

Focus

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A BLIND BROOK HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT PUBLICATION

April 2016

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Happy Passover and Earth Day!

Congratulations to Sammy Landino, Sarah Rodgers, Dylan Robins, Sam Zarkower, and Haley Feuerman on their wins at the Cornell Model United Nations Conference!

Shout-out to the BBHS Band for collecting Gold for the Wind Ensemble, Silver for the Jazz Ensemble, and the Spirit of Philadelphia Award!



Photo courtesy of Margarette Goett
Half of Ms. Goett's AP Language class poses outside of the memorial.

Students Visit the 9/11 Memorial

By Paul Soden

On April 12, English teacher Margarette Goett brought juniors and seniors enrolled in her AP English Language and Composition course to the National September 11 Memorial & Museum in New York City. The trip served as a culmination of the class's study of the 9/11 Commission Report Graphic Novel, educating and informing students while reinforcing the rhetorical significance of publications that surround the 9/11 terror attacks.

The 9/11 Memorial, located on the Lower West Side of Manhattan at the site of the World Trade Center (WTC), commemorates those affected by the attacks. Some exhibits contain artifacts and remnants from the WTC that convey the economic and cultural significance of the Twin Towers in American society. It also laments the loss of life that occurred in the September 11, 2001 and February 26, 1993 terror attacks.

Over the past several weeks, Goett's AP English Language classes have been analyzing The 9/11 Commission Report Graphic Novel in terms of its rhetorical efficacy in its definitional, causal, and proposal arguments.

Within the context of this course, the trip greatly enriched the curriculum by letting students compare the conclusions and biases of the graphic novel and the American public. Students were also given the chance to visualize the immense effects that the 9/11 terrorist attacks had on American life, politics, and economics.

"Being in the museum was very moving and gave me an interesting perspective on a topic about which I have learned a lot," said junior Jackie Broderick. The trip afforded students the opportunity to tour the museum in small groups and observe the displays at their own pace. To many Blind Brook students, the museum moved and empowered them by truly touching their emotions as well as further educating them about such a perilous day in our nation's

history.

"It was very interesting to apply what we learned in class to such a significant event. [The memorial and museum] are sites that all Americans should visit and I am very glad to have had such an experience," said junior Mindy Leder.

Utilizing highly developed multimedia content, the museum first walks visitors through the events of 9/11. Museumgoers are provided with a comprehensive review while also prompting intense sensory experiences. Continuing through rest of the museum reveals rubble from Ground Zero, notes, messages, and articles of clothing from victims and survivors, and other relevant items obtained from the debris of the WTC collapse.

The substantial collection of heart-wrenching and devastating artifacts found throughout the museum is meant to impress upon visitors the significance of the attacks and to communicate the memorial's main message (said by Roman poet Virgil): "No day shall erase you from the memory of time."

While many students cited the damaged ruins of the North and South Towers as the most poignant component of the museum, others found that some of the personal objects from Ground Zero affected them the most.

"There was a teddy bear that said, 'For all the children who lost their mommies and daddies.' It really got to me because my friend's dad died in the North Tower, so it made me think of her and her little sister," said Broderick.

After the trip, students felt that this experience further enhanced their knowledge on 9/11 both as Americans and as AP English Language students.

"The museum made me much more aware of what occurred on 9/11 and helped to reinforce the background information that I had already learned," said Broderick.

Many students also plan to return to the museum in the future to further understand the complex events whose impact will continue to affect American society for years to come.

"One cannot possibly experience the museum in one trip. There is so much information, most of which is quite difficult to grasp, [that it's] necessary to take multiple trips and to apprehend the museum's collection over time," said junior Owen Xie.

Focus Sweeps 8 Awards in Newspaper Competition

By Lily Werlinich

Focus has maintained its second-place hold in the New York Press Association/New York Press Service (NYPANYS) Better Newspaper Contest, collecting eight total awards and one honorable mention.

The newspaper placed third for both General Excellence and Design.

The judges gave special mention to Focus's "extensive school and community coverage," unique graphics, capable writing staff, and use of advertisements from businesses in the community.

Junior Spencer Kaplan was awarded first place for his news story about the Senior Scavenger Hunt, which was published in the October issue of Focus. Judges stated that his article stood out "by far" in the news category, with special mention given to the quality of his lead and use of sources.

Kaplan, Focus Web Editor, was also awarded Best Web Site, along with Webmaster senior Alyssa Wei. The award was bestowed for ease of navigation, in addition to the amount of information present on the website.

Sophomore Michael Discolo received first place in the Best Sports Story category for his December article covering the Rye-Town Titans, an article that judges said "could be in any daily newspaper."

Senior Jake Simon was also awarded in the Best Sports Story category, receiving second place for his October piece about the Boys' Varsity Soccer Team. Simon garnered the award for aptly demonstrating his knowledge about the sport and for the flow of his writing.

Honorable Mention was also given to Focus's use of social media, in large part due to the efforts of Wei, Kaplan, and Multimedia/Social Media Editor Gabriela Ramirez.

Focus collected many awards in the Better Newspaper Competition last year, including Best Use of Social Media, Best Web Site, and Third Place for General Excellence.

BOE Releases Budget for 2016-2017 School Year

By Paul Soden

As preparations for the 2016-2017 school year begin, the Blind Brook administration has begun to propose the school's new budget, which is the most pivotal statement of the educational aims of the district. The specific changes to the budget this year include a 1.15% increase from the 2015-2016 school year budget and a 0.24% increase in the levy tax.

"The proposed 2016-2017 Blind Brook-Rye School District budget is \$43,124,393, a 1.15% increase over the 2015-2016 budget. It is noteworthy that this is the fifth year in the last seven that the proposed budget-to-budget or annual spending increase has been near 1% or less," said Superintendent of Schools Dr. Jonathan Ross.

These key budget changes affect the academic lives of students in all three schools within the district.

At Bruno M. Ponterio Ridge Street School, the budget is projected to adapt to the sweeping influence of the Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics (STEAM) initiative throughout the nation, as well as the increasing need for occupational therapy among students.

"At [Ridge Street School], the district has proposed replacing FLES (Spanish) with a STEAM special and will add a part-time occupational therapist," said Ross.

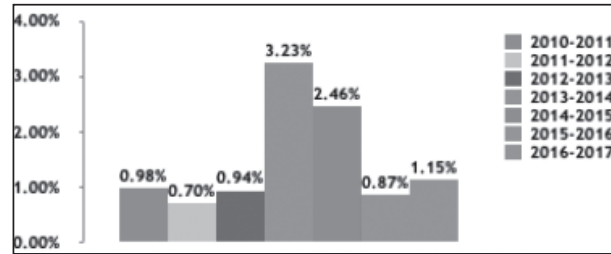
Due to an expected decrease in middle school enrollment, the new budget also proposes one less teaching position in the 2016-2017 school year.

For the high school, the budget means a significant influx of new courses, including AP Computer Science, AP Chemistry, Honors En-

gineering Design, the Syracuse Program Advance for Italian and Spanish, as well as Honors/College-level studies of music and chorus.

"Changes in the proposed budget

numerous opportunities for public information and feedback," he said. The phase which involves public feedback has been underway since March and will end in April.



Courtesy of Dr. Jonathan Ross
This graph depicts the fluctuations in budget from 2010-2017.

will enhance the educational program for students in 2016-2017," said Ross.

The intricate process of crafting the annual budget is an essential aspect of the school and its successful completion with input from the community aids in establishing Blind Brook's standard of excellence.

"Pursuant to Board of Education Policy 5110, budget planning and development for the District is an integral part of program planning so that the annual operating budget effectively expresses and implements programs and activities of the district. Each school's budget requests are the principal's recommendation as to the most effective way to use available resources in achieving progress toward the approved educational goals and objectives of the school," said Ross.

"The process of budget planning and development also allows for community input and contains

"As the superintendent, I have overall responsibility for budget preparation, including the construction of and adherence to a budget calendar. Administrators develop and submit budget requests for their particular areas of responsibility after seeking the advice and suggestions of faculty and staff members," added Ross.

Despite recent progress, the development of the budget is still in the works.

"First and most important [in order to complete the budget], the community needs to express their opinions about the proposed budget and the Board has to consider them," said Ross.

Blind Brook residents have been asked to become familiar with the budget information on the Blind Brook website and to attend upcoming Board of Education meetings to stay informed about the pending budget.

"[The administration is also]

waiting for the final 'Legislative' state budget to be agreed upon to see what additional aid Blind Brook may be in line to receive in 2016-2017," said Ross.

The Board's budget recommendation will be complete after having heard the state budget and the opinions of residents. Voters in the community will then vote on the proposed budget on May 17.

In planning this year's budget, the administration ran into several issues that discouraged its adequate completion. Ross said that the incredibly low tax levy growth factor of 0.12% coupled with a tax base growth factor of 1.0012 created "a difficult budget scenario wherein the 2016-2017 tax levy can only increase by \$87,935."

As a result, \$785,000 had to be cut from the district's spending budget and \$350,000 from the district's reserves had to be allocated toward satisfying the tax levy cap regulations.

"In spite of difficult circumstances, this budget advances an instructional agenda that continues to place students first while minimizing the financial burden on local taxpayers," said Ross.

Ross believes the recent budget plans successfully parallel the district missions and that it will serve students and faculty well in the 2016-2017 school year.

"Given the circumstances and budget assumptions we used this year, I believe the proposed budget is the best we could develop while still achieving the two primary goals of maintaining core instructional programs and activities consistent with School Board Policy 5110 and proposing a budget that results in a tax levy at or below the cap," said Ross.

Seniors Set for Options Program

By Hannah Brady

As the current senior class reaches the end of its time at Blind Brook, many students have begun preparations for Senior Options.

Throughout the Senior Options program, seniors will have the opportunity to explore their interests, obtain work experience, learn outside of a school setting, and utilize the knowledge that they have accumulated from school in the real world.

Each senior can choose to do an internship, independent project, or community service project, as long as it is approved by the school's administration.

The programs begins at the conclusion of each student's AP examinations.

"Senior Options allows the students to make connections between school and the real world and transfer their skills between the two places," said Senior Class Advisor Charlene Decker, who runs the program.

"This program allows them to try something out, for a short period of time. These seniors are going to college where they are going to be

selecting a major. If they can get some hands on experience now, that might help push them in the right direction in the future," she said.

Many students are looking forward to the program, and are hopeful that their Senior Options experience will open doors for them in the future in terms of employment.

"I think this program is a really great opportunity for the seniors to explore what they are passionate about, and will probably give us a leg up when we are looking for jobs and internships later on. I am happy that the school offers the Senior Options program," said senior Samantha Friedlander.

With so many different possibilities offered to seniors, the ways that students can benefit from the Senior Options program are almost infinite.

Faced with a plethora of choices, many seniors had trouble at first figuring out what they wanted to do.

Senior Luke Nadell, who will be working as a beekeeper, said, "I honestly did not know what I wanted to do, so when Ms. Hensley told me about this option, I decided to just go for it. I have always been kind of

terrified of bees, so I think this is an awesome opportunity to do something cool and get over a fear."

Senior Melissa Blum also did not know what she wanted to do, so she decided to focus on one of her favorite hobbies, even though it is not what she is planning on majoring in once she gets to college.

"I am doing a combination of independent projects to explore my interest in music, so I will be teaching myself to play the clarinet and creating an album of a cappella arrangements," said Blum. These independent projects will allow her complete freedom, other than checking in with advisors once a week and logging the hours she spends each day on music.

"What I am most excited for is not waking up at eight a.m. each morning," added Blum.

Other seniors chose to look for things more in line with careers they picture themselves having in the future. Senior Jessica Bender, who has a serious interest in horses, will be working at a stable to better understand barn management, daily horse care, and how to give riding

lessons.

"I am looking forward to my Senior Options because I have done some similar things in the past, but those things were mostly about running a summer camp. I am looking forward to interacting more with the horses from a non-riding perspective and advancing my skills, especially because one of my majors in college will be equine studies," said Bender.

"I am still undecided on what I want to study in college but I definitely want to do something with helping people and doing my senior options with United Way will solidify that for me," said senior Sarah Carmona.

United Way is a nonprofit organization that helps the community through improving education, income, and health.

"The [Senior Options] program allows many students to see if their passions can turn into a career later on. I always say, you will never work a day in your life if you love what you do. I hope that every senior finds what they love to do," said Decker.

Upperclassmen Prepare for AP Exams

By Stacy Gerchick

As the end of the school year quickly approaches, students and faculty alike are diligently preparing for the Advanced Placement (AP) examinations, which begin Monday, May 2 and run through Thursday, May 12. Over these two weeks, Blind Brook will administer a total of twelve exams.

The AP exams are scored on a five-point scale, with a 1 being the lowest possible score, and a 5 being the highest possible score. Many colleges and universities allow students who score a 3 or higher to bypass entry-level courses and sometimes to even earn college credits.

Teachers play a large role in ensuring that their classes are well prepared for the exams. Most teachers design their lesson plans so that students learn the crucial skills needed for the AP exams throughout the year. In doing so, students are not overwhelmed with exam preparation in the weeks leading up to the tests.

"My curriculum is designed to be cumulative in terms of the skills that are going to be assessed on the exam," said AP Language and Composition teacher Margaret Goett.

"If students participate fully in the curriculum throughout the year, they should be in a good position to do well on

the exam."

In addition, a number of teachers choose to allot full periods of class time to AP exam review. Thus, students are given an opportunity to reorient themselves with information that they may have previously forgotten. In addition, they are often given the chance to become accustomed to the format and types of questions that they will encounter on the AP exam.

"Familiarity with the actual exam itself is very important so that students are able to move through it quickly. So, in addition to my regular curriculum, we will be doing two weeks of specific exam practice before the test," said Goett.

In a similar manner, some teachers plan review quizzes that correspond to certain topics of the AP curriculum. As these assessments often count towards students' quarter averages, students are strongly encouraged to study for them, and in turn, for the AP exam itself.

"During the fourth marking period, for those couple of weeks before the exam, I will assign review work, and then we will have quizzes on that review work, so students are really held accountable for this preparation," said AP Statistics teacher Michael McCarvill.

Other teachers, such as AP United

States History teacher Courtney Clarke offer comprehensive reviews of the course material outside of the classroom. For more fact-heavy classes, this type of review is helpful for students to familiarize themselves with the key concepts that they need to know for the AP exam.

"I run nighttime review sessions because [since] the course is so dense, it's difficult to spend a significant time reviewing in class," said Clarke.

While teachers are a very important factor in determining students' success on the AP exams, students also need to take matters into their own hands. Whether or not students perform well on their AP exams is largely dependent on how hard they work throughout the year and how much time they spend preparing outside of class.

In most classes, teachers provide suggestions as to how their students should review for the AP exams at home. However, it is fully up to the individual to put these suggestions into effect.

"For students to review outside of class, I give them review packets and multiple choice questions to work on. I always encourage students to write practice essays, not for a grade but just for them to see how they can improve for the actual exam. I also strongly believe in buying a

review book for the test," said Clarke.

Juniors will be taking AP exams for the first time, so for many it may be slightly more difficult for them to figure out which methods of studying they find the most effective. In anticipation of this learning curve, many juniors have already begun to formulate review plans.

"I plan on preparing for each exam by studying my personal notes from class, taking practice tests or essays, consulting my teachers with any conceptual questions, and utilizing any other resources provided," said Adam Fleishaker, a junior who will be taking the AP Language and Composition and AP U.S. History exams in May.

On the other hand, many seniors are fortunate to have already taken AP exams last year. As a result, they already have an idea of which study techniques will help them succeed on this year's exams.

"Last year I bought AP review books for each class which was really helpful, but I think that this year I am going to try a different approach and just focus more on the notes that I took in class and on doing practice exams," said senior Vanessa Numme, who took AP Biology and AP U.S. History in her junior year, and is currently taking AP Language and Composition and AP Psychology.

Seniors Strut the Runway for Charity

By Emma DePaola

Senate hosted this year's annual fashion show, March of the Trojans, on April 15 to help raise money for Sunrise Day Camp. Nearly 70 models participated in the show, the largest number of participants in the event's history. Audience members were encouraged to buy raffle tickets in hopes of winning a variety of prizes and all proceeds went to Sunrise Day Camp.

The members of Senate choose a new, local charity to support each year. Local charities are favored over national ones because the latter receive more donations and publicity. In this way, Blind Brook's donations will make a more significant impact.

Sophomore Senate member Madison Goldberg made the suggestion of Sunrise Day Camp, which is a unique summer camp in that it is solely for children with cancer and their siblings. On top of being free of charge, Sunrise Day Camp provides children battling cancer with a break from the treatments and medical care they receive, and gives them the experience of summer camp in a safe environment.

"[Sunrise Day Camp was] very supportive of the fashion show and it was such a pleasure to raise money for them," said junior Senate Secretary Kaveri Reddy.

The concept for the Fashion Show was devised in 2012 by the senior Senate members at the time with the help of Senate advisor and guidance counselor Stephanie Jacobs. Since its inauguration, Senate has continued to host the fashion show and support worthy causes in the area.

"The fashion show is a great event and I think this year's was the

best out of the three fashion shows I have been involved with. The models did a great job onstage and it is

such a rewarding fundraiser to be a part of. I think the audience really enjoyed it!" said Senator Emily Wexler, a junior.

Money was raised

through the sale of admission tickets and raffle tickets. There were a total of 39 prizes this year, including tickets to Mets Games, tickets

to do because it supports a great charity and shows the school spirit and nature of the Blind Brook community to want to raise money for a special cause," said Jacobs.

Many hours were devoted to the planning of the March of the Trojans, and Sen-

ate members put in time outside of their meetings to make sure the event would run smoothly. In addition to the time spent collecting dona-

The outfits modeled by the seniors were all from local stores in Rye Brook or the surrounding areas of Greenwich, Rye, and Scarsdale. Stores that participated in the event include Sport Tech, Mixology, Ruby and Jenna, LF, Beginnings, Lester's, Ridge Squire, All Dressed Up, and Havana Jeans. Models wore clothing of both casual and evening style, and many members of the community came out to see the latest fashion trends of members of the senior class.

In between modeling were performances by freshman Ryan Vogt and junior Danielle Goz. Vogt showed off his tap dancing skills with an up-tempo tap routine to the tune of "Bust A Move" by Young MC, while Goz performed her original song "I Believe in Us" with guitar accompaniment by senior Alex Silverstein and then "Listen" by Beyoncé.

"[The fashion show is] a very fun way to raise money for different organizations and I'm excited for the charity to be Sunrise Day Camp because it's a great cause. We [had] double the models this year than we had last year and I think this is one of the best Senate events yet," said senior Katy Comstock, the president of Senate.

The fashion show also had the added surprise of senior Matthew Streichler asking fellow senior Alex Discolo to prom with the help of friends Jake Weisberg, Matthew Jaffe, Jake Simon, and Austin Topkis.

Each of the boys had a written one of the letters in "PROM" on their white shirts, while Streichler had a "?" on his and carried flowers. Discolo accepted the invitation, ending the first act of the show on a high note.



Photo/Meghan Comstock

Senior Amanda Luke rocks a boho-chic look from LF in Greenwich.



Photo courtesy of Emma Greenbaum

Seniors Jake Weisberg, Matt Jaffe, Jake Simon and Austin Topkis pose with prom couple Matt Streichler and Alex Discolo.

The raffle prizes were obtained through donations or connections throughout the community.

"The fashion show is a great

They also needed to set up the tables for raffles and make sure the models were dressed and ready for the stage.

Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Prejudice

Here in America, we are proud of our nation. We stake our land with the star spangled banner and pledge our allegiance to it as dawn breaks. We trumpet our liberties so that all may hear, and we protest those that do not maintain the same liberties. We are the land of the free and the home of the brave.

Well, it is for those of us that are gender conforming heterosexuals.

For any that are taken aback by the sudden change in tone, allow me to refer you to the wave of "religious freedom bills" that have swept across more than twenty states in this great

nation. These hateful pieces of legislation, written in response to the Supreme Court's decision this past summer to extend the right to marry to LGBTQ+ couples, cloak contemptible discrimination under the guise of protecting citizens' rights to exercise their religious freedoms.

Such proposed statutes protect individuals, businesses, and religious organizations that deny services to LGBTQ+ couples for religious reasons. Others have even extended their phobias to the transgender community, allowing the same trio to legally reject the recognition of an individual's gender identity.

der identity.

Under these laws, medical professionals can refuse to treat LGBTQ+ individuals; schools can dictate sex-specific access to bathrooms and manner of dress; and religious organizations can block the adoption process for same-sex couples. And these are just a few examples of the far-reaching ramifications of these laws for the LGBTQ+ community.

The degree of flagrant discrimination varies from state to state, though many agree that Mississippi's recently enacted House Bill 1523, or, "Protecting Freedom of Conscience from Government Discrimination Act," has passed the most sweeping anti-LGBTQ+ legislation in the country to date. This bill legalizes all discriminatory practices for those that believe that marriage is between a man and a woman; that all sexual activity should be restricted to such a relationship; and that gender identity is determined by one's biology at birth.

In fact, these laws set strict parameters for what a citizen can and cannot be. A citizen cannot be gay, cannot be transgender, cannot practice extramarital sex, but a citizen can victimize any other citizen who fits these labels.

Proponents of these religious freedom laws maintain that they merely expand upon the rights specified by the First Amendment to the United States Constitution, in which it is stated that "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free speech thereof."

Where in that sentence does the Constitution state that religion can be used to encroach upon the freedoms of other citizens?

It doesn't—because that is not what the Constitution intends. The First Amendment defines freedom of religion as freedom to practice any faith, freedom to pray to any deity, freedom to erect religious buildings, and freedom from discrimination or harassment based on those actions and beliefs.

What freedom of religion definitely does not entail is freedom of wanton prejudice, intolerance, and heterosexism based on those beliefs.

Thankfully, numerous individuals, activist groups, and corporations have decided to stand firm against this injustice. After North Carolina's legislature adopted its own religious freedom legislation, House Bill 2, on March 23, the public erupted in outrage.

New York, San Francisco, and Seattle, along with other cities and states, have restricted "non-essential public-employee travel to North Carolina." PayPal has cancelled its North Caroli-

na expansion plans, and companies like Apple, AT&T, and IBM have voiced their vehement disapproval. Musicians, like Bruce Springsteen and Cyndi Lauper, have scrapped their scheduled concerts and returned ticket fees.

Other states, anticipating disastrous economic repercussions, have voted down religious freedom laws. One such example comes from Georgia Governor Nathan Deal, who vetoed a bill that would have dovetailed with many other pieces of legislation.

Money, not morals, often decides whether or not these bills will survive. Unlike Georgia and North Carolina, however, Mississippi does not provide bases of operations for many large corporations, and thus does not face the same pressures as many other states to veto or repeal its prejudiced measures.

Don't mistake me: I'm incredibly grateful that so many have remained stalwart against the brazen prejudice of the religious freedom bills. But in a country that finds its gloried roots in the Declaration of Independence, our compass should be directed by our morals, not our wallets.

The bedrock of our nation, the foundation from which our city on a hill grew and flourished, is one that guarantees the universal equality of its citizens and bestows upon them the inalienable right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

Why now, at a time when liberty is spreading its magnanimity around the world, is discrimination a malignant stranglehold around our nation?

Perhaps, like a virulent tumor, prejudice is incredibly difficult to excise once it has taken root. Or perhaps the fear of change forces some to cling to the precipice of the past.

Perhaps the reason does not matter.

The LGBTQ+ community has suffered enough. It is time, now, to stand united as a nation as we define the rights of a citizen. Will we allow all those whose hearts beat red, white, and blue to wield the same liberties, or will we strip a select few of these liberties simply because of who they love and how they self-identify?

We must combat these abhorrent religious freedom laws at any level we can. Write to your congressperson, your senator: Demand that the injustice is removed. Join your local Gay-Straight Alliance or PRIDE Club. Speak out against slurs when you hear them spoken by your peers.

Pay attention and be active—before we pervert our national principles in order to suppress individuals merely asking for the same rights as everybody else.

FOCUS

Editor-in-Chief Lily Werlinich
Managing Editor Leah Kratochvil
Layout Editor Rachel Park
News Editor Lauren Rothmann
Viewpoints Editor Skylar Zakarin
Features Editor Sydney Shiffman
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Multimedia Editor Gabby Ramirez
App Developer Bryan Weintraub

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Eleni Kohilakis	Jack Wells
Clay Korpi	Erica Wels
Jordan Kotler	Jacob Zeitlin
Isabella Lazar	Noah Zeitlin
Caroline Levine	

Contributors

Christine Argentino	Zoe Kansler
Jared Benson	Oliver Kleban
Cayla Chang	Mindy Leder
Jamie Epstein	Vanessa Numme
Haley Feuerman	Griffin Robins

Adviser
 Dr. Kenyon

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Lily Werlinich

Editor-in-Chief, *Focus*

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 things Blind Brook.

Trojans, It's Time to Unite in a Community Fight

By Lily Werlinich

This week, the Blind Brook community received word that Student Assistance Counselor Angela Marciano has been diagnosed with ALS, also known as Lou Gehrig's disease. Although students and faculty have noticed Ms. Marciano's absence from the school this year, only now has the severity of her illness come to light.

Since she has taken leave, Tim Pellegrin has been filling the position of Student Assistance Counselor, advising Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD) club and Varsity Athletes Against Substance Abuse (VAASA),

and keeping an open door for any students that wish to speak with him.

In light of Ms. Marciano's diagnosis, her friends and family have organized a fundraiser in order to provide additional support as she battles ALS and have invited the Blind Brook community. Those wishing to attend should refer to the invitation below for any information regarding the May 15 event.

Focus encourages students, faculty, and their families to consider donating items to the silent auction and attending the function in support of their beloved colleague, advisor, and friend, Ms. Marciano.

Ms. Marciano, One of a Kind

By Vanessa Numme

When I first heard the news of Ms. Marciano's diagnosis, my heart sunk. How could this happen? The kindest woman I have ever known, the woman who completely changed my high school experience for the better, is now in a position that is not deserved at all.

I started seeing Ms. Marciano at the end of sophomore year and continued going to her for advice until the end of junior year. Ms. Marciano was always there for me no matter what I needed. Whether I came into her room for a rant about my friends, a raging fit about school stress, or just because I wanted a piece of candy, she was always there for me and willing to listen.

Knowing that I always had a source of comfort to go to during my day really eased my mind and made me feel safe. Never once was I nervous or scared to go in and talk to Ms. Marciano. I could always say what was on my mind and feel comfortable doing so.

High school can be extremely difficult at times and sometimes all that students want to do is crawl into a hole and never come out. At certain times throughout junior year, I would only focus on the negatives in my life, but Ms. Marciano always reminded me that there are good things, too.

She showed me the positives even when I couldn't see them. She always sees the best in every situation and every single person. I mean, how can you not walk out of her room with a smile after seeing her vibrant lipstick and colorful outfits?

Sometimes students feel that no adult can ever truly relate to what they are going through. Ms. Marciano does.

She knows what to say, how to say it, and when to say it. She has been my immediate morale booster even if I stop in for just a second. Ms. Marciano just gets me, and she knew how I was feeling and did her absolute best to try and help me.

In addition to her being understanding, Ms. Marciano is also extremely patient, and that is my favorite quality about her. No matter how stubborn or impulsive I am being one day, she will always sit quietly and listen to me until I am done saying what I have to say.

Some days I would go in there and I would speak for the full forty minutes, without her even saying one word. The fact that I had somewhere to go where I could just get everything off my chest and have someone listen to me is so much more significant than it sounds.

Ms. Marciano's presence alone helped me so much, let alone the amazing, insightful advice that went with it. She genuinely has a good heart and wants others to feel the best that they can.

Ms. Marciano, I want to thank you for all that you have done for the students at Blind Brook, but especially for what you have done for me.

You went above and beyond to give me the advice I needed to make my life easier. You always showed me the positives when all I could see were the negatives. You never gave up, you always put a smile on my face, and you made me feel safe. You have helped me immensely and have had such a profound impact on my life.

I can say with 100% certainty that I would not be where I am today without you and I am forever grateful for the time you spent with me. You remained steady with me during my darkest times, and I hope that I can be there now to support you during yours.

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Standardized Tests Are Far from Standard

Junior Stacy Gerchick

Although some colleges and universities no longer require students to submit their standardized test scores, these exams are not disappearing anytime soon. Now, people must begin to recognize the glaring inequalities in standardized test preparation that exist between different schools throughout the nation.

At Blind Brook, where we are fortunate to have dedicated teachers and abundant resources, students hardly realize the hardships that their counterparts face in less-fortunate districts.

According to the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, the income achievement gap in standardized test scores between low-income and high-income students has increased by 40% since the mid-1970s.

A primary cause of this achievement gap is the unequal distribution of government funds between rich and poor schools. The richest 25% of school districts receive 15.6% more funds from state and local governments per student than the poorest 25% of districts, says the Federal Department of Education.

This lack of money is severely detrimental. Low-budget schools often cannot afford to hire a sufficient number of teachers, resulting in overcrowded classrooms and less individualized attention for students.

Furthermore, poorer schools lack the necessary funds to become

fully equipped with modern technologies. While teachers at Blind Brook and other schools have come to rely on SMART Boards for lesson plans, students at some schools don't have access to computers.

A study by the American Psychological Association found that low-income children who used the Internet on a regular basis performed better on standardized tests of reading achievement and had higher grade point averages than did children who used it less.

Among other things, children without computer access are unable to utilize free test preparation resources on the Internet. For example, in partnership with Khan Academy, an online non-profit educational organization, the College Board offers students interactive practice for the recently-launched "new SAT."

The problem of the standardized testing inequality unfortunately goes beyond the improper distribution of government funds to schools. More complex issues arise when comparing the out-of-school opportunities available to high-income students to those available to low-income students.

As almost all Blind Brook students know, many parents hire tutors for their children so that they perform well in their classes and on AP and college-entrance exams. As SAT and ACT preparation within schools is limited, tutors for these exams in particular are extremely helpful in evaluating students' in-

dividual strengths and weaknesses. Because tutor fees typically range from \$200-\$600 per session, this luxury cannot be afforded by many families.

Review classes are also popular among students, and are offered by well-known companies such as Kaplan and Princeton Review as well as other local companies. However, like private tutors, review classes are usually expensive and unaffordable to many.

Results from a nation-wide survey conducted by Claudia Buchmann, associate professor of sociology at Ohio State University, Vincent Roscigno, professor of sociology at Ohio State University, and Dennis Condron of Emory University showed that students who took private SAT prep classes averaged 60 points higher on their SAT exams than those who did not.

"SAT prep tools have become a tool of advantaged families to ensure that their children stay ahead in the competition for college admissions," said Buchmann.

Students who cannot afford a private SAT or ACT tutor or a review class have to study for these exams solely with review books. Unlike other more expensive forms of test preparation, this requires a significant amount of self-discipline and motivation. Moreover, if a student is stuck on a practice problem or has trouble understanding a specific concept, it is much harder for them to get help, especially with-

out Internet access.

Standardized tests were initially designed as a way to compare students from schools across the nation and eliminate possible discrepancies in grading systems. In actuality, these exams created an entirely new way to exploit differences between students.

While standardized testing can never be fully equalized, there are ways to minimize the achievement gap between the rich and the poor.

First, more federal regulations should ensure that state and local governments provide the same amount of funding to rich and poor schools.

Additionally, all high schools should offer some form of free test preparation services to students. These services could be as simple as allotting a period of time each day for students to ask teachers questions or go over practice problems.

No student should be unable to attend college because they lack the help they need in preparing for standardized tests. As Blind Brook students, it's often hard for us to put ourselves in the shoes of less fortunate students.

But if you just stopped to think for a second what it would be like if higher education were far out of your reach, you would recognize the dire need for reform.

As college-bound individuals, ensuring that everyone has equal access to this valuable opportunity should be one of our top priorities.

Don't Give a D--n about Your Reputation

Junior Hannah Brady

Watching the political debates, it is hard not to notice the immense list of issues facing the United States today. Climate change, terrorism, the wealth gap, racism, sexism, and many other problems continue to thrive with no real solutions in sight.

Instead of thinking through various courses of action and thoroughly examining their effects on society, many politicians choose to support whichever side of an argument they feel will garner them the most votes, thereby choosing their reputation over what is most suitable for the American people.

Most of us can agree that this is the wrong approach. If everybody were to say and do what they felt they needed to in order to uphold their reputations, then nobody would be working towards actually solving issues.

In daily life, focusing too much on reputation can mean sacrificing what is right and at many times, even yourself.

Unfortunately, the administration at Blind Brook does not seem

to have the same negative perspective on it. Instead, they have hung a monumental banner, larger than the American Flag, with the word "Reputation" written across it in ostentatious script.

As students eat lunch, pass by on their way to class, or stop to chat with friends, they are doing so under the shadow of a constant reminder: "Careful, there are people watching and judging you right this very second."

This encouragement of self-consciousness is not only stressful and daunting, but it enforces an already too prominent theme at this school: the perceived importance of "fitting in."

Yes, following the crowd at Blind Brook can be good at times. It means achieving top-notch grades on standardized tests, getting into highly ranked universities, and someday earning careers that would make most people proud. But such a mindset does not come without its fair share of ramifications.

Encouraging students to conform stifles creativity and dimin-

ishes students' ability to live a life directed by themselves rather than by society's expectations.

Gone are the elementary school days filled with adults saying, "Be yourself; nothing is impossible." Now the phrase is this: "Be hireable, and you can have a nice career, mortgage, and family."

Of course, there is nothing wrong with wanting any of the things, but if you are going through life strictly following the rules to a good reputation for the sole purpose of getting a nice career, mortgage and family, then maybe it is time to look at what you are sacrificing.

There is so much untapped potential in every single person that may never be discovered because people are too busy carrying out what is "expected" of them. So many hide beneath a facade built upon outside expectations and so much potential is lost through this slippery slope.

Plus, there is no way to be sure that maintaining a good reputation is really the best way to achieve anything.

As I watch my senior friends pre-

pare to graduate, the time for this generation to enter the professional world seems closer than ever. In less than a few decades, the wellbeing of society will be on our shoulders.

How can we be expected to improve on any current global issues if our way of thinking has been programmed to be exactly like everybody else's?

Basing who you are, what you say, and how you act on the expected reactions of others does not inspire innovative thinking.

In other words, innovative thinking in no way stems from worrying about your reputation.

Instead, it comes from honest, open discussion between different types of people with different ideas. It comes from finding what you are passionate about and exploring those fields in a way that works right for you. From challenging the status quo, and seeing what is beyond it. From stopping all this nonsense about reputation and embracing ourselves.

Only then can our generation improve this world.



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Walking the Cable: Analyzing the Media's Undeniable Impact on the 2016 Presidential Race

an opinion

By Seth Schuster

The political state of our nation rests on an unsteady tightrope, drawn from skyscraper to skyscraper and stretching from 30 Rockefeller Plaza (NBC) to 10 Columbus Circle (CNN) to 1211 Avenue of the Americas (FOX). These three company's media coverage of the 2016 presidential election, along with that of many other news outlets, is having major consequences on the political playing field, and casting a large influence over primary elections.

The intention of this article is not to point fingers at the partisanship of news networks. We already know that NBC has a more liberal viewership, while FOX professes a conservative base. Rather, we must analyze the collective mistakes that the aforementioned news networks are making, mistakes that throw establishment politicians to the dirt, and thrust anti-establishment candidates to the forefront of media coverage.

The most conspicuous error made by the media is the unbalanced nature of what is known as free media or earned media. Free media is the amount of news coverage via television airtime, Internet, and newspaper sources garnered by the candidates at no financial expense to their respective campaigns. Of all the candidates, GOP frontrunner Donald Trump is without doubt the greatest beneficiary.

A report by The New York Times explains Mr. Trump's free media advantage from a metrics point of view. Based on a conversion from the firm

mediaQuant, Donald Trump has earned about \$2 billion worth of free media over the course of this election season.

That is more than double the free media received by any other presidential candidate. Even Hillary Clinton has earned a mere \$800 million worth of free media, which is still more than the combined earnings of Ted Cruz and Bernie Sanders.

If that does not highlight the magnitude with which Trump leads the field in media coverage, let *The New York Times* put it in perspective: "Mr. Trump earned \$400 million worth of free media last month [February], about what John McCain spent on his entire 2008 presidential campaign." That February total was "as much media as Mr. Cruz and Mrs. Clinton combined."

It is important to note that these metrics account for negative press as well. As the saying goes, "Any press is good press." Nothing the candidates say or do will be a hindrance to their brand, Trump and Clinton in particular. Clinton garnered plenty of publicity surrounding the Benghazi attacks, while Trump racks up attention by spewing xenophobic and hateful commentary.

Herein lies the problem: no matter what the candidates do, the networks continue to voraciously cover them, especially Donald Trump. There is no way to escape his brand. Trump's access to news networks is unparalleled. He calls in whenever he wants, says whatever wants, and gets whatever treatment he wants, ultimately

because he is what the network wants.

Trump brings attention, Trump brings viewers, Trump brings revenue.

It must be understood, however, just how much this free press means to the candidates. Jeb Bush spent \$82 million on his advertisement spending, while Donald Trump spent \$10 million. Jeb Bush, received \$214 million worth of earned media, while Donald Trump racked up his \$2 billion worth. Donald Trump currently leads the Republican Party in votes, while Jeb Bush has dropped out of the race.

Unfortunately, this imbalance in free coverage is not the only issue stemming from the media. Timely reporting has also become a chief concern amongst news networks.

On March 29, during a segment on *Last Word with Lawrence O'Donnell* on MSNBC, Lawrence O'Donnell put up a clip of Donald Trump at a rally in Florida earlier that month (March 8). The clip shows Trump discussing the success of his business ventures, and subsequently challenging the media to "fact-check" what he had said.

Everything said in the clip was false. Everything. And Trump had the gusto to challenge the press to review his lies.

Lawrence O'Donnell said on air that night, "I was sitting our desk that election night, fact-checking that speech as he was saying it...I didn't get a chance to say a thing about it for the next three hours of our live coverage as we cut to other people's speeches and other things

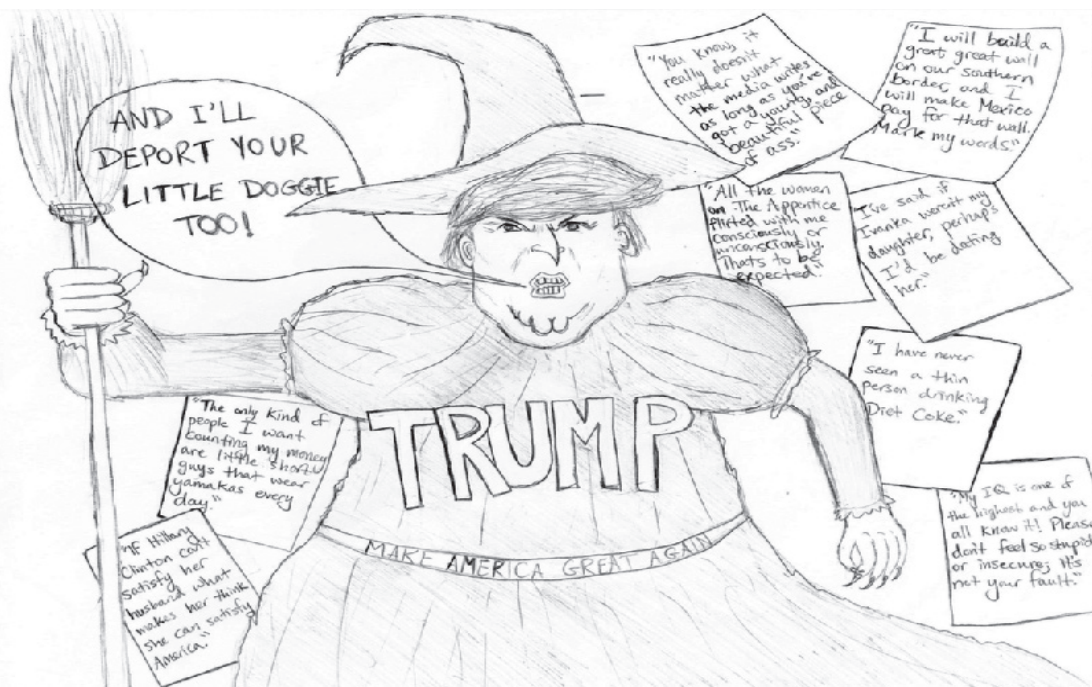
that we were covering...And then the next day, other news organizations debunked those claims, but those articles were seen by a much smaller audience than the prime time election night TV audience."

Only after the votes were cast did the population know of Trump's lies. It was too late. Donald Trump can lie and make xenophobic and hateful statements without shame, because delayed reporting ensures that his blustering will have no effect on his first place status.

Bernie Sanders blasts Trump for being a pathological liar. But Bernie's effort is in vain. Although Bernie's far-left policies are able to attract media attention, he lacks the celebrity that Trump boasts. Sanders and other presidential candidates are simply unable to slow the media grandstander that is Donald Trump.

Another news-favorite is when a particular candidate is placed in another's line of fire. Take Carly Fiorina, for example. Yes, she has dropped out of the race, but her moment in the spotlight came just after Trump criticized her face. Similarly, Chris Christie's moment of glory came in sound bites—like when he pummeled Marco Rubio for mechanically memorizing a statement.

Flashy headlines make news, which become the political platforms for today's candidates. But the imbalance in coverage becomes an imbalance in votes, one that shakes the tightrope that the United States must tiptoe across.



Cartoon/Jeremy Weingarten

Revolts in Political Parties: What Led to the Rise of Trump and Sanders? *an opinion*

By Noah Lubin

Many modern voters believe that the Republican and Democrat establishments have lost touch with the base of their respective parties. Citizens' distrust of big-party candidates has given birth to the wildly and surprisingly successful candidacies of businessman Donald Trump and Senator Bernie Sanders.

How did Mr. Trump ascend the Republican ranks?

No single event could topple an American political party, but a concoction of political failures may doom establishment Republicans. The exposition of this looming fate was President Bush's two failed wars in the Middle East. The Afghanistan and Iraq wars were incredibly costly endeavors that expanded the U.S. national debt and cost thousands of American soldiers' lives. Regardless of their political identity, these failures caused many Americans began to lose faith in the government.

The second disastrous event was the Great Recession. The stock market crash of 2008 and the burst housing market bubble damaged the global economy, especially less affluent Americans. These poorer Americans, who had once voted for President Obama, soon became disenchanted with him, as they did not believe he had their best interests at heart and economic recovery plans showed delayed results.

These new Republican voters, borne from such debacles, were not archetypal conservatives, as many of them hated big business, disliked immigrants, and absolutely detested free trade. Nonetheless, the Republican Party welcomed the voters. Yet the party still did not cater to their needs until the rise of the Tea Party movement within the GOP, which appealed to many voters who sought radical change.

This allowed for the ascension of Marco Rubio and Paul Ryan, both of whom touted extremely conservative beliefs: they championed income tax cuts for the wealthy, reductions in capital gains tax, deregulating Wall Street, and cuts to popular entitlement programs such as Medicare and Social Security. This conservative movement and its economic programs became ingrained in the Republican Party.

The third step was the Supreme Court decision during the Citizens United case. The decision peeled back all campaign finance regulations and enabled donors to give candidates any quantity of money. Republicans were the main beneficiaries because wealthy donors mainly support conservatives for subsequent tax cuts and deregulation of financial markets.

The verdict, however, took power away from the base of the Republican Party, the less affluent voters who now had even less of a voice. Additionally, many of the less affluent voters wanted to see people on Wall Street thrown in jail for their role in the economic crash, not see them handed influence over Republican politicians.

President Obama's successful reelection campaign in 2012 served as the fourth step. The Republican base became frustrated with the establishment for being unable to thwart Obama's reelection. Furthermore, with no productive legislation passed, many believed establishment Republicans were colluding with Obama to make their lives more difficult.

This anger proved to be true in 2014, when the Republican establishment House

Majority Leader Eric Cantor lost his seat to a Tea Party challenger. The Republican establishment overlooked this shift in the base of their party, as they were jubilant in having control over both the House and the Senate. The establishment thought these new Republicans were common conservatives and thus, never adjusted their agenda to help lower-income Americans.

The final event that prompted the ascent of Donald Trump was Republican support for President Obama's free trade agreement, the Trans Pacific Partnership. The Republican base was furious that the establishment would allow more American jobs to be shipped to Asian countries.

Thus, Donald Trump appeared to be the perfect antidote to a diseased party that had lost touch with its roots. His promises to refuse large campaign donations, expand Social Security, bar immigrants, and aid American workers appealed to the vast majority of this Republican base, giving voters a candidate that reflected their core values.

What led to Senator Sanders's rise in the Democratic Party?

While Senator Bernie Sanders is attracting a significant part of the Democratic Party, it must be said that the radical change of the Republican Party is not happening with the Democrats. Hillary Clinton is leading in delegates and will most likely be the Democratic nominee for president. Yet this does not change the fact that many Americans are "Feelin' the Bern."

Bernie Sanders has attracted the very progressive and liberal section of the Democratic Party, otherwise known as the far-left. These voters have become angry with the Democrat establishment for the overall lack of progressive legacy from President Obama. Their two largest concerns are the over-leniency of the Affordable Care Act, nicknamed Obamacare, and the growing power of Wall Street banks following the 2008 crash.

The average Bernie Sanders supporter believes that the current economic system prevents everyone from having upward mobility in society and that only the upper class can succeed. In essence, the American Dream is unattainable for a large portion of Americans, as their hard work will not come to fruition.

For many, the problem stems from Wall Street's control over the majority of wealth in the nation. This comes as a result of the Dodd-Frank Bill. In 2010, President Obama signed this bill in order to reform Wall Street and prevent a future crash like the one of 2008. Despite these regulations, the large banks are already more powerful than before 2008 and many believe that the nation is destined for another crash.

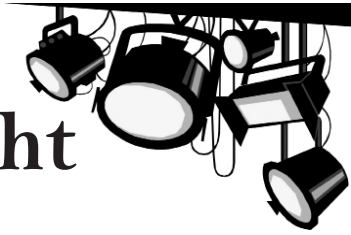
Sanders's voters also do not think that Obamacare goes far enough in helping Americans to receive health insurance. Many would rather pay more taxes for single-payer healthcare than trust insurance companies.

In general, these Democrats are sick of the accommodating nature that the Democratic Party's agenda reflects under President Obama. This shift would allow them to deal with the extremely conservative Republicans "no, no, no" attitude when it came to policy. Thus, the progressive and liberal agenda espoused by Bernie Sanders is incredibly appealing.

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Student Spotlight • Alex Silverstein •

By Danielle Barsky and Isabella Lazar

Senior Alex Silverstein has been an avid musician since he was three years old. His early influences stem from his father, Ted, who was a musician in the 1980s and encouraged his Beatlemania from a young age. Some have compared Silverstein's songwriting and singing to a mixture of rock legends Nirvana and Red Hot Chili Peppers. Silverstein has been a staple of the Blind Brook Band for years and has performed in countless others.

Q: Which instruments do you play?

A: My main instrument is guitar and I've been playing seriously since I was about six [years old]. That it is the instrument I auditioned with at University of Miami and it's the instrument I'm taught on at my music school. I also play bass, drums and piano. I am playing those instruments in different projects I am participating in, but my main instrument is definitely guitar.

Q: How are you involved in music?

A: I'm involved in music through different organizations and various projects [that] I either create or am asked to be part of. The organization I am a part of [currently] is Lagond Music School, which is a non-for-profit organization dedicated to music education and live performance. At that program, I am taught in styles ranging from rock to jazz to funk and so on. Many of my friends from that program have bands on the side, which I am asked to participate in a good amount. It's just fun, I love doing it as much as possible.

Q: In addition to studying at Lagond, which bands do you participate in?

A: I perform with the high school wind ensemble, the high school jazz band, the Lagond All Stars, a Lagond performing band (in which I assist teach), and a few bands I have with friends. I don't have my own project going right now, but hang in there—it will be coming.

Q: What do you do at Lagond Music School?

A: I have been part of Lagond Music School since I was in fourth grade. For the majority of the time I was there, I would play in various performing bands, which would teach me about different styles of music, how to play different styles of music and how to perform on stage. When I got to be an upperclassman in high school, I joined Lagond's top performing band, "The All-Stars" and went on a tour from New York to Nashville. Also, I attend the college prep program during the summer, which is a rigorous 4-week program that prepares you for music college.

Q: Do you participate in the school band? Can you describe your experiences with it?

A: Yes, I participate in school band. It is hard to describe the experience I've had in band. Mr. [Howard] Levy is a phenomenal bandleader, but as you know, we live in a district where the arts aren't as focused on as other subjects and a lot of the kids in the band don't take it very seriously. Dealing with that can be disruptive to the band's progress, but there are still a lot of kids who

take it seriously and the band sounds great. I am happy I'm a part of it.

Q: How much experience do you have with music outside of school and Lagond? How long have you been involved with it for?

A: I would say I have a pretty good amount of experience with music for my age. I've been on a national tour, have played in all county ensembles, played in festivals, have taught and received lessons, and have been consistently practicing and listening to music everyday of my life.



Courtesy of Alex Silverstein
Silverstein (left) jamming with Lagond all-stars at Dino BBQ in NYC.

Q: Where have some of these performances taken place?

A: I have performed in too many places to count...Ocean City, Nashville, Hershey Park, NYC clubs, Playland, charity events, and way more. I'd say lately I've been playing shows at least once a week.



Courtesy of Alex Silverstein
Silverstein gazes at his adoring fans while performing at The Hudson Room with the Blues Buddha Big Band.

Q: Have you participated in a college music program? Did you enjoy it? Why or why not?

A: I have participated in the Lagond College Prep Program and I enjoyed that tremendously, but aside from that, I took a class at NYU for songwriting with Grammy nominated singer-songwriter, Larry Dvoskin. I enjoyed that a lot because I got to learn new aspects and information about music, specifically songwriting.

Q: Do you plan to attend a college with an arts and music program?

A: Yes, I am attending the University of

Miami's Frost School of Music. I will be studying music business there.

Q: What are your aspirations during and after college, or just in the near future?

A: My aspirations for college are to become the best musician I [can] be, and [to] meet and talk to as many people as possible. The music industry is about connections and seizing every opportunity that comes your way. You never know which one could be your lucky one. And after college, I really have no clue what I'm doing. I'll probably try making it as an artist so I don't say to myself "what if" in 30 years, but if that doesn't work out I intend to join the industry side of music...it's impossible for me not to be playing or surrounded by music. Music isn't just something I love; it's a huge part of my life and me.

Q: Do you enjoy composing certain types of music?

A: I write whatever comes to mind. I don't believe in narrowing your writing to a certain style or formula, it limits creativity. I have written Latin songs, rock songs and I've also produced beats. Sounds are sounds, and all have their own purpose.

Q: How many songs have you written? What are some of their names?

A: Yeah, I write songs all the time. Being creative is one of my favorite things about music. It allows you to express whatever you're thinking and feeling in the form of melody and harmony. It's really powerful. I don't usually share my songs and I have too many to count but they are about a wide variety of things ranging from depression to happiness, and random stories. They can really be about anything. No limits.

Q: Are there any messages in the music you write?

A: Sometimes, and sometimes there aren't. Lyrics contribute a lot to music but what people don't often realize is that they aren't the music. A lot of my songs have messages of happiness, perseverance, hope, being a high school kid, divorce...I just try to be as honest as possible in them. No point in not being honest in your own music.

Q: Is there anything you specifically do enjoy or do not enjoy about music?

A: I don't enjoy when people are closed-minded to different styles of music. Not everyone is trained with a musical ear. There really isn't much I don't love about music and I love most of it.

Q: What is your favorite thing about music?

A: My favorite thing about music is how powerful it is. Music is not only something people listen to, but also it is something people use to cope with, and to get through tough times. These sounds are comforting, powerful and can produce hope in an individual. Music has gotten me through the roughest times of my life, and aside from that, music is in everything! Sports games, movies, elevators, parties, and restaurants... everything. It is so important to every aspect of life.

Security and Custodial Staff at Blind Brook

By Sam Gibbs

Many students at Blind Brook do not think twice about the people who help run the school. Teachers and administrators are often seen as the main proponents in creating a safe, positive learning environment. However, among those behind the scenes that help Blind Brook to function are the security staff and the custodial staff.

These staff members work each day to make sure the school is safe and clean, two factors necessary to the well being of the entire Blind Brook population. Often, students disregard the importance of these jobs, but in reality, the school would not operate without them.

The Board of Education creates a budget plan every year before school starts to allocate funds. Security, which was greatly enhanced after the Newtown school shooting, falls under "Supervision and Support."

The total budget for this area is \$1,953,736, an increase from last year. Custodial staff and maintenance falls under "Facilities Operation and Management." That total budget is \$2,248,655, also on the rise from the previous year.

Given that many custodians also double as bus drivers, it is also important to note that bus driver salaries, which fall under "K-12 Pupil Transportation," have \$365,653 in funds per year.

The security staff gets to the school everyday by 7 a.m., and some guards do not leave until 10 p.m. if they cover the late shift. During the early shift, several security guards direct traffic while others man the desk, opening the door and making sure all is well. The late shift staff stays and waits for all activities to finish and all students and faculty to leave the building.

During the day, the guards have various jobs to carry out. When manning the desk, they sign people in and out, making sure they check that security protocols are followed in case of emergency. The security staff also issues late passes to students, writes reports, and issues ID badges to visitors. Whoever sits at the security desk also monitors the video cameras that produce images on the security computer.

In addition to monitoring Blind Brook's doors, security can often be seen walking the halls, watching students, the whole building, and regulating traffic in the parking lot.

Though less common aspects of daily life, fire drills and lockdown drills also fall under security's domain. The guards are the main facilitators of these drills; they make sure that all runs smoothly so that in case of an emergency, faculty and the student body are prepared. After all, the security

staff is the first line of defense for Blind Brook students.

"The best interest of the students is always kept in mind. I've always found honesty with the students is the best way to deal with them and protect them from themselves," says School Monitor Dave Centofanti, a long time security staff member.

"I talk to everybody. We have good communication with the students. They can always come to us for help," said Security Monitor Bill Santoro.

Similarly to the security staff, many of Blind Brook's custodians begin work early. Some members of the custodial staff drive buses, meaning their shift starts at 6:45 a.m. with checking the buses and starting their routes.

They pick up high schoolers and middle schoolers first, typically arriving with a bus full of students around 7:30 a.m. After dropping off the older students, the buses then make their rounds for the elementary school.

In between the morning bus route and afternoon one, the custodians have many different jobs. Most of them start their day by putting down the chairs in the commons. After that, they follow the requests of their supervisor, Director of Facilities Louis Rodriguez. These jobs span from fixing lights and plumbing to cleaning up spills or maintaining the grounds.

On occasion, the custodial staff will be tasked with setting up for school events relating to academics, sports, award ceremonies, etc. The typical day, though, consists of some combination of previously stated jobs, followed by the final sweep through of the commons during ninth period.

Afterwards, the custodial staff shuttles the elementary, middle and high school students to their homes before parking the buses and signing off for the day at 4 p.m.

Although custodians spend just as much time on school grounds as the security staff, many do not interact with the students except on bus rides.

"Some kids on the bus are more social than others," said Anthony Lavecchia, a bus driver and custodian.

"I know the kids on my bus," said Andy Bruno, "But I develop more of a bond with the younger, elementary school kids because I have them from kindergarten up until high school, basically their whole school life."

Both the custodians and security guards play integral parts in the safe keeping and flawless function of the Blind Brook school district. Their actions often go unnoticed, but without these crucial staff members, the educational experience in the high school would not be the same.

How Much Do We Really Know About Our Candidates?

By Joanna Goodman

2016 is a big year. It's a leap year, the year we seniors go off to college, the year of the summer Olympics and, of course, the year of the U.S. presidential election. However, unlike past elections, this time around a large percentage of our class will be eligible to vote—and hopefully will.

Right now, we are in the midst of the primaries: events that every magazine, newspaper, and TV news station analyze endlessly. Many students have begun to engage themselves more and more in politics, but there remains a considerable lack of knowledge among eligible voters in our district who should not only be following the elections, but also partaking in debate, learning to defend various viewpoints, and overall, educating themselves for when they hit the voting booths in November. Yet, politics are not a part of Blind Brook's core curriculum and the government class that is offered is merely an elective.

Teaching politics in the classroom has long been an area of dispute. Some argue that teachers cannot teach politics without bias—that they will discriminate or sway their students to vote one way or another, or bring up even more controversial issues. For example, a reporter at LEX18, a popular news channel in Kentucky, covered a story concerning Kendra Baker, a teacher in Kentucky, who was fired for discriminating against Democrats. Many parents were outraged.

One parent, Mary Gilbert, who believed her daughter was being taunted for sharing her opinions, said, "It should not be in the classroom at all... You don't send them to school to have someone else's opinion shoved down their throat and demand they agree with it. It's appalling. It's wrong."

This gets us to the heart of the problem: unwanted "shoving of opinions down throats." Linda Lyons, an Education and Youth editor for Gallup, published findings that 71% of teens have the same social and political ideologies as their parents, and that students across the United States have not been provided the opportunity to form political opinions on their own. So, can the student body be educated on politics in the classroom in a balanced way?

Kevin Meuwissen, Assistant Professor at the Warner School of Education at the University of Rochester, wrote an article for the Huffington Post titled, "Generating Productive Political Discussion in the Classroom" in 2013.

He touches upon the difficulties teachers encounter in trying to generate conversation on somewhat con-

troversial subjects, yet the eminent importance and responsibility of the schools to do so. He writes, "A central role of public education is to empower students to think deeply about how we ought to interact with each other and work toward solutions to public problems in a democratic society... we must more fully embrace this role in our schools."

Similarly, Paula Mcavoy, coauthor of *The Political Classroom*, shared in an interview with NPR Senior Education Editor, Steve Drummond, that "To be able to talk about politics is a skill that people need to learn. And it would be great if it were learned in school because these are great moments in which you bring a group of young people together who are forming their political views. They can really learn to engage across their differences and to start to see that political conflict is a normal part of democratic life."

Learning in an environment with peers and friends can help students see both sides and help students expand their exposure and ideologies. While this is something many school districts fear, it is also a really great aspect of high school that should be utilized to help equip our generation with the skills necessary to succeed.

We can help Blind Brook, and neighboring districts, instill healthy political debate among senior classes by defining the politics of teaching. Meuwissen spoke of using open-ended questions and learning to understand multiple perspectives. But, even more simply, in this presidential year, I believe all we need are facts.

We need an understanding of how the system actually works—a refresher on superdelegates and the Electoral College briefly touched upon in sophomore year history class—an understanding of the issues at hand, and a general knowledge of how each candidate proposes to deal with them, with no bias, no opinion, and no influence. In addition, we must be cultivated with the skills necessary to defend positions we may not agree with and respect others' views—skills that those running for office appear to lack as well.

What happens in the next four years is crucial; issues at hand, such as immigration, health care, gun control and gender rights, are pivotal, and for the first time, our class—our generation—has a say in the matter.

We can affect the course of history, but we cannot healthily do this without being properly educated and knowing the true facts at hand, not skewed data thrown out by opposing parties. The home is one source, but the classroom is a better one.



Courtesy of Joanna Goodman



Get Ready to Register!

1

Check Eligibility: In order to vote, one must...

- Be a United States citizen
- Be eighteen years of age or more
- ** Please note, certain states allow citizens to vote in the primary election at seventeen so long as they will be eighteen come the general election (this applies in NY)

2

Register: This must be done at least 25 days prior to voting in NY State in one of these ways

Mail an Online Form:

- Go to the NY State Board of Elections home page online and click "register to vote" to download and print form
- Check off criteria and information by clicking in boxes on form or by hand
- Print and sign the form
- Mail the completed and signed registration form to Westchester County Board of Elections (148 Mather Avenue, White Plains, New York 10601)

In person:

- Ask for a registration form in a local (or any NY State) elections office, public assistance agency or Department of Motor Vehicles

For an absentee ballot:

- Complete the Voter Registration Tool from longdistancevoter.org OR go to NY State Board of Election home page and complete the voter registration form
- Verify your voter registration

Confirm your eligibility:

- Unavoidably absent from county on election day
- Unable to appear due to illness or disability
- Patient at a VA Hospital
- Detained in jail or confined in prison
- Download and complete the New York Absentee Ballot Application
- Receive, complete, and return your absentee ballot

3

Learn: Become educated about the candidates

- Being a conscientious citizen is more than just voting; it is also about being informed about why to vote for a particular individual
- Read up, watch the news, ask others for help!

Let's Talk Electoral College

By Elieni Kohlakis

A common misconception is that the presidential candidate who wins the general (or popular) election immediately takes the Oval Office. But there are four different historical occasions on which a candidate won the popular vote but did not secure enough electoral votes to take office: Andrew Jackson (1824), Samuel Tilden (1876), Grover Cleveland (1888), and Al Gore (2000).

This preconceived notion that voters are the sole deciders of elections is one that plagues the American population because, in fact, the votes of each American citizen serve no purpose except to the Electoral College.

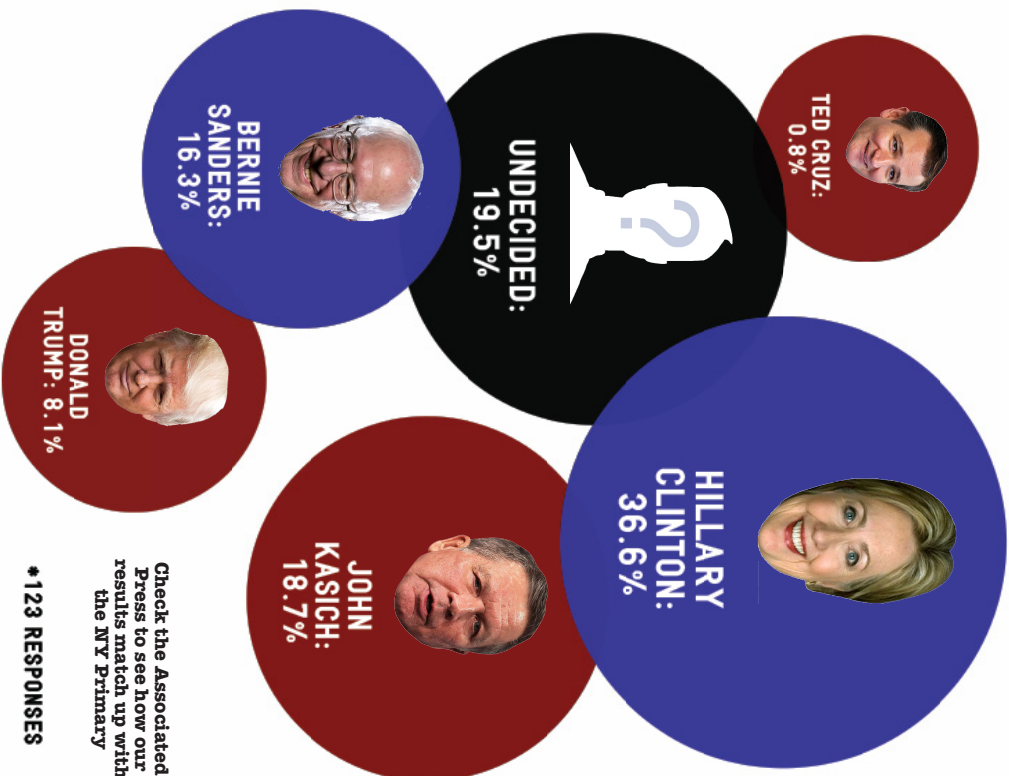
The electors are representatives who vote for a president based on the preferences of their state. Each state is granted a set number of electors based on representation in Congress. In the Electoral College, each elector has the opportunity to cast a vote in favor of the candidate most favored by the population of their state.

Whichever presidential candidate wins more than half of the electors' votes (over 270 of the 538 electors) will then take oath as President of the United States.

The Electoral College is rooted in the writings of the Constitution, although a similar organization was used in the Holy Roman Empire from the Middle Ages to 1792. The Founding Fathers incorporated the Electoral College into the Constitution in an attempt to make a compromise.

This system enabled the selection of a President by both popular and Congressional vote. Each state has the same number of electors as it has representatives in the House of Representatives and the Senate combined, with every state entitled to two Senators and the House of Representatives officials based on each state's population. The more heavily populated the state, the greater the number of House members.

BHS PRIMARY RESULTS



Every ten years, the United States Census determines how many representatives are granted to each state. Among the states with the most electors are California with 55, Texas with 34, and New York with 31.

According to the National Archives and Records Administration, in order to be an elector, qualifications must be fulfilled. It is imperative that the elector is not part of the Senate or House of Representatives, and also does not hold an "Office of Trust or Profit under the United States."

Electors are selected in various ways across the country. Most commonly, a political party at a state party convention nominates the electors. Nominees are typically party leaders, state-elected officials, or people that have some degree of affiliation with a favored presidential candidate.

Come Election Day, individuals across the United States vote for the candidate they most favor. Then, the electors are able to vote for president. It is expected that the electors will vote for the presidential candidate with the most votes in their designated state. However, there is no law saying that they must vote in accordance with the results of the popular vote. Nowadays, it is uncommon that the electors will cast their vote in favor of the candidate who does not win the popular vote.

In order to cast their votes, the electors meet on the Monday after the second Wednesday in December. The electoral votes are then counted in a joint session of Congress on January 6, following the electors' meeting in December.

Members of both the House and the Senate meet on this day in the House chamber in order to officially tally all of the electors' votes. As this count is being conducted, the Vice President oversees matters. Upon finishing the count, the Vice President, serving as President of the Senate, announces the next President and Vice President. The process is concluded upon the inauguration of the selected President on January 20.

Features

Startup Stats

By Arianna Kohlikakis
HEADSPACE

Blind Brook students, like many others around the world, suffer from their fair share of mental health issues, such as depression and anxiety. Although the administration has put in place safeguards to help students manage such distresses, like Wellness Day and access to the school psychologist, students must also maintain responsibility for their own wellbeing.

Meditation is one method used by many individuals to counteract harmful thoughts. Scientific studies have proven that meditation has many benefits, including better sleep, training, listening skills, eating habits, relationships and more happiness and focus.

The growing desire to start meditating has led to the birth of Headspace, an application that advertises a "gym membership for the mind." Headspace aims to promote meditation and relaxation for all users by mixing electronics with reality.

The application offers hundreds of hours of ten-minute programs categorized under a variety of titles. Themes like "addiction," "creativity," and "relationships" cater to the spiritual demands of each user and provide support for a vast consumer base. Headspace incentivizes users to track progress, reward their journey and even obtain rewards on their way to a "better mind."

Since its birth in 2010, Headspace has

experienced immense success, with over five million users enrolled in programs. Andy Puddicombe and Rich Pierson, the app's founders, are responsible for its remarkable growth. The former Buddhist monk (Puddicombe) and the marketing man (Pierson) put their heads together to integrate technology and relaxation in a beneficial way.

The app makes meditation accessible by allowing users to sign up online at www.headspace.com. After a short free trial, unlimited access can be bought on a monthly basis for \$12.95, yearly for \$7.99 a month, biyearly for \$6.24 a month, or eternally at \$419.95.

Mirroring its founders' beliefs in community as a form of support, Headspace has a "Buddy Feature" that allows users to link up with friends online. Additionally, the mobile application can be used in conjunction with the website so that users have an additional level of access to their

Headspace accounts.

Blind Brook's reputation is as competitive high school is one that many students attest to. Thus, it is to be expected that an aura of stress be coupled with the intense focus on grades, scores and success. Applications such as Headspace provide easy access to stress-management tools and ultimately serve to increase the happiness of users.



Photo/Amanda Capelli
Freshman Carly Kabot finds her zen.

BLINKIST

The masterminds behind the startup "Blinkist" seek to make book selection—that painstaking process that devoted readers are all too familiar with—as easy as clicking a button. And thanks to them, now it is.

Their slogan, "You were born curious. Start learning and reading faster now" is a testament to the company's efforts towards facilitating literature selection. Blinkist has transformed over a thousand best-selling nonfiction books into compact synopses that can be read in fifteen minutes or less.

Though these super summaries do not go nearly as in depth as those of Sparknotes, Cliff Notes and other such sites, Blinkist believes that they provide a taste of each book's pages to entice a reader into one literary world over another.

The website offers a trial period of three days at no cost. During this 72-hour period, potential users can read up to four summaries in one day. After the trial ends, a free version is available and enables users to look at up to one book per day. A \$49.99 or \$79.99 yearly subscription give full access to the site's library, the difference between the two being that the more expensive membership has multimedia features (i.e. audio books).

The innovators of Blinkist have a very specific target population of "movers and

shakers." The company's aim is to provide interesting reading material without making readers commit to a multi-hour

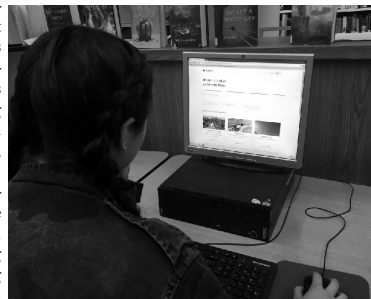
engagement. It offers the language and complexity of a sophisticated piece of writing and the time needed to read a brief article.

The service works by taking the original text, extracting the main concepts, and then transforming them into memorable messages. Through this process, Blinkist can consistently upload a variety of summaries on all topics. Its availability as both a website and an app also creates an ease of use that is especially appealing to consumers.

Various organizations like the App Store, TIME, BuzzFeed, and Forbes have acknowledged the progressive nature of Blinkist. Not only does it help adults find literature that interests them, but also students.

The startup organization provides a plethora of resources for students to peruse on their quest for a riveting read. In addition, this website provides reliable information about the novels in its library—something that cannot be confirmed on typical go-to websites like Wikipedia.

By no means do the summaries Blinkist offers stand as substitutes for reading the actual text, but the simplified forms of the plot do serve to increase understanding and entice readers.



Photo/Amanda Capelli
Freshman Ellie Sanchez scrolls through Blinkist.

Scholarships Paving the Way for College

By Marly Suesserman

The infamous "college process" is one that pans differently for everyone. Some can foresee their future, others cannot fathom what the next four years of their lives will have in store. For many, however, scholarships, both academic and athletic, play an integral role in the process.

Scholarships are awarded to, as denoted by the title, scholars in their respective fields. Some are "need-blind" and solely given based on credentials, while others consider scholarships based on financial status.

When applying to colleges, being awarded a merit scholarship can either help alleviate the financial burden of the four year education or make a college more appealing.

Academics

Colleges determine which students will receive merit scholarships based on multiple qualifications. They most heavily assess standardized test scores, GPA, rigor of class schedule, and extracurricular activities. Additionally, some schools gauge distance from their college, level of interest shown by the student during the application process (i.e., did they reach out to admissions, did they schedule an interview?), and even timeliness of application submission.

Senior Brooke Ackerman, who recently committed to the Commonwealth Honors College at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, was awarded several different scholarships. Due to her exceptional PSAT scores, she was named a Commended Student, and was able to put that award on her college applications.

"I did not think I was going to get this award, but since it is a nationally recognized award, colleges are already familiar with what it entails. Overall, I think it was definitely beneficial because it enriched my application and allowed me to stand out from others," said Ackerman.

Ackerman was also given the Chancellor's Award, a merit-based scholarship for University of Massachusetts, Amherst.

Athletics

There are more ways to be recruited by a college than through academic-based merits alone. Senior Mackenzie Korpi experienced her college process differently than most Blind Brook students.

She will attend Carleton College in Minnesota in the fall, where she will play on the school's Division III (DIII) soccer team. Since Korpi knew she always wanted to participate on a DIII team and go to a small liberal arts college, she took action early.

"I went to a bunch of identification camps, which are weekend camps at a college where the coaches get to look at recruits and watch them for long periods of time. My club soccer team also went to a lot of college showcases, which are tournaments that coaches come and watch. After each showcase I contacted the schools [that] I was interested in and eventually I found niche at Carleton because it was the best fit for me both academically and athletically," said Korpi.

In Korpi's case, because she was hoping to play under Division III, the recruiting process started relatively late. Division I (DI) recruiting processes can start as early as one's freshman year of high school, though it depends on the sport and on the school.

Coaches for DI colleges attend large showcases and tournaments, selecting some of the best players that they watch and later contacting them for further information. Athletes can be asked by colleges for a number of things, such as highlight videos where athletes show off their skills and mentor recommendations.

A common misconception for DI athletes is that every player has a full-ride scholarship for all four years of college. While this is usually the case for DI football and basketball, many other sports coaches will divide scholarship money

among several different players.

DIII colleges are not permitted to give athletes athletic scholarships, though many can receive money through financial aid or merit-based scholarships.

Other options

There are other ways to get scholarships and financial aid for colleges in addition to the aid of academic and athletic excellence. The Free Application for Student Aid (FAFSA) helps students get money from the federal government based on their or their family's financial and economic standing. FAFSA evaluates the family's current state and from that gives applicants appropriate sums of money for each individual college.

Additionally, many clubs, organizations, and large corporations give the opportunity for high school seniors to apply for scholarships. Finding the perfect one can be as simple as typing "find a scholarship" into a search engine.

Most require a transcript, essay, and a letter of recommendation. These scholarships are typically privately funded, meaning they have no affiliation with the college attended nor with the federal government. These types of scholarship programs typically award a lower sum of money than would a nationally regarded merit scholarship program.

Technically Speaking... A Chat with Charles Von Hollen



Photo courtesy of Mr. Von Hollen
Von Hollen (left) marches with members of the Computer Club.

By Sydney Shiffman

Technology Staff Director Charles Von Hollen is a key member of the Blind Brook community, working throughout the entire district to help teachers to better infuse technology into their curricula. He teaches a segment of the Honors Computer Science program and is also available to help students with their technology-related needs. *Focus* sat down with Von Hollen who can frequently be spotted teaching the joys of Google Forms or force-quitting technological meltdowns.

Q: What sparked your interest in technology?

A: I was really young. I was probably a freshman in high school and the big craze was downloading illegal music and getting things for free. You quickly learn the morals behind that and what you should or should not do, but it actually made me build a computer to be able to handle certain download speeds and...burn them to disks. And then shortly thereafter you learn the lesson that you really should not do that and you should learn to—as many people say—use your powers for good

and make sure that you do the right thing.

Q: Did you study along this career path in college?

A: I did. My undergraduate degree is in information technology with a minor in information

systems...And then at the same time during the summer times (with colleges running a shortened calendar) I would come home and substitute teach, and I really found a blend between the two things.

Q: What do you like about the subject matter you chose to pursue?

A: I love technology. I love that it changes everyday. It keeps getting better and better and the driving force behind technology is to make everyday life easier and more enjoyable... Once I picked up the teaching aspect, it sort of really made me think about differences and things that I could do.

Q: What prior jobs have you held and what did they entail? What is the most interesting assignment you have ever been tasked with?

A: Believe it or not, during college one of my most lucrative jobs was being a security guard. A few of [my friends and I] would go home and work for the security company. It was fun to work with your friends and make a lot of money during the summer. Very interesting job, to say the least.

And then I also had some tech-

nology internships. I worked for Stew Leonard's technology department, which was actually a really cool experience. It's a fun place to work and their technological demands are greater than you would think. And then I also had probably a half-year position when I was in college with NXP Semiconductors, which was a division of IBM.

Q: What was your most interesting assignment in the workforce?

A: I had a few interesting projects that stick out. The first one at Stew Leonard's was building a new POS system for their dairy (ice cream) stand that they had...Basically, the registers are all picture-based so you had to make a system so that they could quickly ring out the ice cream... And then I had another really challenging job when I was with the Semiconductors company. [We] built them a new help desk ticket system. It was actually my first experience leading a group of peers through a project...We left that project and they actually used it for five years.

Q: What form of technology (in terms of physical equipment or knowledge) do you think is most lacking at Blind Brook?

A: I think Blind Brook does a really great job with a lot of things. I, of course, always want more of everything. I would love to see more technology use and I think we're making great strides in that aspect, so it's just keeping things digital, keeping things in a format that's current for students. [We should] just keep pumping technology, whether it's directly as a curriculum component or just supporting existing curriculums to enhance the educational opportunities for students.

Q: Can you please describe the adoption of the Chrome Book in the Blind Brook school district? What are the goals of the project,

when was it initiated, and how is it expected to play out?

A: Currently at Ridge Street (the elementary level), we have an eight Chrome Book cart and a few Chromium carts, so those old Netbooks [are converted] into things similar to Chrome Books...

Then you get into the middle school. Currently, this year, 7th and 8th grade have Chrome Books and then next year will be [grades] 7, 8, 9, 10 with Chrome Books. I've definitely seen some benefits to it and although sometimes the process for change might be a little slower than you'd desire, having work digital, having teachers have access to you at all times, [can] really enhance the learning opportunity for students. Hopefully we continue to get good results and can continue to build out that initiative year by year. I know financially things are always hard to come by, but I really do think it's worthwhile and the benefits are tremendous.

Q: If you had to choose only one thing that you have learned about technology to teach every student at Blind Brook, what would it be and why?

A: Embrace it. Sometimes new technologies are intimidating or scary because you may not understand it or believe in it but play with it, investigate it, use it, see if it works for you. Not everything works for everyone but definitely try new things. Never be afraid to try new things. [Technology] changes rapidly...Just stay with it. Learn it no matter how old you get. Embrace it and never be afraid of it. Never tell people not to use it.

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My Cloverfield Day

By Jordan Kotler

On March 10, my brother, Zach, and I wanted to go see a movie, so we decided to check out *10 Cloverfield Lane* on its opening night. I had not seen the original *Cloverfield* from 2008, so I decided to watch the movie during my free periods in between classes ahead of seeing the sequel that night.

We chose *10 Cloverfield Lane* because of its interesting path to theatres. No one even knew there was a *Cloverfield* sequel in production until the trailer surprisingly dropped on January 15, only a couple of months before the movie was released. This is mostly unprecedented in the film industry because it is believed that films have to be on fans' radars for months or years before its release in order to fully promote the material.

But Executive Producer J.J. Abrams decided to shake things up by nicknaming the film *Valencia* while it was in production, so that hardly anyone would suspect a thing. The plan worked, as in its opening weekend, *10 Cloverfield Lane* grossed \$25 million on a \$15 million and is still going strong.

The original film employed similar marketing tactics, taking advantage of its enigmatic nature by releasing the first trailer with loud explosions, screaming people, a headless Statue of Liberty, but without a dialogue or title.

Cloverfield lived up to its mysterious trailer by gradually unveiling a monster wrecking havoc on New York City while a group of friends attempted to navigate their way to safety. One of the main characters records the events on a hand-held camera, through which the audience absorbs the thrilling events. This was a clever cinematic tactic, as it made me, along with many of my fellow audience members, feel as though I were trying to survive the attacks along with the friends.

Fans of *Cloverfield* eagerly awaited future attacks, but these did not come until the trailer for *10 Cloverfield Lane* dropped nearly six years later. The trailer looked nothing like the first movie except a few commonalities.

The brief snippet consisted of a woman awaking in a bunker with two other men, where she is told that she was rescued after a car accident and it is not safe to go outside. Besides that, viewers had no idea what the plot of the film was.

My brother and I were extremely excited because we had never entered a movie theatre with such little information on what we were about to watch. In this digital age, I usually would have seen every trailer and read multiple reviews before seeing the film to get a general idea of what I was about to see.

But the element of surprise was off the charts as the twists and turns of this movie made for a different theatre experience than I have ever had before.

Abrams put the traditional sequel format to bed by going with a completely different genre for this follow-up. While

Cloverfield was a found-footage disaster movie, first-time director Dan Trachtenberg calls *10 Cloverfield Lane* a psychological thriller.

The tagline, "Monsters come in many forms," forces the audience to question who or what the monster is from the get-go.

Mary Elizabeth Winstead stars as Michelle, a woman who wakes up in the bunker with Howard (played brilliantly by John Goodman) telling her he saved her from what is outside the door. They are joined by Emmet (John Gallagher Jr.), a believer of Howard whose sole desire is remain safe.

The entire movie consists of trying to figure out whether Howard can be trusted or not. Although he tells Michelle that he has done her a service by saving her life, she cannot tell if her life truly needed saving, or if Howard kidnapped her and has horrors planned.

The movie often sways from one way to the other, making the audience wonder if Howard is being creepy and dangerous or heroic and selfless. While he could just be another crazy guy that thinks the world is coming to an end, Michelle's constant escape plans show that she thinks differently.

Spoilers Below

For the most part, this film takes place in the bunker, but when Michelle finally does break out, the audience is left with more questions than answers. While it turned out Howard was right about the dangers of the outside world, we never discovered his true desires for Michelle.

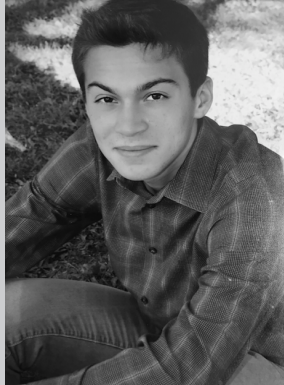
The magnificence of Howard's character stems from his mystifying nature: his intent could have been to protect Michelle, or to kidnap her and pretend she was his daughter. In either scenario, Goodman's portrayal was remarkable, making me hate Howard, sympathize for him, and respect him all at the same time.

Winstead's Michelle is also deserving of praise. The actress created a smart, creative, and inspiring character that is the closest leading female character I have seen to Sigourney Weaver's Ripley in the *Alien* franchise.

While some have criticized the ending for its lengthiness, I thought it was completely necessary and original. The big twist in the end was not just that there were aliens, but also that the film transformed into a science fiction movie seemingly out of nowhere. (Also, this shift allowed Michelle an epic sequence where she builds a bomb and destroys an alien ship and only just survives.)

If the next movie follows similar ideology as the first two, it will continue its trend of switching genres with each movie and will transform completely into science fiction for the next addition to the *Cloverfield* franchise.

The incredible release and marketing campaign of this *10 Cloverfield Lane*, along with its astonishing plot twists, ensure that I will never again—nor have I ever—experience a film the same way.



Courtesy of Jordan Kotler

Festivals Compete for Crowds

By Alana Applebaum and Alexa Limb

Beginning as a makeshift operation with its headquarters in one of the founders' childhood bedrooms, Founders Entertainment had reigned as the company behind Governor's Ball, New York City's most popular music festival since 2011. Every year, over 135,000 people flock to Randall's Island to see indie and alternative rock, hip hop, and electronica performances by both bigger music industry names and less well-known artists.

Yoni Reisman, Tom Russell, and Jordan Wolowitz, co-founders of Founders Entertainment, were a trio of young entrepreneurs that wanted more than their assistant positions at other music festival companies and booking agencies.

While remaining with their day jobs, they began using their music industry contacts and connections, along with startup money of \$50,000 each, to plan a small outdoor music festival in New York City.

Over the past few years, the event has dramatically increased in popularity, allowing Founders Entertainment to sign popular artists that now draw in crowds of over 45,000 people for each of the three days of the festival.

Last month, Live Nation Entertainment, a well-known American entertainment company, acquired Governor's Ball just in time for the festival to be getting a run for its money. Amidst the success of Governor's Ball thus far, Live Nation may be in for a harsh wake up call.

For the first time ever, Goldenvoice, a division of Anschutz Entertainment Group (AEG) is launching Panorama, an east-coast version of the Coachella Valley Music and Arts Festival, the company's popular event that is held annually in California.

Goldenvoice has set Randall's Island as Panorama's venue, and the event is scheduled for only about two months after Governor's Ball. Concertgoers will soon decide whether New York City's original music festival will remain superior, or if it will be overshadowed by Panorama.

Founded by entrepreneur Paul Tol-

lett, Goldenvoice first launched Coachella in 1999. With its impressive performance lineup and celebrity appearances, it has drawn crowds of over 180,000 attendees across its two weekend dates. Given Coachella's immense popularity, it is no doubt that Panorama has the potential to attract similar numbers.

Live Nation is unquestionably facing a highly skilled competitor. After all,

Goldenvoice was able to turn the remote location of Indio, California into a city that hosts one of the United States' most popular music festivals. Not to mention that Coachella has thrived for more than a decade, while Governor's Ball only recently made a name for itself.

Only time will tell which event will dominate this year on Randall's Island.

Despite being owned by different companies, Governor's Ball and Panorama seem to be very similar types of festivals. The main difference between the two is the specific artists that make up the lineup of performers, so it ultimately comes down to the preferences of prospective attendees.

The headliners for Governor's Ball include Kanye West, the Strokes, the Killers, Eagles of Death Metal, and Beck, among many others. Yet with Panorama's impressive lineup, including Kendrick Lamar, Major Lazer, A\$AP Rocky, and DJ Khaled, both festivals are featuring some of the most influential artists of 2016.

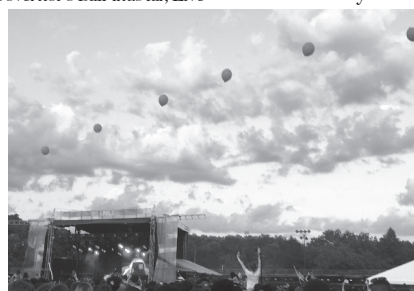
"It's hard to say at this point [which festival will be more popular]. Both shows have their huge headliners. Governor's Ball has Kanye [West], who just released a historic album in the industry on his own

[The Life of Pablo], and then Panorama has Kendrick Lamar, who just released one of the most significant and musically experimental albums in hip hop [To Pimp a Butterfly]," said senior musician Alex Silverstein.

"I believe Governor's Ball is going to have the same turnout it usually does, with a 100% sold-out crowd on Sunday for Kanye. Panorama is new and still growing, so I believe Governor's Ball will still have more of a turnout (relative to the size of the venue)," he said.



Courtesy of Zoe Sanchez
Senior Zoe Sanchez poses at GovBall with juniors Sam Striar and Zoe Kansler.



Courtesy of Nicole Axelrod
Balloons fill the sky to concertgoers' thrill.

Like That? Try This!

By Gabby Applebaum and Danielle Barsky

After endlessly rewatching, rereading, and replaying your favorite movies, books, and songs, they no longer provide you with the same level of excitement and satisfaction. Thankfully, fans of all genres have a number of options available that can satisfy their need for a fresh source of entertainment. To help you decide where to focus your attention on next, we have spun around some of those favorites and found their modern equivalents. Take a peek below to find your next binge!

1. *Mean Girls* (2004) - *The DUFF* (2015)
Mean Girls is a classic movie that scores of teenagers find themselves making references to throughout high school. Directed by Mark Waters and written by famous comedian Tina Fey, this movie stars Lindsay Lohan, Rachel McAdams, Lacey Chabert, Lizzy Caplan, Daniel Franzese, Jonathan Bennett, Amanda Seyfried, and Fey herself. Taking place at a typical high school in Illinois, *Mean Girls* focuses on Cady Heron (Lohan) who moves to town after living in South Africa and being homeschooled for her entire life. Cady is thrust into a world of drama, and even though she makes some questionable choices throughout the film, she eventually realizes whom her true friends really are.

Similarly, *The DUFF*, which features Mae Whitman, Robbie Amell, and Bella Thorne, centers around a senior in high school named Bianca Santos (Whitman) who feels continuously overshadowed by her popular best friends.

Bianca first begins to doubt herself when Wes (Amell), a guy she has known since childhood, calls her the "DUFF" (Designated Ugly Fat Friend) of her friend group at a party she is attending. After looking back on past experiences and deciding that she is truly the "DUFF," Bianca goes out of her way to try and make herself stand out more. Throughout her journey to increase her popularity, Bianca comes to realize that staying true to herself is more important than anything else.

2. *Full House* (1987-1995) - *Modern Family* (2009-now)

Although *Full House*'s prime may have been back before a world filled with iPhones and Macbooks, this family-oriented sitcom has managed to capture the hearts of generations to follow.

Set in San Francisco, *Full House* chronicles the ups and downs of the Tanner family. After losing his wife, Danny Tanner (Bob Saget) has to teach his three daughters, DJ (Candace Cameron-Bure), Stephanie (Jodie Sweetin), and Michelle (Mary-Kate and Ashley Olsen) important life lessons to fill the void left by their mother. Helping him along the way are Joey (Dave Coulier) and beloved Uncle Jesse (John Stamos). Filled with laughter, tears, and heartwarming relationships, *Full House* has impacted the lives of millions of Americans. A reboot of the show, called *Fuller House*, was just released on Netflix this past February.

Modern Family, like *Full House*, is a show for viewers of all ages. Starring Ed O'Neill, Sofia Vergara, Julie Bowen, Ty Burrell, and Jesse Tyler Ferguson, this sitcom features three interconnected families that share unique experiences and overcome obstacles together.

While each episode of *Modern Family* has multiple subplots that feature situations in school, the workplace, and many more

settings, ultimately all of the families come together after their busy days and prove to the show's audience how important family truly is.

Both *Full House* and *Modern Family* are perfect shows for family members to kick back, relax, and enjoy quality time with their loved ones.

3. *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* (1997) - *The Name of the Wind* (2007)

The Harry Potter series is one that almost everyone knows. J.K. Rowling's tales of witchcraft and wizardry follows the life of Harry Potter, who, in the first installment of the series, gets an invitation to attend the magical school of Hogwarts.

At this supernatural school, Harry learns how to navigate the magical world of wands and wizards, meeting valuable friends along the way that guide him throughout his future adventures and obstacles. Harry's main task in *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* is to try to stop the villainous Voldemort from seizing the valuable sorcerer's stone.

For those that fell in love with this mystical novel, *The Name of the Wind* includes enough magic and sorcery to fulfill all unearthy fantasies.

The Name of the Wind, the first book in the Kingkiller Chronicle series, tells the story of Kvothe, who, after spending years as an orphan in a sinful city, makes a daring yet successful bid to join a school of magic. In this captivating book, readers learn about the infamous legend of Kvothe and how he becomes an accomplished thief, courageous magician and dangerous assassin.

Like *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*, *The Name of the Wind* will keep readers on their toes until the very end, with anticipation and excitement filling every page.

4. Ariana Grande - Tori Kelly

Those that do not yet know about Ariana Grande certainly have a "Problem." Grande has become a pop sensation, known for her incredible vocal range, which has been demonstrated in popular songs such as "Problem," "The Way," and most recently, "Focus."

Grande began her Hollywood career as an actress on the Nickelodeon show *Victorious*. She then started to upload covers of well-known songs on YouTube, leading her to sign with manager Scooter Braun and land a recording contract. Ever since then, Grande has been belting out countless hits and continues to blow up the charts.

For avid "Arianators", as her fans are affectionately called, the music of Tori Kelly is sure to please. Kelly tried to jumpstart her singing career by auditioning for American Idol in 2010. Unfortunately, she did not make it to the Top 24, with Simon Cowell going so far as to call her voice "annoying."

However, Kelly refused to let her Idol failure deter her. She continued to write her own music, and released her EP, produced in her own bedroom. This EP became extremely successful, and helped Kelly gain fans from around the world.

Kelly also was signed by manager Scooter Braun, and has continued to take the music business by storm with songs such as "Dear No One," "Unbreakable Smile," and "Nobody Love."

Fortunately for fans of both artists, Grande and Kelly are known to be good friends, and in 2014 performed a duet of Grande's song, "Right There."

From Screenplay to Broadway

By Jamie Kerner

About two summers ago, I sat in the red velvet seats at the New Amsterdam Theatre in New York City with my mom and sister as we watched a Broadway performance of *Aladdin*.

My family and I had always been huge fans of the movie predecessor that was released about twelve years before the Broadway adaptation graced the stage.

With nothing but high hopes for the production we were about to watch at the theatre, we indulged ourselves, ready to be amazed.

Throughout the entire performance, my family and I were in awe at the costumes, the dancing, the singing, and just the show in its entirety. We left the performance singing the Broadway renditions of the classic songs from the movie. I thought the musical outdid the original Disney movie, being bigger and better in every respect.

The theatre production of *Aladdin* eventually was nominated for five Tony Awards in 2014, winning in the category for "Best Performance by a Featured Actor in a Musical" for the character of the Genie, played by James Monroe Iglehart. Nomination categories also included "Best Musical," "Best Book of a Musical," "Best Original Score," and "Best Choreography." Clearly, I was not alone in praising this production.

After marveling at the show, I began to wonder: what other movies were transformed into spectacular Broadway productions, just as *Aladdin* was?

The winner of last year's Tony Award in the category of "Best Choreography" is the first to come to my mind. *An American in Paris* opened on Broadway in April of 2015, and was inspired by the movie of the same name. Though it was hard to match the excellence from the film in regards to the choreography, director and ballet master Christopher Wheeldon excelled and served the film justice.

Newsies, another film that was transformed into a Broadway hit, also won the Tony Award for "Best Choreography," though this show took home the award three years before *An American in Paris* did.

Newsies was originally a Disney film about the Newsboys strike of 1899 in New York City.

Although the movie did not receive good reviews and was said to have flopped in the box office, twenty years later, its reprisal on Broadway was a hit.

Little Shop of Horrors also falls under the category of movies that were made into Broadway hits.

The "horror, comedy, rock musical" first premiered off-off Broadway in 1982, and was based off of a 1960s low budget film with the same name. The musical inspired another movie recreation to later be made in 1986, as well as an animated series that was premiered in 1991.

The transformation of a Hollywood blockbuster into a spectacular Broadway production is not always an exact science. Extra songs are often added into the Broadway versions of movies in order to turn them into full-fledged musicals.

Though the conversion of films to Broadway shows requires adaptation from one medium to another, the making of both types of production is somewhat similar and typically requires the same team of individuals. The key players that make up this type of team include producers, investors, general managers, stage managers, dance captains, and of course, the actors.

On the flip side, plenty of Broadway productions have inspired noteworthy movies. A prime example of such would be the rock musical *Rent*. The movie rendition of the critically acclaimed production has a cast that features many of the same members that were in the show on Broadway. *Rent* is the eleventh-longest running Broadway production of all time and has grossed over \$280 million.

There is something about Broadway that makes all of its productions so noteworthy and breathtaking. The excitement of live theatre and the glitz and the glam of it all help to make it somehow exceed everyone's sky-high expectations.

I have come to appreciate the Broadway renditions of most movies more than the original film themselves. When turning a movie into a Broadway production, directors, producers, and choreographers aim to please the fans. In my opinion, they usually succeed, with Broadway trumping the screenplay any day.



Courtesy of Jamie Kerner

Thanks for the Memories: A Fall Out Boy Concert Review

By Rachel Goodman

"Playing at Madison Square Garden is our slam dunk in the basket," said bass guitarist Pete Wentz of Fall Out Boy. These were the band's last words of the night before playing their final songs of the performance.

As the crowd cheered and jumped up and down, the ecstatic energy was almost overwhelming. Never had I been to a concert where the band tried to form such a deep and emotional connection with its fans. After a countless number of speeches about how grateful they were to be playing at Madison Square Garden, contagious tears, and ceaseless dancing, it finally rang true that this group was composed of genuine members who realized the magnitude of their effect on thousands of fans.

From start to finish, Fall Out Boy created a powerful sound filled with an obvious dedication to the music they were playing, while the sophistication of their songs was demonstrated through intricate guitar riffs and solos.

The lead singer, Patrick Stump, had a rich vibrato that sent chills throughout the audience. His soulful and strong voice sounded better in person than I could ever have imagined. Joe Trohman on guitar radiated with happiness as he constantly ran towards the edge of the stage to greet fans with a wide grin on his face. Drummer Andy Hurley played

with pure concentration while pumping up the audience by pounding on his set with undying enthusiasm.

The physical and emotional volume of the overall performance only increased as the concert raged on.

Pete Wentz gave an inspiring speech before the band played their third-to-last song. He spoke on behalf of his fellow bandmates, explaining his amazement at how far they had come throughout their careers.

He also made a serious address on anxiety and depression, describing his personal struggle with it and reaching out to his fans that have struggled with it as well. I was shocked by his gesture to relate to his audience on such a personal level, but it only made the unity in the crowd stronger than ever.

Wentz reinforced the significance of never giving up and of pushing

oneself further and further: "One kid may not be able to make a slam dunk in the basket right away. But you know what he's gonna do? He's gonna go out to the basketball court and keep trying and trying, and everyday he's gonna get that much closer and closer to making it in. Then one of

these days he's gonna get his slam dunk in the basket. And you know what? Playing at Madison Square Garden is our slam dunk in the basket."

With these words, a resurgence of spirit spread

throughout the audience as the band began the song "Centuries." Every voice in the audience screamed along, convinced that they would be able to make themselves be remembered for centuries to come.

During the second to last song, "My Songs Know What You Did In The Dark" the rallied feeling was too

forceful to suppress. Many members of the audience, including myself, stood up on the chairs raising their hands, singing along and cheering. This was probably their most powerful and thrilling song of the night.

After the song ended, the band started to play "Saturday," which was one of the very first songs the group wrote together when they formed in 2001.

Wentz immediately jumped out into the audience and a mass of people sprinted toward him, pulled by his magnetic force. The person directly in front of me managed to climb up on the chairs in front of us and hold Wentz's hand for about three minutes.

Wentz cried as his fans jumped up desperately to touch him and hold his hand. There was an intense emotional connection between him and us. There was no real singing anymore, just music playing in the background as audience members sobbed.

Wentz gripped the hands of his fans and looked down at the audience with an immense amount of gratitude and pride. Confetti was released into the air making the space around us filled with color as the band thanked everyone for one final time.

The energy that buzzed off of everyone continued on as the music died down and flowed out the door with the masses of individuals who felt inspired to work toward their own slam-dunks.



Photo/Rachel Goodman
Fall Out Boy rocks out as lights flood the stage.

MTV Movie Awards Report Card

By Stacy Gerchick

After spending a April 10 evening cozier up on my couch watching the MTV Movie Awards, I thought that the show could use a little grading. Read below to see how I marked the awards ceremony.

1. Hosting: B

Dwayne "the Rock" Johnson and Kevin Hart did not disappoint audiences with their endless banter and countless jokes, but their crude and occasionally offensive nature of their humor docked them a letter grade.

2. Jokes: B+

If you're looking for an award show that will keep you interested, the MTV Movie Awards is definitely for you. In addition to Johnson and Hart, most of the award presenters and even recipients were cracking hilarious jokes all throughout the evening. On the other hand, some of the jokes that were told seemed scripted and rehearsed, which detracted from their potential humor.

3. Performers: B+

Both Halsey and Ariana Grande performed breathtaking renditions of their original songs, "Castle," and "Dangerous Woman," respectively.

While there was nothing wrong with either of their performances, I thought that the songs that they chose to sing were not upbeat or lighthearted enough to match the rest of the awards ceremony.

4. Award Presenters: A-

With fan-favorites such as Seth Rogen and Zac Efron presenting awards, it was hard for me not to get excited every time a new prize was about to be handed out. Most presenters made sure to put on a dynamic performance before the nominees for the awards were read aloud. Once in awhile, the presenters' jokes failed to really entertain me and seemed to have everyone in the audience wishing that they would leave the stage and allow for new talent to take their place.

5. Award Recipients: A

All of the winners of the MTV Movie Awards fully deserved to take home their popcorn-shaped trophies. After all of the critical acclaim and praise that Star Wars: The Force Awakens, received, winning the coveted Movie of the Year Award seems fully justified. Will Smith was a perfect choice for winner of the Generations Award, which honors actors who play major roles in both

the film world and other aspects of society.

6. Costumes/Outfits: A-

Most of the celebrities at the awards show were wearing outfits that I could only ever imagine seeing on the Red Carpet. The elegant gown that Grande wore during her performance perfectly matched her song. Despite this, some celebrities wore inappropriate outfits, particularly Halsey during her performance. Although I have nothing against wanting to show some skin, I thought that her cut-out leotard was unnecessary and did not really add anything positive to her performance.

7. Special Effects: A

From the second that I turned on the TV, I was blinded by fireworks exploding and bright lights flashing all throughout the stage. A few of the effects were so impressive that I almost forgot that I was watching a real show. Especially impressive were those during Halsey and Grande's performances, making the experience for viewers at home feel almost like an actual concert.

Snubs:

Unlike most award shows, the

MTV Movie Awards prides itself in being reflective of the entertainment preferences of teenagers and young adults.

Unfortunately, it seemed to me that MTV's attempt at breaking the mold was often overbearing and drawn out. In one particular instance, Johnson and Hart spent a good five minutes rapping about "Leo and the Bear" from *The Revenant*. This segment, which was clearly intended to appeal to the youth, was pointless and lacked the humor that it needed to be successful. Eliminating like portions of the show would have made it much more enjoyable.

Surprises:

The MTV Movie Awards featured a refreshing amount of diversity, with award nominees and winners of all genders, sexualities, races, and ethnicities. As the Academy Awards have recently come under fire for only featuring white actors in top categories, I think that it is extremely significant that MTV took a bold, progressive stance. One of the best ways to promote equality is through the use of the media, and this award ceremony exemplified the open mindedness that should be standard in all aspects of American society.

Campaigns Use Ad Voices to Sway Voters

By Joie Ng

With the next presidential election coming up, candidates are going all-out with their campaign advertisements in order to attract more voters. Components of these ads are carefully deliberated so candidates can convey their messages as clearly and effectively as possible. Among choices in wording, sound effects, and imagery, an important decision must be made concerning the advertisement's voiceover, which has the potential to significantly impact the ad's rhetorical effectiveness.

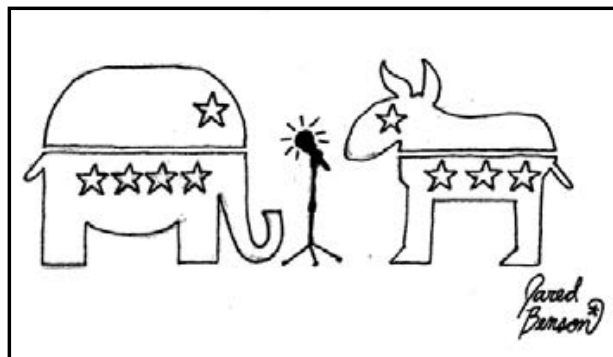
A recent study published in *Political Communication*, called "In a Different Voice? Explaining the Use of Men and Women as Voice-Over Announcers in Political Advertising," examined more than 7,000 advertisements from the 2010 and 2012 United States Congressional elections. The study analyzed choices made regarding the use of male voiceovers versus the use of female voiceovers. More

These trends are prevalent in political advertisements promoting the candidates of this year's presidential campaign. For example, "Mari," one of Democrat Bernie Sanders' ads addressing the topic of health care, is voiced by a woman. "Real Change," which promotes his positive personality traits, is also voiced by a woman. Likewise, Republican Jeb Bush ran the ad "Currency" with a female narrator. This ad contained criticism of Trump's stance on Planned Parenthood.

Furthermore, according to the study, a candidate's choice of narrator gender for their ads potentially depends on their own gender and political standing. For instance, male candidates were more likely to use a woman's voice than female candidates. Republicans, with a 42% predicted probability, were more likely to use a female voice-over than Democrats, with a 28.3% likelihood. This is most likely due to the desire to attract

specifically, it focused on the impact these choices had on the audience and their effectiveness in conveying their intended messages.

In terms of the effectiveness of male and female voice-overs based on the subject matter of an advertisement, the study found that women's voices were more convincing when used for "feminine" issues, and subsequently women were 12.6% more likely to voice ads relating to such issues. For example, women's voice-overs were more likely to be paired with political ads about child-care, health care, or education. In addition, they were more likely to voice negative and "contrast" ads, as well as ads that were about a candidate's characteristic traits rather than their policy proposals. Conversely, more "masculine" issues, such as crime and foreign policy, were thought of as more credible when addressed with men's voices.



Drawing/Jared Benson

Technology's Role in Privacy vs. Security

By Jacob Zeitlin

Can the government compel manufacturers to assist in unlock-

ing cell phones whose contents are encrypted? That question has come up a lot recently, especially concerning the opportunity to retrieve information from the locked iPhone of one of the attackers in the San Bernardino shootings. More than just an issue of privacy versus security, controversies such as this one also bring up the

question of how technology impacts that issue. Just because manufacturers possess the capability to break into the phone—or even if they don't already possess the capability—should courts in the United States be able to compel them to reveal the information?

The issue that directly involves Apple and the iPhone used in the San Bernardino investigation started on February 9, when the FBI successfully requested a federal judge to issue an order that mandated Apple to create the software that would allow the FBI to override the cryptographic security features that protect users' information. The details of the order included that Apple would be required to disable the auto-erase feature, which deletes the data on the phone after ten incorrect attempts at entering the passcode. It would also need to accept many passcode attempts sent from another device, and no delay between passcode attempts could be added. Essentially, the FBI wanted Apple to allow it to try all possible four-digit combinations so it would eventually be able to unlock the phone.

On February 16, Apple responded with an online statement released by CEO Tim Cook. On the site, Apple provided two primary reasons for their objection to the government's order. They said first that it would undermine the principles of security that Apple values, allowing another computer to use "brute force" (entering many passwords rapidly) to unlock a device, and second, that it would set a precedent for the government to expand its power to diminish privacy in the interest of improved national security. As Apple wrote, "Should the government be allowed to order us to create other capabilities for surveillance purposes, such as recording conversations or location tracking?"

For a number of reasons, I agree with Apple. First, it definitely does set a precedent that the government

can infringe upon its citizens' right to privacy. Once we expand this governmental power, even just a little,



Courtesy of Jacob Zeitlin

there is no way of knowing how far the government will attempt to take it. In essence, this is a modern-day Orwellian controversy: do we read people's conversations to learn more about what they do in secret, even if it undermines a basic right of privacy? I simply do not see how that can be justified.

In addition, there is no way of knowing if unlocking the device will even be

valuable to the FBI's investigation. Because the government agency does not have access to the contents of the device, it cannot be sure if it contains anything that will be useful. The attacker could have very well cleared the device of anything that could lead to the FBI or anyone who read the phone gaining information as to how the attack was planned and carried out. In my opinion, because of this uncertainty, it is not worth creating the software that would allow the FBI to unlock the phone.

Furthermore, Apple has not fought at all against the FBI or another government agency—Apple has also mentioned the NSA—creating the software on their own to do what they are requesting Apple to do. In an article published in *WIRED* magazine, Apple wrote, "The government does not deny that there may be other agencies in the government that could assist it in unlocking the phone and accessing its data; rather, it claims, without support, that it has no obligation to consult other agencies." Apple argues that the government does, in fact, have an obligation to consult those other agencies, and should do so before demanding that Apple unlock the phone for them.

Although there is conflict of opinion between Apple and the FBI, both sides actually want the same thing: some specific precedent to be set drawing the lines between privacy, national security, and what the government can and cannot do in order to obtain information. The two sides certainly do not agree on what that precedent should be, but regardless, there needs to be something established in order to prevent further conflict within the next few years.

Some have speculated that this company is Apple's covert move to enter the car industry, but I doubt that. If Apple had anything to do with this company, it would not be revealing any concepts or designs so early in the production process.

Radiation Contamination

By Eliana Rosenzweig

On February 6, a leak of tritium, a radioactive material, contaminated the New York water supply and was traced directly back to the Indian Point nuclear power plant, according to The Journal News.

The Indian Point Energy Center, located in Buchanan, New York – less than thirty miles outside of Rye Brook – consists of two nuclear power plants that, together, can generate over 2,000 megawatts of electricity. According to Entergy Nuclear, the company that owns the Energy Center, this is approximately 25% of the electric power used in New York City and Westchester County combined.

According to CBS News, Neil Sheehan, a spokesman for the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, claimed the leak occurred during maintenance. Workers were reportedly transferring water when a drain overflowed; instead of being transferred to a different nuclear power center, the contaminated water leaked underground.

Tritium levels were the highest that they had ever seen in Indian Point Energy Center to date. Tritium is an isotope of hydrogen and a radioactive substance that is emitted frequently in nuclear power plants. Officials at the nuclear power plant reported that the contaminated

water containing radioactive tritium leaked into the groundwater underneath the power plant, and eventually infiltrated local water supply.

Governor of New York Andrew Cuomo, who lives only fifteen miles away from the power plant, stated that the water contained over 8 million picocuries per liter of radioactivity, a stunning 65,000 percent increase of the average radioactivity levels of 12,300 picocuries per liter at the nuclear power plant.

“Our first concern is for the health and safety of the residents close to the facility and ensuring the groundwater leak does not pose a threat,” said Cuomo.

Unfortunately, this isn’t the first time that the Indian Point Energy Center has faced severe

tritium contamination in their water supply. Records show incidents as recent as 2009 and 2014 that also cite high radioactivity levels in Indian Point’s water supply, thus increasing safety concerns surrounding the proximity of the nuclear energy plant to suburbs and to New York City.

“While this instance of tritium in the ground is really not in accordance with our standards, there really is no health or public safety consequence,” said Jerry Nappi, spokesperson for Entergy Corporation.

Despite denial of safety threats by Entergy Nuclear, health investigations conducted by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission show that there might be more danger presented by the radioactive tritium leak than officials

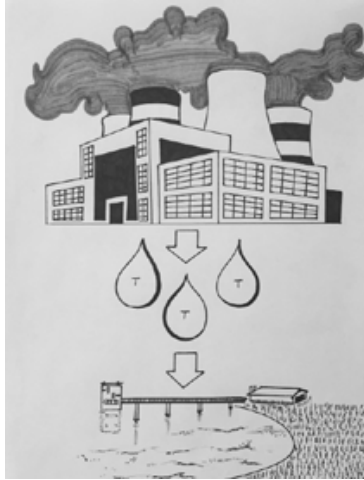
originally thought.

According to Indian Point Energy Center, workers are continuing their regular systems to ensure safety, but are now also taking frequent samples from so-called “monitoring wells.” These “monitoring wells” were installed with the goal of identifying elevated radionuclides, or atoms with too much nuclear energy, by early detection in the ground.

In addition to frequent sampling, workers are inspecting the drainage and pump systems of the power plants in order to determine how exactly the tritium permeated the water supply.

Long-term radiation exposure can trigger genetic mutations and cancerous tumors when emitted in high levels, according to the US EPA. When large amounts of radiation are in contact with the human body in a short amount of time, risk of radiation sickness and Acute Radiation Syndrome increases.

Acute Radiation Syndrome occurs when the measure of absorbed radiation in the body surpasses 75 rad, according to CDC. Symptoms include nausea, vomiting, ulcers, and skin damage. As stated by the World Nuclear Association, natural sources account for most radiation exposure each year but any dose of radiation, however small, is a hazard to the health of humans.



Drawing/Cayla Chang

Blind Brook EMRs Coming to the Rescue

By Rachel Goodman

To benefit the community and gain experience in the medical field, several juniors at Blind Brook High School have been volunteering at a local EMR program. Alexa Limb, Paul Soden, Sarah Simon and Allison Gelfarb, all juniors, now have a better understanding of how the emergency medical system works. They have learned about the complexity of the medical field and the importance of first responders in emergency situations.

EMT, or Emergency Medical Technicians, require greater training than EMRs, or Emergency Medical Responders, and have a greater skill set and scope of practice.

To become an EMR, all four juniors had to take a certification course where instructors taught them the necessary skills such as CPR, handling medical and trauma patients, and making splints for broken limbs. As of now, in emergency situations, the EMRs can only ride in ambulances with an EMT or paramedic supervising. However, they are still able to perform basic first aid skills and get hands-on experience while helping the EMTs. EMS services respond to most emergency situations, including car

accidents, drug and alcohol problems, and injured limbs.

During the EMR class, Limb, Soden, Simon and Gelfarb were able to ride in Greenwich EMS ambulances and get a sense of

Through this process these juniors have learned a lot about trauma management techniques and hope to utilize this knowledge through their potential medical careers. “I want to be a

after school sports: “When I go skiing I always see people getting hurt and can never do anything about it, so I wanted to learn how I could help in the future,” said Sarah Simon.

Learning how to perform emergency medical treatment can also apply in the future when they leave for college. “College campuses and college towns are known for needing a lot of EMS workers and I wish to work as an EMS in college,” said Allison Gelfarb.

After receiving the full EMR certification, Limb, Soden, Simon, and Gelfarb now attend Explorer Post Meetings at Greenwich EMS (GEMS) Headquarters. During these meetings, they discuss recent dispatches, do practice activities that prepare them for real-life emergencies, and also ride in the GEMS ambulances. The four spend roughly 48 hours a month volunteering.

“Being an EMR is a very rewarding experience in that it truly affords aspiring medical professionals with the opportunity to learn while actually saving lives. I would recommend the program to anyone who wants to become a doctor,” said Paul Soden.



Photo courtesy of Allison Gelfarb
Juniors Sarah Simon, Allison Gelfarb, Alexa Limb, and Paul Soden learn the ropes of EMR.

the real-life patient management techniques implemented on board. They were also able to attend the Greenwich Hospital Teddy Bear Clinic where little kids who attended the neighborhood had the chance to tour the ambulances.

doctor when I get older and being an EMR seemed like a great first step towards gaining valuable knowledge and experience in this field,” said Paul Soden.

This knowledge can also be applied to their lives today. One example is during competitive

The Highs and Lows of Adderall

By Alex Nadasi

Chances are if you ask any student, including those at Blind Brook, they'll know what Adderall is. The drug is commonly known for being prescribed to students to help cope with Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), but it has become infamous on college campuses for its illegitimate use by students without prescriptions. Like many other drugs, Adderall can become addictive, and its increasing use combined with ethical cheating issues make it a tough pill to swallow for academic and medical professionals.

A British manufacturer, Shire Pharmaceuticals Group, first introduced Adderall into the pharmaceutical market in 1996. It was created with the intention of treating ADHD as well as narcolepsy, and is generally well regarded in the medical community as a tool to treat such disorders. Adderall works by increasing the number of neurotransmitters norepinephrine and dopamine, which balance out the neurotransmitters in the brain and decrease hyperactivity.

Though Adderall treats many patients and is generally regarded as safe, there are several potential side effects that can result from consumption. Such effects include hypertension, hypotension, abdominal pain, weight

loss, loss of appetite, nausea, and acne. While the side effects are for the most part insignificant, the threat of addiction that Adderall poses is the most serious risk.

As users take Adderall, they may begin to develop a tolerance, requiring more of the drug

other substances. According to the National Survey on Drug Use and Health, 90% of college students who use Adderall non-medically also reported binge drinking. The mix of alcohol and Adderall can be quite troubling; this combo can lead to psychological issues like paranoia, anxi-

they had used prescription stimulants to stay awake to party. Such use of Adderall by students without prescriptions is where the main problem lies. Many college students will take the drug when they need to focus to complete long assignments or when studying and pulling "all-nighters," or staying awake through the night.

A study conducted at an Ivy League university (the exact university is unknown) and presented at a Pediatric Academic Societies meeting found that 18% of students surveyed admitted to misusing a prescription stimulant for academic purposes at least once in college. Additionally, out of those students, 24% said they had done so on eight or more occasions.

However, according to Business Insider, Adderall only improved low-performance test results. Scores of those who performed well on tests without the use of stimulants generally decreased or remained the same.

In an age when academic competitiveness is only increasing, the supposed unfair advantage Adderall provides to non-prescription students has become an issue for some students and administrators, and some would even consider its abuse cheating. But is it helping or hurting?

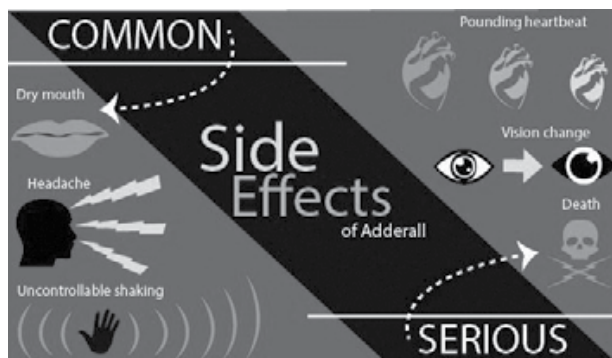


Image courtesy of the University of Miami Student Newspaper

to obtain the same effects. With exceptionally high dosages – severe overdoses – the drug can cause catastrophic effects including kidney failure, coma, and cerebral hemorrhage. However, for the most part Adderall is rarely fatal as long as proper care is administered.

Adderall can additionally be dangerous when combined with

ety, and severe depression, and physical issues including nausea, vomiting, weight loss, and heart palpitations.

A large part of the conversation surrounding Adderall revolves around its improper use in academic settings. In a study published in the National Library of Medicine, a third of the students surveyed reported that

Wake Up and Give Students the Sleep They Need

By Jamie Epstein

It's 12 AM, the evening before two AP tests and an English paper are due. Not a word has been written on the Microsoft Word document and I feel my eyes start to droop. A wave of exhaustion courses through me after a long day of never ending activities and responsibilities: attending classes until 2:20 PM, play rehearsal until 9 PM, and finding time to complete my assigned workload.

As students, we are wired to prioritize these things because they are behaviors praised by the community we live in. However, one activity we don't prioritize is sleep, and it might just be the most important one of all.

Sleep is imperative to human survival due to the many active processes occurring below the skin. It is a restorative period, allowing the body to repair cells damaged throughout the previous day. The body only secretes growth hormone during sleep, which makes it an essential part of maturation. These processes make sleep a necessity to teenagers, who are in their peaks of growth and maturation.

One of the most significant aspects of sleep for students is improved memory. A good night's sleep has the power to improve anything learned from the day before, specifically motor skills.

This can be extremely helpful for students trying to master that jump shot or dance move.

Without sleep, students struggle to concentrate in class. We've all been there – waking to the vexatious sound of the alarm and wanting to stay in the comforting confines of your bed. The day to follow is ruined, plagued by irritability and lack of focus. While we all understand, first-hand, the inconvenience of sleep deprivation, society fails to recognize the danger associated with it.

Driving while sleep deprived is an enormous issue in this country and can be even more hazardous when paired with students who have little driving experience. According to the National Sleep Foundation, being awake for 24 hours produced impairment equal to a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of .10 after 24 hours (.08 is considered legally drunk). Should we be allowing students with little driving experience to get on the road without a proper night's sleep?

With more and more research concerning the effects of sleep deprivation, why are school districts not rushing to push back

school start times?

Researchers at Brown University found that melatonin, the hormone responsible for sleep onset secretion, occurs at a later time in adolescents as they mature, and turns off later in the morning. Therefore, it is more difficult for them to go to sleep earlier at night, and wake up early the next day.

The science is definitive: teenagers are not wired to follow the rigorous schedule they are being forced to follow now.

Greenwich High School is exploring a plan to move their start time to 8:30 AM, only 40 minutes after the Blind Brook start time of 7:50 AM. If this policy were to be implemented at Blind Brook, we would see massive changes in the behavior of our students.

"The research is clear that adolescents who get enough sleep have a reduced risk of being overweight or suffering depression, are less likely to be involved in automobile accidents, and have better grades, higher standardized test scores and an overall better quality of life," said Pediatrician Judith Owens, author of "School Start Times for Adoles-

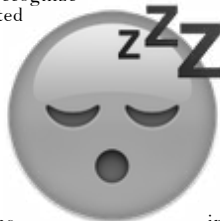
cents."

A major issue that school districts tend to have with moving school start times is the effect on after school activities. Pushing start times back an hour could cause scheduling difficulties for students with extracurricular activities, such as after-school jobs or caring for younger siblings.

Parents commuting to work may not be able to drive their kids to school with a delayed start time – and more buses might be necessary to accommodate these students. This may require additional funding from the district, or budget cuts to other areas.

In order to combat this issue, the school district could switch the elementary school start time with the middle and high school start times. This way, the sleep habits of the teenagers can be met without the need for additional funding from the school.

Although these issues are pressing, they are overshadowed by the dire need for students to get more sleep. I urge the Blind Brook School District to take a serious look at the sleep habits of its students, and make the decision to push school start times back to 8:30 AM. It shouldn't take long for the administration to come to this conclusion, although they might need to sleep on it.



Image/Emojipedia

Varsity Snapshots



Photo/Ayden Bauer

"This track season, I hope for our whole team to qualify for the section meet. We have very young athletes this year who I feel can contribute positively to the team. Personally, I hope to beat my records for the 400-meter race and high jump." **Track, Kyle Mak**

"We are going to have a good chance this year with a young, but experienced team. Most of the guys have been on the team for 2-3 years so we are definitely conquering the mental aspect of the game as the talent is already there."

Tennis, Jason Hershaft



Photo/Emily Sachs

"I think that we have some bumps in the road because we have a very competitive schedule. But we are a more than capable team that, when we play as one, can make it far."

Softball, Sarah Carmona



Photo/Rachel Penn



Photo/Emma Seguljic

"We have a really young a are and are looking to build on our skill to continuously improve. Our goal is to win the league which we did in 2014." **Girls' Lacrosse, Joanna Goodman**



Photo/Meghan Comstock

"I really think this year will differ than years past. We have a lot of young talent that will be beneficial to us throughout the season. I think combining these young guys with the more veteran members of the team is a great recipe for success. I have high hopes for this season and I hope set precedent for years to come."

Boys' Lacrosse, Jason Schoen

"Our goals are to build off the success that we had last year, and turn it into something special. It all starts by playing fundamental baseball with the right attitude every practice and every game."

Baseball, Justin Moross



Photo/Noah Zeitlin



Photo/Griffin Robins

"We have great upperclassmen on the team that can take us to the state championship this year. If we play together and stand strong through adversity on the course we should have an outstanding year, with an outstanding group of handsome men." **Golf, Dean Oppizzi**

Quotes by Evan Ketchabaw

Mandatory Practices Break Up Spring Break Plans

By Matthew Jaffe

High school athletes often have extra responsibilities that their peers do not have to worry about. Many times they are held to a higher standard, as coaches expect athletes to both fulfill their role on the team, act as a role model, and represent the team in an appropriate manner. At Blind Brook, one of the obligations that student athletes carry is the mandatory attendance of practice throughout spring break.

Controversy has arisen over the holding back of athletes during spring break. Some believe that since students are voluntarily participating on high school teams, they should not be forced to relinquish the free time that other students possess.

A common issue that many senior athletes face is the spring break trip to the Bahamas, a five-day excursion that takes place during school break. Although not an officially school-sanctioned trip, the vacation is run by a private travel firm, and is organized years prior to its start. As a result, many students protest that having to sacrifice this week is an unfair requirement.

"On our team, the rule is that if a player misses a practice, he misses the next game. My trip is over the course of five days, so that means I would miss a large part of my senior season because I am going on a trip that has been planned for two years," said senior Grant Alter, who is also captain of the Boys' Varsity Lacrosse team.

Coach Massi, head coach of the Blind Brook Varsity Baseball team, has a similar policy on players missing practice.

Brandon Hamlet, three-year varsity baseball player and captain, explained the newly implemented rule: "If you miss a practice and don't have a valid reason like seeing a teacher or at a doctor's appointment, it counts as an unexcused miss. For every unexcused miss, a player has to miss the following game."

Unlike Alter, however, Hamlet believes that his coach's policy is an important lesson that should be taught in every sport. "I think that Coach Massi is doing the right thing by teaching us how important practice is, and that without it we wouldn't be able to play in games."

Junior Robert Giuliano, a teammate of Hamlet, agrees: "I think that [the policy] is for the coach to decide. There were a bunch of kids who went to the Bahamas [that] did not come to one of our practices because they were not home yet, but there was not a punishment for that because...it was a valid reason. But if someone just decides that they do not want to go to practice, of course the coach will not let that person play because it shows a lack of commitment."

Despite some athletes' protestations, the value of maintaining a rigid practice schedule is unmistakable. Attending practice helps students to increase their skill level and develop his or her talents. On top of this, when athletes miss practice, they are unable to prepare as a complete team, which can throw off a team's success.

Many proponents of the practice restrictions state that if students want to participate on a team, then they should truly consider how willing they are to dedicate themselves fully.

VAASA Resurges

By Alli Abrutyn

Along with the start of spring sports, this season has brought the resurgence of Varsity Athletes Against Substance Abuse, a club also known as VAASA.

VAASA is a voluntary program run by Student Assistance Counselor Tim Pellegrin. Although this program has been present at Blind Brook in the past, it was absent last year.

To combat this, Mr. Pellegrin has decided to revamp and re-implement the program, which is based upon the ideals that athletes should know what substances they are putting in their bodies, and to make sure what they are eating and drinking is healthy.

Mr. Pellegrin said that students would be receiving training from CANDLE, an organization dedicated to educating young athletes on drug and alcohol use.

"The students will be putting together a picnic day the week of April 18 to speak to their younger peers about drug and alcohol use, especially in sports seasons," said Pellegrin.

A key aspect of this program is that the high school students who are a part of the program will be educating freshmen and eighth graders on the importance of not succumbing to peer pressure. They will be focusing

on informing younger students about drug and alcohol abuse and the importance of treating one's body correctly.

"I know that peer to peer communication can be really powerful and that varsity athletes are often looked up to, so the goal of the group is to speak to their younger peers about drug and alcohol use," said Mr. Pellegrin.

VAASA held an interest meeting on March 7 with approximately fifteen students. In the future, the club will have weekly meetings to put together their presentations for younger students and receive training on the issue.

The club is still available to students who did not attend the interest meetings and Mr. Pellegrin is still seeking students who are considering joining the program.

"I got involved in VAASA because I find it very important that varsity athletes do not harm their body," said junior Charlie Fern.

"I think it is important to be conscientious of how you treat your body, because most people when looking back at their time as varsity athletes don't wish they used more drugs, but instead they wish they worked up to their potential as athletes," said fellow junior and club member Ariel Bittelman.

Wrestling for a Team

By Michael Discolo

Blind Brook is lucky enough to offer a wide array of sports to its students.

From sports like football, soccer, lacrosse to baseball, tennis, and volleyball, students have plenty of opportunities to take advantage of the high school's athletic program. The one sport missing from this otherwise hefty roster is wrestling.

For several years, wrestling has been the sixth most popular sport at the high school level in the United States. Over 250,000 student athletes compete on wrestling teams nationwide.

Unfortunately, with the variety of winter sports at Blind Brook, there are not enough students available to participate on a wrestling team.

Recently, however, the possibility has arisen for a future team, one that would be merged with other schools in the nature of the Rye-Town Titans hockey team.

"My main question any time we look to add programs is: how many students are interested? Once I know that, I then need to determine how will it be possible to create a team or if it will be necessary to merge with another school," said Athletic Director Douglas Goldman.

Middle school gym teacher and former wrestling coach Matthew Beatty is extremely supportive of the idea to implement a wrestling team here at Blind Brook.

"The sport itself would have been a great alternative for those middle and high school students that do not play basketball or hockey. It would provide our students with the opportunity to participate in sport, which is always a healthier choice than just sitting home," he said.

Wrestling can often be viewed by parents as a dangerous sport, one that could impact their child's physical well-being and academic performance.

In spite of such a stigma in many parents' minds, wrestling is actually one of the more safer high schools sports.

Ice hockey, football and cheerleading have nearly double the amount of injuries per year and a much higher concussion rate than wrestling.

In a study performed by *The American Journal of Sports Medicine* during the 2005-2006 season, high school wrestlers suffered 387 injuries throughout 166,279 athlete-exposures. This created an injury rate of 2.33 injuries per 1,000 athlete-exposures.

Of these injuries, the most common included shoulder strains/sprains (8.5%), ankle strains/sprains (7.6%), and knee strains/sprains (7.0%).

Although a team sport, wrestling provides great emphasis on individual success. Because athletes are technically competing alone, the pressure of letting down fellow teammates does not exist.

Besides being an independent sport, wrestling has such a widespread following because it allows and encourages students of every size and gender to participate.

"What's great about the sport of wrestling is there is no advantage by being a certain size being that there are fifteen weight classes which allow students of varying sizes and weights to participate," said Beatty.

"For example, a high school student that weighs 99 pounds would most likely not make the varsity basketball team, but would have a great opportunity to start at that weight for the varsity wrestling team. Now, this student has found a place where they can maximize their potential, which is secret ingredient to success," he said.

Those interested in wrestling should speak to Mr. Beatty or Athletic Director Goldman for more information about the possibility of a Blind Brook team.



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Sports

Game Changers

• Justin Moross •

By Max Chalfin

Justin Moross has played an important role on the Blind Brook Varsity Baseball team ever since he was called up in his freshman year, making this spring his third full year on the Trojans baseball team.

As both a pitcher and an outfielder, Moross's focus and concentration have helped him to be successful. These traits, along with his leadership abilities, convinced Head Coach Adam Massi to name him a captain for his final season at Blind Brook.

"I would say my best asset is my pitching. As a pitcher, my strengths are hitting each corner of the plate and keeping hitters off-balance. I am definitely not an overpowering pitcher, but I rely on my off-speed pitches in order to keep hitters confused," said Moross.

Most pitchers at the high school level are trying to throw their fastest stuff day-in and day-out, but Moross finds that throwing a little slower with more accuracy creates a much more impactful pitch rather than a beaming 85 mph throw that rarely hits the mark.

Although his great mindset allows him to be a powerful player on the field, Moross feels that he still has areas to work on.

"I want to improve on every aspect of my game every year. I have my strengths and weaknesses, but I am never satisfied. My main focus as the season goes on is

making sure I take care of my body so that I don't get any sort of pain or injury," said Moross.

Moross believes that in order for the whole team to have a successful season, everyone needs to stay healthy throughout the entirety of the vigorous season.

Constantly providing his teammates with support and motivation are two qualities that Moross has possessed throughout his varsity career, earning him the title of captain.

"Justin is very motivated and gets the whole team focused and fired up. [It is] definitely an advantage having a leader like him to look up to on and off the field," said junior Jordan Forrester.

Coming into preseason, Moross was a role model for the new players and even a portion of the athletes that have been on the team for some prior years.

"Justin likes to have fun on the field, but also does a great job of letting us know when it's time to buckle down and get to

work. Being able to draw that line is what makes Justin such an incredible captain," said sophomore Lucca Colangelo.

Moross feels that being named captain has had a great impact on him as a player: "My experience as a captain has not

changed my game physically, but it definitely has mentally. Brandon Hamlet, another captain on our team, and I make sure that everybody is focused on the task at hand. I have communicated with the younger teammates of mine a lot in the past week

about my experiences at their age, and I try to make them realize the opportunity they have to play Blind Brook baseball."

Moross has had many of these opportunities throughout his time on the Trojans.

"I wouldn't say I have many flashy highlights, but one example of a big and meaningful game to me was a game last year against Keio. I threw a complete game in one of the most competi-

tive games I have ever been a part of. It is always a battle when we play Keio, and I definitely won't forget that game. We came up short for the last two years against very competitive teams in sectionals, and it would mean a lot to get passed that point and beyond," he said.

Moross's experiences have helped him become a better player because he has realized the importance of learning from his mistakes. As a senior and experienced member of the team, he hopes to help the newcomers become more well-rounded players.

After leaving Blind Brook, Moross hopes to continue playing the sport that he loves.

"I have not thought about life after Blind Brook baseball, but I will definitely love to play any sort of baseball that I can. Whether it's travel baseball over the summer or possibly trying out for the club team in college, it all sounds very appealing to me," he said.

Even though Moross would like the season to never end, his last year on the boys' varsity baseball team will eventually come to a close this spring.

"I hope to leave the legacy of a winner, and nothing more than that. I want to make an impact on all of my teammates when they step on the field, and let them know through my actions that I will give it my all, whether we are up ten or down ten," Moross said.



Photo/Rebecca Regueira

• Mackenzie Korpi •

By Oliver Kleban

Mackenzie Korpi has been a midfielder on the Blind Brook Girls' Varsity Lacrosse Team since eighth grade and has spent the last two years as a captain. At the time of this article, she has accumulated 199 goals over her career and is looking to surpass the 200-goal mark in the next few games, extending her record as Blind Brook's all-time leading scorer.

"By this game, on the 19th, against Westlake, Mackenzie should hit her 200th goal milestone. That's really a rare and very unique milestone to hit because it's not every day that someone reaches that amount of goals in their career. It's something that should be celebrated and something that should be focused on," said Girls' Varsity Lacrosse Coach Mike Martino.

Korpi began playing lacrosse in fifth grade with Rye Youth Lacrosse and currently plays for Yellow Jackets North, a club team in Connecticut, along with competing for Blind Brook.

"When I first joined the lacrosse program in eighth grade it was relatively new and not many of the girls knew what they were doing, so it's been really exciting to see the team develop to the point we are at now," said Korpi.

By sophomore year she had scored 100 goals, becoming the first to ever reach that milestone at Blind Brook. After this achievement, her coach, Mike Martino, told Lohud, "Knowing the hard work she puts in, she'll definitely grow into an ever better player. It's really exciting to see."

Now, as a senior with seven games left

in her senior year, she continues to be a star athlete and teammate for the Trojans.

"Kenzie is a good leader and great role model as captain. She holds the team together and sets a good example for the younger players," said sophomore and fellow teammate Melanie Stiler. "She is very strategic and has made great plays and scored many great goals."

"I think that Kenzie is a real team leader. From the beginning she has always wanted the team to improve and I think everyone really looks up to her," said teammate and fellow captain Joanna Goodman.

Korpi's work ethic, skill, and athleticism have made her a terrifying sight for any opposing goalie in Section I Girls' Lacrosse.

"As a midfielder I have the ability to go all over the field and take on the role of both an attacker and a defender which I really like. In soccer I am more of a

physical player than a technical one, but girls' lacrosse is an extremely technical game, as it is [a no] contact [sport]," said Korpi.

"My coach [Mike Martino] always says that girls' lacrosse is basically just track with a stick, and as someone who loves to run, I've really enjoyed that aspect of the game," she added.

"Mackenzie's growth has been phenomenal over the past six years that I've known her as an athlete. She's always been a good athlete but she's really refined her skills," said Martino.

For the last three years, Korpi has played a varsity sport in the fall, winter and spring

for Blind Brook. "I've really valued my time as an athlete at Blind Brook because of the many athletic opportunities I have had here. I've been on the Varsity Girls' Soccer Team for four years and was a captain

this fall. [I] have also been on the [Varsity] Ski Team for three years. I really like being on a team and every year, particularly on soccer and lacrosse, one of my favorite parts of the season has been how close the team gets," she said.

Korpi's time on these teams has not gone unnoticed by members of the Blind Brook community.

"Mackenzie is just one of those special athletes. I would say that in my six years here, I think it's a toss-up between her and Courtney Shaw for the best and most well-rounded athletes to ever come through this school," said Martino.

Korpi will be continuing her soccer career at the collegiate level in the NCAA Division III Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (MIAC).

"I will be playing soccer at Carleton College, which is a liberal arts school in Minnesota, this fall. Carleton does not have a varsity lacrosse team but I am planning on trying out for their club team. I am looking forward to taking advantage of the many club and intramural sports at Carleton and hope to also join the Ultimate Frisbee and hockey team."

Carleton College comes in at number eight on the US News rankings of America's top Liberal Arts colleges, which shows that Korpi takes the student portion of being a student athlete just as seriously as the sports.

"My time as a Blind Brook athlete has taught me a lot about how to be a team player and the importance of always working your hardest," said Korpi, as she reflected on the end of her high school career.



Photo courtesy of Mackenzie Korpi