or heaven or hell, why are we here? It’s an answer to my questions,” Sahar said.

Like Sahar, Miranda said an important aspect of her faith is the comfort gained from the knowledge that God has a plan — that life has a goal.

“I think that it’s easier to go through hardship when you know that there’s someone who’s doing it for a reason, and one of the things that I was reading about with one of my friends in Proverbs the other day was how God never leaves us,” Miranda said. “He never leaves you at a hardship, like there’s always going to be something better, so knowing that when you hit a wall, either that you’re going to get over it or learn something from hitting it is really valuable.”

While Isabella and Miranda agreed that, in order to be a member of their particular faith, one must believe in God, Jews do not always believe in God, accord-

“I think that it’s easier to go through hardship when you know that there’s someone who’s doing it for a reason, and one of the things that I was reading about with one of my friends in Proverbs the other day was how God never leaves us. He never leaves you at a hardship, like there’s always going to be something better, so knowing that when you hit a wall, either that you’re going to get over it or learn something from hitting it is really valuable.”

— MIRANDA MEJIA

ing to sophomore Nathan Appelbaum. He said that many of his friends at Bernard Zell Anshe Emet Day School, the school he attended before Lab, are unsure about the existence of God but still practice. Questioning and debating are important aspects of Judaism.

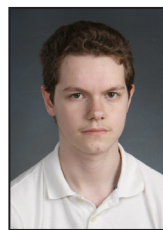
Nathan, who is Jewish and does believe in God, said he likes the feeling that there is a higher being “who will always take care of you.”

For Daniel Garfinkle, a junior who was raised practicing certain aspects of Judaism but is now an atheist, Judaism is, to him, primarily a way of life.

Even though her belief in God is important, a large part of Sahar’s Islamic identity is the Muslim community she’s a part of — where she has some of her closest friends.

“During Ramadan, after you fast all day, at sundown, you go to prayer, and prayer is from 10 to 12 o’clock at night every day,” Sahar said. “The sense of community at that time is just so crazy because there are so many people filling the mosque and there are people bringing food and everybody is

there for one another and everyone is giving older people rides — that’s the definition of community to me.”



Daniel Garfinkle

that these were Jewish practices, and once he learned that they were, decided he did not believe in God.

“The religious beliefs never affected me, they never reached me, and when I was actually presented with beliefs, I was like, ‘I mean that’s interesting to think about but not really’ — I didn’t see how it correlated to reality at all, or how it could even be relevant to somebody’s life,” Daniel said.

To Miranda, her Episcopal faith is incredibly important. She said that, looking back on her life, she can see God’s plan for her — connections that convince her of his existence.

She has witnessed people returning to their faith, even if they lost it during their life, convincing her of God’s power. She said her mom, a palliative care doctor, has told her that those who have a stronger sense of faith are more calm when they’re dying.

Discovery process

While Miranda has never really questioned why she is an Episcopalian, Isabella said she has, on occasion, wondered what it would be like to not be a Catholic.

Isabella said she came out of these crises feeling a stronger connection with God. Questioning her faith was like any other teenage identity crisis — she asked herself: “What if I had been born to another family? What would I believe?”

“It’s impossible to live your life without believing that there’s something — I don’t know, it just gives me a reason for why we are alive because without God or heaven or hell, why are we here? It’s an answer to my questions.”

— SAHAR SIDDIQUI

Today, Isabella goes to mass every Sunday and prays every day, if she has time.

For others, there was no distinct crisis but a gradual change brought on by growing up and family tradition.

After senior Kelly Slimmon, an Episcopalian, was confirmed in eighth grade, her parents no longer required that she went to church, so she stopped going as much. Her parents, who both go to church every Sunday, were angry at first but have come to accept it. She chose homework over church, yet still considers herself an Episcopalian.

Kelly said that, to her, the Episcopal faith is not a particularly strict sect of Christianity — and that, at her church, not everyone believes in God. She said she thinks of God as an idea — a set of morals, a way to live one’s life — not an entity, a “big man in the sky.”

God is an entity to some students, a set of ideals or morals to others.

Miranda said it’s hard to understand the perspectives of a non-religious person from a religious perspective.

Sahar said she doesn’t think Lab students know how to ask respectful questions about religion, so they either won’t ask them or they phrase them in a rude way. But to understand the experiences of others, people need to ask questions.

And not just giggle.

ARTWORK BY AMBER HUO