Club promotes equity within STEM field

Aiming to inspire girls in STEM, sophomore starts national club

by LEAH EMANUEL

A new U-High club is promoting equity in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics through mentorship and outreach programs.

Women in STEM, a national organization founded by sophomore Ananya Asthana, bridges the gap at U-High between social activism clubs and academic clubs by creating a space for women who are interested in STEM fields, to network with academically and socially.

WiSTEM is a nationwide collaboration that now has chapters in eight schools in four states: Illinois, Pennsylvania, Indiana, and New York. Each chapter follows approximately the same agenda, but they are designed to fit what is needed in their community.

The organization has a mentorship program pairing high school students with college students in STEM fields, and the U-High chapter will host an outreach event for elementary school girls.

After joining both math and science team as a freshman, it became apparent to Ananya that there were few junior and senior girls in the clubs.

Ananya said, "Especially at Lab, where we do have a whole culture of social justice, you still see that disparity at junior and senior year. It's pretty disheartening to see, especially as a freshman."

Recognizing this disparity at U-High, Ananya began to learn more about the gender disparity issues in STEM fields, and wanted to find ways to empower girls to pursue STEM.

Sophomore club member Eve Grobman said, "I think for me it's most important to cultivate a love of STEM and have younger women realize they have the potential to go into fields that they may not have thought they could and I think it's really important for me for everyone to either fulfill their dreams or realize their potential."

Ananya said she was inspired to start the mentorship program after reflecting on the impact of guest speakers. While she appreciates the value of guest speakers, but she said high school girls can find it hard to relate to speakers.

"It seems really disconnect ed when you just see successful women because you don't really know how they got there and it just seems like a story that you can't really relate to but that you can as a prospect," she said.

By pairing U-High students with University of Chicago students, Ananya hopes to better illuminate the path to a successful STEM career for high schoolers.

"It provides a tangible inspiration for high school girls to see what they can do in three or four years and where they could be," Ananya said.

Mutual motivation. Sophomore Kaylee Qin, right, talks with her mentor, Melis Ozkan, over coffee at Hallowed Grounds. The Women in STEM mentorship program is designed to provide girls with tangible inspiration for achieving their goals.

Ananya said, "Natalie Babylon, a sophomore who serves as club's vice president and head of community service, said she especially values the independence of the mentorship program because it allows students the freedom to talk about whatever they want with their mentor. This can range from helping each other through a discrimination they may have experienced or celebrating a successful achievement together."

WiSTEM members have been organizing an outreach event for elementary school students May 5. Club members will invite students from schools across the south side of Chicago to participate in STEM workshops led by scientists, researchers and professors from the University of Chicago, Northwestern University, and University of Illinois at Chicago.

Ananya's inspiration for the outreach program was to help young girls see their potential from an early age. She said that it is often recognized that gender disparity starts at a young age, but not a lot is done to prevent it from occurring early on.

Natalie said, "Empowering girls at a younger age is really the best way to effect change."
Lab to start hiring earlier for diverse options

by Emma Trone
SPORTS EDITOR

In order to attract and build a more diverse pool of applicants for open faculty positions, including four at U-High and others across the schools, the administration is moving up the timeline of the annual recruitment process.

According to Lab Schools Director Charlie Abelman, the diversity recruitment efforts of past years were less successful because of delays in advertising and starting the interview process. The administration and departments worked to confirm and advertise vacancies earlier in the year, Dr. Abelman said.

Charlie Abelman

“The later you are in the market, the harder it is to get a robust pool of candidates,” Dr. Abelman said. “If you want that robustness to include candidates of color, or other aspects of diversity, it’s just more difficult later.”

Dr. Abelman said he intends to befriend the process much earlier in his role as director, differing from his predecessors who were only involved in the final stages of the search.

“One of the things I’m going to do is ask the selection committees, before they finalize the pool of candidates, whether they’re inviting to campus, to be able to see that group of people,” he said. “By involving myself earlier in the process, I can be more informed and help influence the hiring.”

In the high school, the search for candidates to fill English and History teaching positions and two counseling positions is already in motion, owing to the moved-up hiring timeline. Principal Stephanie Webster, other administrators and faculty members plan to attend hiring conferences, including one in late January, that focus on diversity hiring in independent schools. Hiring conferences give both schools and teachers the chance to network and allowed schools to interview potential faculty members.

“In all hiring in the high school, we have the commitment and the concern that we really need to be more successful in bringing in and hiring more candidates of color,” Dr. Webster said. “Not only are there very highly qualified people, but there is an important social and cultural environment for everybody — for students of color, for white students, for educators — to really work with a diverse population that brings diverse perspectives.”

Coders named finalists at Facebook Hackathon

by Iván Beck
ASSISTANT EDITOR

It is widely accepted that teenagers have strong opinions and feelings about social media, but does social media know about human feelings? Can Facebook comprehend our emotions?

Those are questions that a team affiliated with U-High tried to answer at Facebook’s national hackathon, a marathon coding event where teams have 24 hours to create innovative code.

The event was held in Menlo Park, California on Nov. 17. The U-High team of senior Ashwin Aggarwal and 2017 graduates Alex Gajewski, Jonathan Lipman and Wanqi Zhu placed as a finalist with an application that can read a person’s mood using biometric data from smart watches with a person’s Facebook posts to determine whether an individual is sad.

The project ended up being successful because of its social impact, Ashwin said. “It’s one of the few legit applications of smart-watch data that tries to combat sadness.”

The team from Carnegie Mellon University won the event.

The Lab team had been designated “Facebook’s Favorite” at HackHilo, held at the University of Chicago at Illinois in February 2017. The team members enjoyed working together.

“In the end, I really enjoyed hacking with the other three, Ashwin said. “I definitely think we all learned a lot, not only from the project but from meeting other hackers or employers.”

NEWS IN BRIEF

Back to the ‘20s with winter formal “Great Gatsby” theme

With a “Great Gatsby” theme, the winter formal dance will be held from 7:30-10:30 p.m. Feb. 2 in Ida Noyes Hall.

Student Council has hired a new DJ for the dance, called DJ Enigma. Tickets will be $10 in advance and $15 at the door. Student Council will also host a spirit week leading up to the dance, where students are encouraged to dress according to specific daily themes: Monday, Pajama Day; Tuesday, Twin Day; Wednesday, Denim Day; Thursday, Beach Day; and Friday, Grade Color Day.

The coat check system will change. Instead of writing numbers on people’s hands, Student Council will give out colored wristbands to write numbers on instead, Cultural Union President Florence Almeda said.

— KATERINA LOPEZ

New alumni relations director to replace internal director

Nora Hennessey has been named Laboratory Schools executive director of alumni relations and development.

She began Jan. 17 and replaces Alice DuBose, who has been working as interim director for two years.

Most recently, Ms. Hennessey worked at the University of Chicago as the Associate Dean and Director of the Development Division of the Humanities. In this role, Ms. Hennessey worked with the dean to advance the mission of the campus through the efforts of 280 faculty members and over 800 graduate students. She also oversaw $60 million in fundraising.

“All around Lab is evidence of learning I am inspired by seeing the students and teachers in action,” Ms. Hennessey said. “The University of Chicago is also a remarkable place. Having worked here for several years, I am excited to get to now be a part of Lab and to help create new collaborations across campus that positively benefit students and teachers.”

— NATALIE Glick

Asian Students’ Association hosting New Year food celebration

For the celebration of Chinese Lunar New Year, which is from Feb. 15-17, Asian Students’ Association will host a three-day festival to welcome the Year of the Earth Dog.

ASA members will serve a different cuisine each day of the festival, beginning with Chinese food Feb. 14, Vietnamese food Feb. 15 and Korean food Feb. 16. ASA will also host Lunar New Year-themed games at the festival.

— Sam Fleming

Submit Social Justice Week workshop, speaker ideas by Feb. 7

The social justice committee is now accepting workshops, T-shirt designs and budget submissions through Feb. 7 for Social Justice Week, which will take place April 12-16. The theme is “WE ARE,” an acronym for Woke, Equal, Activist, Resisting and Engage.

Each day will focus on a word of “WE ARE,” such as Woke for Monday, and so on. An extended application will be distributed for students to attend workshops, similar to Social Justice Week 2016.

Questions can be directed to committee president Elizabeth Van Ha or to Franz Wild.

— IVÁN BECK

Debate team receives fifth bid to the Tournament of Champions

After a month off, the debate team won two more bids to the Tournament of Champions in the upcoming weekends of winter quarter.

At the Billy Tate Southern Bell Forum Jan. 6-8 in Nashville, Tennessee, seniors Michael Hollie and Dheven Unni went to actualize as the 12th seed. The two also competed at the Lexington Winter Invitational Jan. 13 in Boston, where they placed second.

With five bids to the Tournament of Champions, which are won by placing highly at competitive tournaments, Michael and Dheven are tied for the fifth most bids in the country.

— TALIA GOERGE-KARBON
Indian-Cambodian poet Ru- mpi Kaur writes about the universal experience of self-doubt and the process of healing by accept- ing herself in her October-released poetry collection, "The Sun and Her Flowers." Although seeming- ly summed up in concept, Kaur’s poetry is set apart by the raw, straightforward emotion with which she conveys her thoughts.

Separated into five chapters whose titles — "wailing," "falling," "rending," "creating," and "healing" — describe the narrator’s emo- tional state, the book begins with Kaur’s portrayal of personal heartbreak, then it explori- es the roots of her emotional difficulties and in using the pages to examine her post-abusive-relationship depres- sions and honed her parole, she finds a way to move forward and find value in herself.

Reading this story told in verse allows a reader the unconven- tionally different opportunity to engage in a thought-process, a recovery pro- cess. The narrator goes through extreme struggles, and some lines the reader with an unexpected, int- elligently-stimulating depth. Lines like her address to refugee camps, "I say of my heartache, "you are afraid to let the reader feel uncom- fortable in doing so, she is writing honestly.

In addition to being a personal exploration, Kaur’s release shines a light on critical issues: immigrant hardship, sexism, rape culture to name a few prominent themes.

Kaur writes in an exposing way which is transformative enough to touch all readers, so even if one has not experienced the kinds of heartache and loss described in "The Sun and Her Flowers," they still undergo the emotional jour- ney. As a lesson in empathy — at a time when so much self-accounting — this book is a well-written, worthwhile read.

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FRIDAY, JAN. 19, 2017
U-HIGH HIGH SCHOOL, CHICAGO

Great depth, beauty within powerful poems

Though differently, all readers can relate to ‘The Sun and Her Flowers’

by PRIYANKA SHRIJAY

09:00 AM

The recipe of life, above, a poem and illustration from the back cover of "The Sun and Her Flowers." The poetry book is available for check-out at the Pittritz Transkran Library.

THE RECIPE OF LIFE.

by IVÁN BECK

ASSISTANT EDITOR

Each year, over 130,000 people gather in Indio, California, to lis- ten to several performers at the world’s largest country music fest- ival. The Lake Shake Festi- val welcomes about 50,000 fans for three days of music in nearby Indio, California. The Lockwood Pavilion.

Tunes from the Lockwood Pavilion.

Music in the country music fanbase is be- ing created as a solution to the climate change crisis, but the move- ments are cheaper.

Despite the lack of a strong po- litical message, country music is also a stress reliev- er. It’s really fun to sing along with my friends to listen to country music, explains that by overcoming the idea that the music is “redneck” or “hillbilly” people would find coun- try music to be reliable and en- joyable.

The themes of living in the South, working hard and finding love combined with the sound of a guitar, banjo, or accordion are not only relatable for Southerners, as several U-High students have dis- covered.

The Lake Shake Festival, June 22-24 on the shore of Lake Michi- gan, provides an upcoming oppor- tunity to explore country music. The event will feature prom- inent artist such as Blake Shel- dton, Dylan Scott, Tracy Lawrence, and others, in what the Chicago Tribune called “Chicago’s biggest weekend for country music.”

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Family connections create love for country music

by GRACE ZHANG

ASSISTANT EDITOR

Being small is a big deal. Hosting parties everyday, re- laxing at home instead of work- ing, and living the rich life one’s dreams are all part of reality in Lei- sureland.

In a land where big problems disappear and there’s no stress, it’s easy to forget one is five inches tall. Paul Safranek, played by Matt Damon, leaves down to talk to his friend Dave Johnson, Jason Sudeikis, about his family. Paul’s character falls a little bit short of expectations, though. He seems adamant about his professionism that U-High Theatre increases the level of professional- ism that U-High Theatre is known for," Touch said. Joe Manz, a director, explained that this year more original works were in- cluded as opposed to previous years.

Each of these works were writ- ten by students.

He also said all the directors are veteran of the theater, a fact that is different from previous years.

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After expansion, student body must adapt

by MICHAEL RUBIN
MANAGING EDITOR

Lab is at a crossroads. In the aftermath of the planned expansion... dynamics within the student body have shifted. The U-High student body is faced with a decision to either welcome the expansion and welcome the benefits of added diversity and new perspectives. In fall quarter, Principal Stephanie Weber spoke to the school at an assembly about inappropriate messages posted to social media. She said at the time that the messages ran counter to the Lab Schools’ values.

Some students were quick to assign blame to the influx of new students who did not grow up as part of the Lab Schools community.

“The friends I’ve made don’t treat me any differently than who they were when they came here. I don’t have any enemies, and I’m always happy with my classes and my experience at Lab so far.”

— Michael Reavichandran

“Since the beginning of the year, everyone has gotten to know each other better. We’re all becoming closer friends. I’ve felt welcomed by the kids that went to middle school here. The hallways used to feel very hectic but now they don’t because the people that I see moving through are people I know now.”

— Iris Xie

“I think that because the structure of the classes vary, students really need to get the layout of each one so that we know which to spend the most time on and what the teachers expect to see. There are also a lot of resources we can use to get help with including teachers and tutors and even counselors.”

— Mikhala Daring

Food

After completing their first quarter, freshmen feel more comfortable in the high school community

Freshman check-in

by PRIYANKA BHILJAY CHIEF WRITER AND KATERINA LOPEZ MIDWAY REPORTER

Hyde Park cafés warm winter with coffee

by NATALIE GLICK AND ABBY SLIMMON• Plein Air Café

After completing their first quarter, freshmen feel more comfortable in the high school community.

Mikhala Daring

Asad

Joshua Reavichandran

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CREAMY EXCELLENCE

Plein Air Café, 5753 S. Woodlawn Ave., offers a variety of excellent coffee.

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Assembly shines light on hidden discrimination

Coordinators use theme to show MLK's legacy

by DHEVEN UNNI
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Themes from the N-word to sexual assault were broached at this year’s Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. assembly Jan. 11 in Gordon Parks Assembly Hall.

Black Students’ Association, along with the theme “The Path We’re On: Civil Rights 1968-2018,” to observe Dr. King’s 89th birthday. BSA put the assembly together with faculty sponsors Camille Baughn-Cunningham, Naaia Owens and Ron Tunis.

“Normally when we have a speaker, we don’t ask what they’re going to say but we certainly give them an idea of the direction we want them to go. I didn’t have a problem with the direction she went, but it was a slight departure from what our goal was.”

— RON TUNIS, COUNSELOR

Keynote speaker Randi Gloss, who founded Glossrags, a company that makes apparel memorializing the lives of black women and men, focused on the use of the N-word.

Mr. Tunis said he enjoyed the speech, he said the content was unexpected and that her talk was shorter than he thought it would be.

“Normally when we have a speaker, we don’t ask what they’re going to say but we certainly give them an idea of the direction we want them to go,” Mr. Tunis said. “I didn’t have a problem with the direction she went, but it was a slight departure from what our goal was.”

As he is retiring later this year, Ron Tunis attended his last MLK assembly as BSA sponsor. Mr. Tu

“Feminist Club looked at sexual assault were broached at this year’s Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. assembly Jan. 11 in Gordon Parks Assembly Hall.

Assembly shines light on hidden discrimination

Non-black people should not use the N-word. I am more than happy to have a respectful discussion, N-word use must stop

For respectful discussion, N-word use must stop

by SAM FLEMING
CHICAGO LIFE EDITOR

I know you and your friends say it when nobody is around to call you out. I know because I’ve heard it — slip out a few times and the awkward silence and apogee that comes after. I understand that you don’t like being told what you can and can’t say. I get that it really doesn’t make sense to you for one race to claim ownership of a word. But although I understand that you feel you have the right to use it, “I don’t get why you do. Non-black people should not use the N-word. I am more than happy to have a conversation about the nuances of black people using the N-word, but in order for anything productive to come from them you need to respect me by not using it first.”

— RON TUNIS, COUNSELOR

People being offended starts important conversations; whether you’re offended about the use of the N-word, PC culture, affirmative action or one of the variety of other issues being talked about in whispers around the school, you should never feel afraid to start a conversation. These conversations need to happen, but in order to have any successful dialogue there needs to be a basis of respect. Using the N-word behind closed doors gets rid of that basis of because using it shows a complete lack of respect for my voice in any conversation. The N-word doesn’t offend me because I believe anybody who says it is inherently racist. It offends me because using it shows that respecting me and respecting what makes me comfortable is not something that you value. It is cowardly to use the word only when nobody black is around to object, because you are creating an echo chamber where your language can never be challenged. Although you may not see using the N-word as a big deal, as a member of your high school community, I want you to respect that I do.

So although debate can be open as to whether black people’s use of the N-word creates a double standard, or whether it should be socially acceptable to use the word in song lyrics, it is more important to recognize that the N-word makes people in our community feel disrespect-ed and hurt.
New year, new healthful habits

Resolutions can be hard to maintain; here are three easy, impactful ways to improve your mental and physical health throughout 2018.

Spin classes provide fun, full-body workout

If the beginning of a new year has inspired you to strengthen your body, look no further than Chicago’s countless spin studios and classes. Classes at studios such as SoulCycle in the Loop, Old Town, Lake View and North Shore, or Cycle Therapy in Hyde Park offer not only a full-body workout but an encouraging atmosphere with upbeat music to match. “I think it’s just so fun to be in an environment with a bunch of other people who are motivating you to work as hard as you can, and that sense of community is really awesome,” said Alyssa Hannah, who attends a SoulCycle studio class once a week. “The music is also super fun, and the instructor that I go see is very motivational.”

With classes ordinarily dialing in at around an hour or shorter in length, you can easily attend a couple of classes a week without overwhelming an already packed schedule. When staying fit can be this fun and community-oriented, keeping your body healthy won’t feel like such a chore.

Meditation apps offer space for relaxation

While meditation has been in practice for centuries around the world, modern tools have made it easier than ever to improve your mental health and lower anxiety. According to Terri Greene, who teaches meditation as a part of the Stress Redux PE classes, “Most of our struggle as people is that we’re continuously thinking about or being consumed by things that we can’t relax. But when you’re meditating, the thought is that you’re trying to empty your mind and focus on the present.”

The free app Stop, Breathe & Think offers an easy introduction to meditation and relaxation, with 15 unique, guided meditations tailored to a particular mood or psychological need. After introducing basic meditation practices, the app can help you customize your meditation routine.

Spending as few as 5 to 10 minutes meditating guided by this app or a similar one each day has been purported to help stabilize your mind and make you feel more connected to the world around you.

Meatless Mondays help environment and body

If eating more healthfully is one of your commitments for the new year, participating in Meatless Mondays might be a good stepping stone to more intensive diet changes, such as vegetarianism and veganism. Consuming less meat has been proven to not only improve physical health, but also the well-being of the planet as a whole.

“Meatless Mondays” have a century-long precedent, including the World War I-era movement to reduce meat consumption to fuel the war effort. The modern Meatless Monday movement encourages people across the world to abstain from meat products each Monday as a way to reduce the risk of heart disease, stroke, cancer and diabetes. Environmentally, cutting meat for one day of the week reduces greenhouse gas emissions, water usage, and fuel dependence. This small tweak to your diet might mean all the difference for your body and the Earth.

— Compiled by Emma Trone
Illustrated by Neena Dhamia
Since last spring, young men of Troop 929 have been paired with female undergraduates from the University of Chicago who study science, technology, engineering or mathematics. This partnership has given girls a chance to be paired both a mentor and an example to follow when it comes to being successful in STEM. This partner- ship has also provided the teens a sense of hope because gives stu- dents someone they can inter- act with on a more personal level, more than just a friend. They come to speak during a club meeting.

The Women in STEM club has also set up partnerships with other high schools across the coun- try, and they are able to work to- gether to discuss inequities of roles of women and men in STEM with other women outside of the Lab Schools bubble. This broadens the discussion from the typical Lab student to kids from all differ- ent backgrounds. Additionally, an outreach program for elementary school students will instill in the youngest students the idea that going into STEM fields can lead to success.

This club was created not just because one student was interest- ed, but because U-High lacked a place where students could voice their opinions on the significant topic the bias toward men in STEM. The U-High community really needed this club. The goal of this work is, of course, to make STEM more accessible to everyone.
Racial tension. War
Gender inequality
Protests. A nontrivial national
election and a
time when political
discourse was
civil and respectful.

50 years later, racial inequality
protests remain at forefront

by TALLA GOERGE-KARRON
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

50 years ago, 1968
was a year of intense political
violence in the United States.

“Of hard hats and hippies. A good
deal of racial tension.”
CHARLES PAYNE, PROFESSOR

“1968 was a year of intense political polarization.”
CHARLES PAYNE, PROFESSOR

Martin Luther King Jr. leads what
would be his last march in Memphis,
Tennessee, to protest against
black sanitation workers who were
striking for better treatment. There were conflicting
casualty reports, but according to "The Whole World Was Watching: an oral
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and more than 30 police officers were injured.

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1968 wasn’t just another year. Turmoil
defined 1968 with assassinations,
riots and movements for underrepresented minority groups.
Tension still holds 50 years later
within America. Inequality among groups may never be fully resolved, and protests against
inequality continue today. From Americans’ consumption of news to political polarization,
2018 shows the American people have become increasingly divided in opinion.

MARCH 28
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APR. 30
Students and faculty protest Columbia
University’s connection to the Vietnam War, culminating in their occupation
of five campus buildings. At 2:20 a.m.
1,000 police officers stormed the buildings,
forcibly removing students while mercilessly beating them;
29 students were arrested.

JUNE 5
Sen. Robert F. Kennedy, a leading Demo-
cratic presidential candidate, is shot by
Sirhan Sirhan after giving a speech in the Ambassador Hotel ballroom in Los Angeles. He died eight hours later.

NOV. 5
Former Vice President Richard
Nixon beats Vice President Hubert
Humphrey, becoming the 37th President
of the United States. Dogged by the
lack of progress in the Vietnam War,
President Lyndon B. Johnson had
decided not to run for re-election.

DE. 24
Apollo 8 becomes the first manned
spacecraft to orbit the moon. Jim
Lovell, Bill Anders and Frank Borman
evacuated earth’s orbit, orbited the moon
and returned to earth safely. They
were the first to witness an earthrise
and see the whole earth, among other
even more momentous achievements.

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Riots broke out in more than 100 cities.

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