



GUIDE POST

NORTH HIGH'S STUDENT NEWSPAPER

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DEREK CHAUVIN FOUND GUILTY

JONATHAN SANDERS '24
STAFF WRITER

On Apr. 20, 2021, former Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin was convicted on all charges of the death of George Floyd. Chauvin may be sentenced up to 40 years in prison for second-degree murder, up to 25 years for third-degree murder, and up to 10 years for second-degree manslaughter. This case, handled by the Fourth Judicial District Court of Minnesota, has been broadcast live for over a month and has been followed with non-stop media coverage for just as long.

As important as this case is, many Americans previously not concerned with such matters as police brutality or racial inequality have since become more informed on these issues. Many have also begun to feel once more the somber mood that dominated summer 2020 and have called for another round of reforms.

Floyd, unarmed, died on May 25, 2020, after police alleged that he had counterfeited a \$20 bill and Chauvin knelt on his neck to restrain him. The death of another Black man at the hands of a white law enforcement officer sparked nationwide protests in every state and every major city, as Americans were appalled by such a clear example of police brutality. Floyd's death had long-lasting effects on the country: support for Black Lives Matter rose 15% between April and June 2020, reaching a 52% majority; and many Confederate statues and memorials on government property have been taken down.

Extensive police reform, mostly concerning de-escalation techniques and professional standards, has taken place, and more is expected to come under the



Derek Chauvin pleaded the fifth during his trial on Apr. 15, deciding not to testify on his own behalf. (Photo: Court TV)

Biden administration. However, BLM and other groups have pushed for more drastic, permanent measures, such as the dismantling of qualified immunity, police officers' exemption from civil liability.

Activists from around the country criticized Minneapolis's response to Floyd's death, eventually compelling Minnesota to file a criminal case into Chauvin's actions. State of Minnesota v. Derek Michael Chauvin thus began on Mar. 8, 2021, the defendant charged with second- and third-degree murder as well as second-degree manslaughter.

Judge Peter Cahill heard opening statements on Mar. 29, Special Assistant Attorney-General Jerry Blackwell saying that "Mr. Chauvin betrayed [his] badge" and showing the jury a video of Chauvin's chokehold on Floyd. Blackwell additionally pointed out that the eight minutes

and 46 seconds that became iconic of the summer's protests was undercutting the real figure—Chauvin's knee had been on Floyd's neck for 43 seconds longer. Blackwell ended his statement by emphasizing the officer's refusal to lift his knee even after being told that Floyd lacked a pulse. The defense argument, led by Attorney Eric Nelson, stated that "The use of force . . . is a necessary component of policing" and that Floyd's death was caused by a cardiac arrhythmia brought about by preexisting conditions and his prior ingestion of methamphetamine.

The prosecution's case began on the same day. Minnesota Attorney-General Keith Ellison led the case, aiming to prove that Chauvin's actions warranted charges of either manslaughter or murder. Of a list of about 400 potential witnesses, 38 were

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Great Neck's Fight Against Anti-Asian Discrimination

KATIE NG '24

CONTRIBUTING WRITER

On the rainy day of Apr. 11, around 60 people showed up at Firefighters Park in Great Neck and marched to speak out against the recent displays of hate towards Asians.

Like many other communities, Asians have experienced racism for decades in the U.S. However, hateful acts towards Asians have become highly prevalent in the past year.

Since the beginning of 2020, over 3000 Asians have become the victims of verbal harassment, physical assault, and discrimination.

An analysis released by the Center for the Study of Hate and Extremism examined hate crimes in America's 16 largest cities. Their data revealed that while these hate crimes decreased by 7% in 2020, the number of crimes targeting Asians rose by nearly 150%.

Unfortunately, many tragic hate crimes get hidden, pushed into the past, and go unnoticed. Racism against Asians is the exact reason why so many members



Sarah Smith

of the Asian community can no longer go out in public without questioning their safety or worrying whether or not they could be physically or verbally attacked.

Anjelica Wu, a sophomore at North High, along with a small group of high schoolers from North and South, decided that it was time to take a step up instead of "letting fear silence [their] actions." This group of dedicated high schoolers planned to hold a rally in Great Neck, created an online flyer, and shared it to multiple social media platforms.

Taking AP exams and finals into consideration, the planning committee decided to have the rally take place at 2 p.m. on Sunday, Apr. 11. Luckily, word about the rally spread quickly.

Through this event, Anjelica intended to "speak out against the hate crimes, bring people together in times of crisis, and help people see the courage in themselves to speak up."

Anjelica shared a personal experi-

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A NEW WAY OF CELEBRATING INTERNATIONAL NIGHT

SOPHIE FRENKEL '23
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

International Night at North High is an event that allows students and the Great Neck community to experience diversity and learn about the different cultures all around the world. It often consists of music, dancing, singing, and entertaining activities. In years prior, students at North High choreographed traditional dances, as well as songs in all foreign languages that are offered at school.

Last year, the event was scheduled to be in the North High's Commons on Mar. 12 but was canceled that afternoon due to the rapid outbreak of COVID-19. Although many alterations needed to be made, the event was able to be held this past March in a safe manner. In order to make International Night safe, the event was held virtually. However, students were not able to present live performances due to the requirement of in-person practices outside of school.

"North High students participated in this year's virtual International Night by presenting video recipes from around the world," said French teacher Madame Asvestas. Luckily, Foreign Language Month at North High took place not too long before International Night.

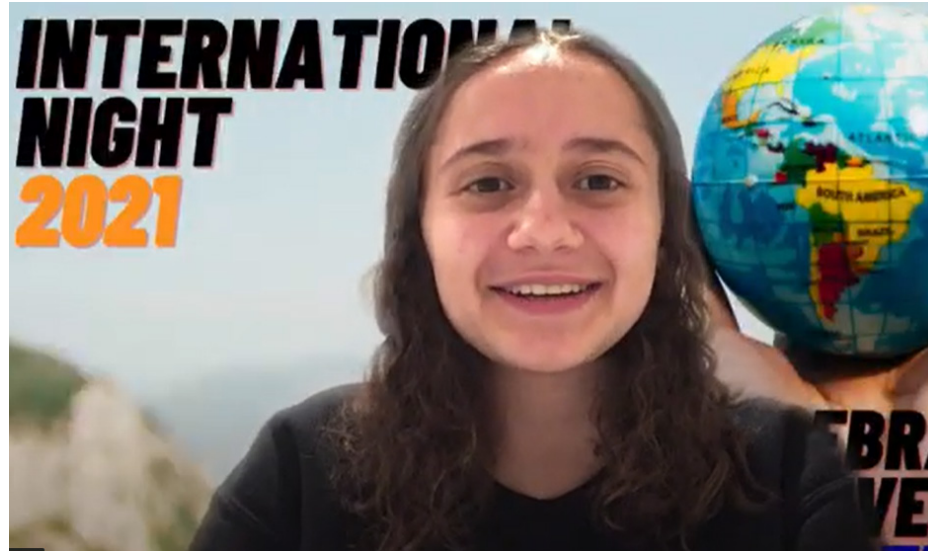
Students were able to apply their background knowledge from what they learned during this month to International Night, allowing them to have a greater experience.

Senior Lauren Victory explains how International Night was different than her other years of participation in this event. "I was really happy to be able

to do something because International Night has always been so much fun in the past, but not being able to get together as [French students] normally do was a bit sad," said Victory. "It would have been

ing a foreign language," said Asvestas.

On a lighter note, students in the French club separated into groups of two or three and prepared a different French dish together over Zoom. Victory's group



Natasha Khazzam, International Club president and International Night MC, celebrates the event by talking about diversity over Zoom. (Photo: Ms. Lee)

cool to have some live element to it rather than a prerecorded video, but [I'm] not sure how that would have been feasible."

In addition, students created t-shirts with drawings and slogans to demonstrate what foreign language month meant to them. "All 10th grade foreign language classes celebrated Foreign Language Month by creating their own t-shirts with a slogan in their target language of study that promoted the importance of learn-

made crepes, and mentioned that "[her] whole group had fun while doing so."

For the 10th grade foreign language students' t-shirts, students were prompted by their foreign language teachers to decorate white t-shirts with festive slogans.

Some teachers offered students extra credit in their classes to participate in this activity, whereas other teachers made the project mandatory.

The t-shirts were required to con-

sist of a short slogan/saying in their target language of study, as well as an illustration or picture, and "March is Foreign Language Month" or "GNN Celebrates Foreign Language Month 2021" on the back. Sophomores Brielle Nassi and Megan Kashi used the slogan "Impossible n'est pas français," in French, meaning "there is no such word as 'can't.'"

Sophomore Christine Zhou used the phrase "我喜欢吃饭" in Mandarin Chinese, meaning "I like to eat food." "I took an old white t-shirt from my house and decorated it with stickers. I also used markers and a stencil to make it look more professional. My third period Chinese class presented their t-shirts to each other, which was really fun," said Christine.

Likewise, Sophomore Linda Li enjoyed the experience of making t-shirts because "it was unlike any project [she] has ever done for school before." Linda's shirt said "太棒了" meaning "that was amazing" in Mandarin. Linda enjoyed that she was allowed to decorate the t-shirt however she wanted.

Students and teachers at North High were able to make the most out of this year's makeshift International Night and Foreign Language Month.

As a community, it is wonderful to know that those who usually participate in in-person school activities are still enthusiastic about International Night this year, regardless of the changes that had to be made.

Regardless of the obstacles that come towards North High, a solution can always be found. Students do not fail to stay optimistic, as they continue to put in the effort and preparation.

MODEL CONGRESS HOSTS SECOND VIRTUAL CONFERENCE

JACOB SHIRAZI '24
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

In the era of virtual field trips, Great Neck North's Model Congress hosted its own online delegation and invited other schools to participate. Students made their individual bills beforehand and debated for their proposals to get passed in a mock version of America's Congress. Last year, North High's Model Congress also hosted its own congress in lieu of the annual UPenn Model Congress being canceled.

"Last year, schools from across the country were very quick to join in on our conference as everybody was looking for online MOCO competitions when COVID-19 just started to spread and everything was closing down," said junior Sahar Tartak. This year, North High's Model Congress is expecting a much smaller number of participants. "A year later, many other schools are hosting their own conferences and so we are definitely expecting a smaller conference of our own."

Planners and organizers of the North High Model Congress conference were excited and looked forward to the event. "We are excited, motivated, and ready to succeed," junior Greg Leung shared. The virtual competition is set to be held online later this month. Organizers and planners reached out to over 50 schools across the country last week through social media, email, and phone.

The ultimate goal of Model Congress is for students to present their bill to fellow "representatives" and receive a majority vote for their legislation to

pass. Bills can be on any subject, controversial or not, from various Senate and House of Representatives committees. For example, students can draft a bill about gun control, and will present their bill to a committee of students who also wrote bills about the same issue.

Model Congress is a club designed

gun control, economics, and abortion.

Every Monday after school, members log onto a Zoom meeting to have a mock conference. One delegate presents a bill, while other students speak on whether they agree or disagree with its content. After students have expressed their different opinions, a final vote is conducted,

means of giving back to the community.

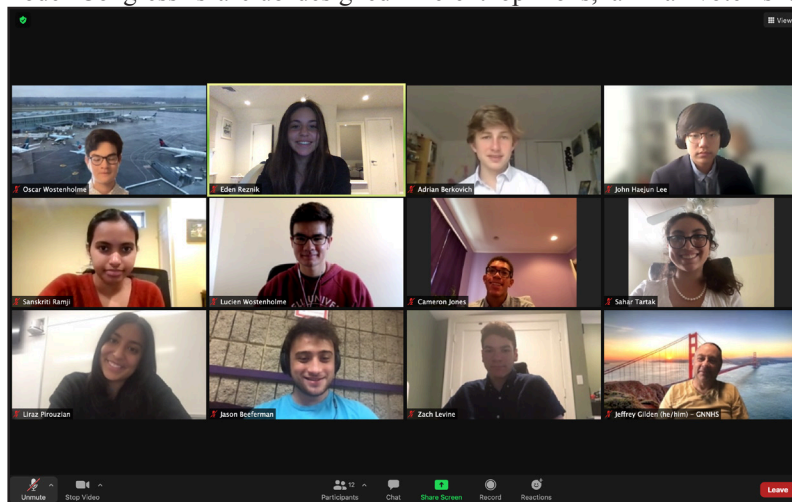
"I think that it's important that clubs, like Model Congress, stay active because, in general, it's important to be involved and aware politically, and what other better, fun way is there to do that than to simulate real-life congress, and give back to the community by inviting other schools to join in as well," said Tartak.

North High's Model Congress also invited Connor Townsend as a guest speaker. Townsend is the Manager of Audience Development at American Battlefield Trust, a group responsible for preserving America's hallowed battle-grounds and educates the public about what happened there and why it matters.

Members of the North High's Model Congress are excited about their conference and are preparing to display all the skills they have obtained throughout the year in hopes of getting their bills passed.

"As a politically active club, we strive to provide delegates a way to experience Model Congress despite the challenges of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic," said junior Oscar Wostenholme. "From coordinating guest speakers to conducting outreach, our delegates worked tirelessly to ensure a smooth and organized conference. On behalf of all of us at the MOCO club, we are excited to host our second annual conference on Sunday, April 25th."

North High's Model Congress has worked hard to further the club and hold exciting events with many educational opportunities, despite the plethora of hardships faced over the last year.



Delegates from North High's Model Congress, along with those from other schools, debating a bill. (Photo: Sahar Tartak)

to help students explore politics in a fun, engaging way. Students act as different legislative branch members in various positions. Model Congress allows students across the country to simulate the United States Congress and display their skills in debate, public speaking, research, and parliamentary judgement. These skills can be shown while explaining bills and ideas on pressing categories such as foreign affairs,

ed, deciding on whether it passes or not.

"We want to learn how we can attract the most students as possible because the end goal is to learn as much as we can and make politics a more friendly and appealing world for everyone," said Leung.

North High Model Congress delegates enjoy the competition that the delegation has to offer, but many also see it as a valuable learning experience and a

NORTH HIGH'S HOLOCAUST COMMEMORATION

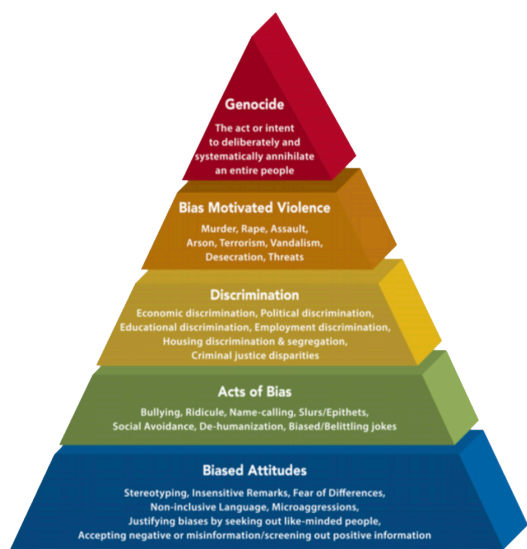
ALEX AHDOOT '21
STAFF WRITER

This year, North High took on a new method of observing Holocaust Remembrance Day and spreading its message schoolwide, following the switch from physical to virtual events. In addition to remembering those who tragically perished in the horrific events of the Holocaust, North High's

sion questions for social studies classes to consider and foster conversation.

For example, Mrs. Knacke explained that the Social Justice Awareness Club "contributed a webpage in the form of the club's most recent newsletter to the No Place for Hate website. The newsletter and webpage center around Women's History Month and historical women." Some topics that were covered in this issue include "Women of Color," "Antisem-

Why is it so important for me--one person-- to be inclusive?



The ADL's "pyramid of hate" which explains how lower levels of discrimination can lead to more severe forms of hate and bigotry affecting everyone. (Photo: ADL)

No Place for Hate Club organized various clubs and classes of the school in order to acknowledge other groups in America and elsewhere that have been marginalized throughout history.

According to Ms. Ostrover, one of the advisors of the No Place for Hate Club who spearheaded the event, the goal of this year's Holocaust Remembrance Day was to "take an 'alternative commemoration' approach and highlight not just the Holocaust itself, but marginalized groups in America today as well."

Ostrover explained that "in the past, No Place for Hate has organized a museum exhibit in the library for Holocaust Remembrance Day that included the work of students from various classes across the school." Students would usually go to the library with their social studies classes and walk through the different exhibits to learn about different aspects of the Holocaust. However, this year, due to COVID-19, the exhibit is virtual and also accounts for a broader range of subjects.

In addition to commemorating the devastating losses in the Jewish community, stemmed from pure anti-Semitism, and the other people who lost their lives in the Holocaust, such as Gypsies and political opponents to the Nazis, North High brought attention to contemporary genocides all over the world and commemorated marginalization of the Asian-American community, the African-American community, the Hispanic community, the LGBTQ community, and the Native American community.

Calling upon clubs including the Gender and Sexuality Alliance, the Social Justice Awareness Club, and the Asian Culture Club, the No Place for Hate Club tasked students with creating websites that illustrate the issues faced by marginalized groups and how certain treatments may have endured over time. The websites included visuals, videos, and additional links to sources that highlight these groups, as well as a resource page including discus-

sion and its Effect on Women," "Women in the Holocaust and World War II," and "Allyship for the Asian Community."

Additionally, each club's website is linked to North High's Holocaust Remembrance Day website, creating one unified place for students to go and explore the projects. There are various types of media displayed on the website, ranging from written pieces to video presentations. These works give a glimpse into the personal lives of some North High students, including immigrant stories by senior Xiomara Trinidad Perez and junior May Tun.

While it has been a bit of a challenge for organizers to gain participation in this event due to the fact that clubs have not been physically meeting in school, the Holocaust Remembrance Day website is interactive and "can be edited at any time, so we can continue to add to it should any student feel moved to contribute," Ostrover explained.

"The way to prevent genocides from ever happening again is to stop bias by bringing awareness and respect across groups," replied Ostrover when asked about her motivation behind organizing this event.

According to the Anti-Defamation League's "Pyramid of Hate" model, we can take steps towards remembering the Holocaust and preventing such an event from ever re-occurring even on a very small scale.

The ADL believes that hate can start with something as small as a microaggression or a seemingly harmless joke, but if little acts such as these go unnoticed they run the risk of growing into something much more serious such as discrimination, violence, or in the worst case, genocide.

The common theme across so many historical genocides is that they all stem from a source of hatred. Therefore, the collective hope is that by working together to combat hate, we can collectively make meaningful progress towards becoming a more informed, peaceful, and harmonious society.



KELLY CHU '21
COLUMNIST

Japan has recently announced its plan to release more than one million tons of radioactive water from the Fukushima nuclear power plant back into the Pacific Ocean. This controversial decision, which came after years of debate, was met with an onslaught of backlash from both neighboring countries and local fishermen.

The Fukushima nuclear accident occurred in 2011 at the Fukushima Dai-ichi Nuclear Power Plant, located in the town of Okuma in Fukushima Prefecture of northern Japan. Known as the second worst nuclear disaster in history, this accident was caused by the Great Tōhoku Earthquake, or the Great Sendai Earthquake. This magnitude-9.0 earthquake, the most powerful earthquake to ever strike Japan, began on the northeastern coast of Japan's main island of Honshu, triggering large tsunami waves that ravaged many parts of the country.

The Fukushima power plant, operated by the Tokyo Electric and Power Company (TEPCO), had six nuclear reactors, or devices that can initiate and contain nuclear fissions. Nuclear fission is

FUKUSHIMA POWER PLANT'S SAFETY IS QUESTIONED

health effects documented among Fukushima residents that were directly linked to radiation from the accident, many residents remain wary, and most have still not returned to their homes as government officials continue to work tirelessly to clean up several towns in northeastern Japan.

After the accident, officials have used more than one million tons of water to attempt to cool and to stabilize the partially melted reactors. Although this radioactive water is currently being treated by a complex pumping and filtration system that filters out most of the radioactive elements, some traces of contaminants still remain, including tritium, a radioactive isotope of hydrogen that can be harmful to human health in large enough doses. TEPCO has since constructed more than 1,000 tanks to store this processed water, but these tanks are expected to be completely full by 2022. In response, the Japanese government has recently approved of a plan to dilute the processed water and release it into the Pacific Ocean, claiming that this process meets the international safety standards and guidelines for nuclear plant waste water, and has been backed by the International Atomic Energy Agency. Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga stated that "the Japanese government has



Operated by TEPCO, a picture is taken of the Fukushima power plant at the Fukushima Prefecture in Japan. (Photo: Kyodo News)

the process of splitting an atomic nucleus into smaller fragments, and is accompanied by the release of a large amount of energy. At the time of the earthquake, all three of the operating reactors were quickly shut down and the backup generators were turned on in order to keep each reactor's core cool, as they emit high residual temperatures. The ensuing tsunami waves soon reached more than 40 feet high, flooding the power plant and causing the emergency generators to fail. Without a functional cooling system, the reactors overheated and the cores partially melted down. This nuclear meltdown along with the resulting explosions from the buildup of pressurized hydrogen gas released large amounts of radioactive material into the environment. Government officials established a no-fly zone around the power plant and 47,000 residents were evacuated from the area. Many workers were exposed to high levels of radiation in their efforts to stabilize the reactors, and there were even increased levels of radiation appearing in local food and water supplies.

The International Atomic Energy Agency rated the Fukushima nuclear accident a level seven on the nuclear event scale; to date, the only nuclear disasters to ever reach this classification are Fukushima and Chernobyl. Although the United Nations released a report this year ahead of the ten-year anniversary of this disaster stating that there had been no adverse

compiled basic policies to release the processed water into the ocean, after ensuring the safety levels of the water ... and while the government takes measures to prevent reputational damage," the IAEA has also noted that wastewater has previously been disposed of in a similar fashion in nuclear power plants around the world. Michiaki Kai, an expert on radiation risk assessment at Japan's Oita University of Nursing and Health Sciences, said "there is consensus among scientists that the impact on health is minuscule."

However, many environmental groups and local fishermen, strongly oppose this move. Environmental groups claim that even trace amounts of radioactive materials could easily build up and concentrate in the higher levels of the food chain, and the local fishermen's efforts to rebuild consumer confidence in their products will essentially be crippled. "The message from the government that the water is safe is not reaching the public, that's the huge problem," commented an official with the association of Fukushima's fishermen unions "our efforts in the past decade to restore the fish industry will be for nothing." China, South Korea, and Taiwan have also denounced this plan. The Chinese foreign ministry has said in a statement to the public that "this approach is extremely irresponsible and will seriously damage international public health and safety and the vital interests of the people of neighbouring countries."

BIDEN AND THE BORDER CRISIS

GISELLE MAKANI '23
STAFF WRITER

The Biden administration is under fire over the significant surge of undocumented immigrants being detained at the U.S.-Mexican southern border. Many claim that the recent surge is due to President Joe Biden's encouraging migrants to come during his campaign trail. At a White House immigration roundtable in early April, Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris asserted that climate change contributes to the Central American and U.S. immigration crisis. During a press conference last month, he condemned former President Donald Trump for not giving enough aid to the Northern Triangle in the wake of weather disasters. Yet over the past several months, thousands of undocumented immigrants have been pouring into America's southern border seeking refuge from the conditions in their home countries.

Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas earlier stated that if the increasing number of refugees heading to the borders continues to soar, the United States might "encounter more individuals on the southwest border than we have in the last 20 years." Shortly after they arrive at the border, migrants and unaccompanied children are often detained and sent to migrant centers running way beyond capacity.

Health officials are also pointing out that these facilities are essentially superspreaders for COVID-19 since social distancing is hard to maintain. Republicans have bashed Biden for his response to the crisis, and claim he is making the situation even worse. They argue that the increased number of undocumented immigrants entering the country is caused by the halting of many of Trump's previous immigration policies at the southern border.

"In March 2021, the agency encountered more than 172,000 per-

sons attempting entry along the Southwest border, which authorities said represented a 71 percent rise over February 2021," a spokesperson from the U.S. Customs and Bor-

fore, many refugees are either expelled or turned away at the borders due to the lack of suitable resources and facilities.

House Minority Whip Steve Scalise criticized Harris for not doing



Immigrant men in a crowd behind a McAllen, Texas Border Patrol Station. (Photo: Verónica G. Cárdenas)

der Protection said earlier in the month.

Many left-leaning activists have been advocating for Biden to allow more refugees into the country amid allegations that he would keep the historically low cap on refugees admitted into the United States. As a result, Biden has sought to increase this number and is planning on lifting this cap sometime in May. Harris was appointed by Biden to lead the effort in discovering and resolving the root causes of the southern border crisis.

However, people from all sides of the political spectrum have claimed that Biden has not yet improved the conditions of the thousands of minors at poor and overcrowded migrant centers. There-

enough to relieve the crisis. He believes that both Biden and Harris are not doing enough to address the border crisis, and sees it as a "national disgrace." He has also personally called out Harris and has urged her to go "down to the border and see this for herself."

Nonetheless, the numbers of families and children attempting to seek asylum for violence, poverty, and government corruption have not been slowing down due to the pandemic. Unfortunately, the current immigration system in the Mexican and United States border is not equipped with supporting these individuals, despite protests for Biden to enact change in the system.

Jonathan Blitzer, a New York Times reporter, has revealed, "on average, it takes almost two and a half years to resolve an asylum claim, and there's now a backlog of 1.3 million pending cases, up from half a million under Obama."

Natural disasters, the end of strict lockdowns for the COVID-19 virus, the rise of gang-related violence, corrupted governance, coupled with the common perception that Biden has promised to become more accepting with migration are some of the main reasons that many are immigrating to the U.S.

In January, Biden introduced a \$4 billion plan to assist in the Northern Triangle nations, almost doubling U.S. financial aid to several countries. The plan includes many programs focusing on addressing and improving many prevalent issues such as quality of life, security forces, and combating gang violence and official corruption.

The spike in the amount of undocumented entrants being held in migrant centers with extremely poor conditions at the southern border is now used as an argument for right-wing activists to criticize Biden's immigration policy.

Furthermore, Republicans claim that Biden broke a federal rule back on his first day in office when he paused the spending on the U.S.- Mexico border. Congress had already voted on spending billions of dollars on the wall, yet Biden revoked the decision, causing many Republican members of Congress to speak out.

"It is Congress' job to authorize how money is spent and the president's job is solely to spend it efficiently," echoed Republican Senator Roy Blunt.

Regardless, the over-occupied and unsafe immigration facilities are failing and in need of resolutions. The facilities are COVID-19 hotspots due to their overcrowding and lack of pandemic preparedness, leaving many families, minors, and others sick and unable to find a place to keep themselves safe while in recovery.

DEREK CHAUVIN FOUND GUILTY

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called to testify between Mar. 29 and Apr. 13. One key testimony came from Charles McMillian, a bystander who communicated with Floyd as he was pinned down; McMillian teared up as he recounted how he had told Floyd to rise and enter the police car, only for him to say that he was not able to. Courteney Ross, Floyd's long-term girlfriend, gave witness, too, describing his personality and interests. She also tried to rebut the defense's drug argument, explaining how the two of them had tried hard to break their addictions, to no avail. Notably, Minneapolis Police Chief Medaria Arradondo condemned Chauvin's actions on the stand, saying that he had clearly violated police policy by using excessive force. Floyd's brother Philonise Floyd also testified, describing their childhoods and George's love of sports, as well as their shared struggle with opioid addiction. The prosecution tried to appeal to the jury's sympathy while also arguing that Floyd's death was a direct result of Chauvin's actions.

The defense's case commenced on Apr. 13, calling seven witnesses to testify; Chauvin himself pleaded the Fifth Amendment. Dr. David Fowler stated that Floyd's cause of death was "undetermined" and that "Mr. Floyd had a sudden

cardiac arrhythmia, or cardiac arrhythmia, due to his atherosclerosis and hypertensive heart disease." Fowler also suggested that carbon monoxide from the police car may have played a role in Floyd's death.

Barry Brodd was called upon by the defense next, though his testimony that Chauvin's chokehold did not count as a use of force was marred by his later admission that it did. The prosecution's main goal in calling witnesses seemed to be to offer other possibilities of how Floyd died, shifting the blame off Chauvin, as they also tried to argue that the number of bystanders at the scene had precluded medical responders from assessing the situation. Nelson rested his case on Apr. 15. Both sides delivered closing statements on Apr. 19, and the jury, sequestered since the Apr. 11 killing of Daunte Wright in a Minneapolis suburb, began deliberating on the same day.

Crowds gathered outside the court where the jury announced that former Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin is to be found as guilty on all counts. He has been found guilty of unintentional second-degree murder, third-degree murder and second-degree manslaughter. The prosecution argued that Floyd had died due to the actions of Chauvin. "He did what he did on purpose, and it killed George Floyd," said prosecutor Steve Schleicher.

Great Neck's Fight Against Anti-Asian Discrimination

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ence from a couple of weeks ago when she and her family went out to a restaurant for the first time since the beginning of the pandemic. Instead of feeling a "sense of normalcy" to fill her with excitement, she felt "anxious and was scared to go outside." She explains how as they were dining she "was afraid that a person would storm into the restaurant and attack her family, solely because they were Asian Americans."

Situations like these are an accurate representation of what has happened to thousands of other Asians living in the United States—getting attacked simply because of their race. It is not surprising to learn how many other Asian students, parents, and families in Great Neck have the same mindset and are filled with anxiety and fear when doing everyday activities.

The purpose of a rally was to reassure these people that there are people who are willing to stand up and fight for the Asian community's elders, brothers, and sisters. Throughout the demands for equality and marching in the rain, dozens of individuals with only intentions of peace were able to come together and unite for a common cause.

When freshman Renee Lan at-

tended the rally and shared that "it felt really nice to be able to passionately stand up for something I cared deeply about."

This rally gave families in Great Neck the comfort and consolation that they are not alone in this fight for peace and equality. Despite a common part of the Asian culture that teaches how to let go of negativity people have clearly had enough of the unjustified and cruel treatment that has been shown towards the Asian community.

"The overall message I hope people learned from our rally was to use the moment we had together to strengthen their inner bravery and humanity and stand up for other people and themselves," Wu affirmed.

The week following the first rally was another, coordinated by the Asian Club. This rally, like the other, began in Cattermill Park, but proceeded to have a march down Middle Neck Road.

Although the rally emphasized putting an end to anti-Asian hate, countless people were found with "HATE HAS NO HOME HERE" signs, displaying the support for all minorities who face racism and discrimination.

With continued support for minorities and education regarding how to be an ally and upstander in Great Neck, both in and of the school, discrimination will find itself at an all-time low.

Staff Editorial:

One Last Look Forward

This year has been different. As we approach the end of the 2020-21 school year, we're forced to recognize that we've endured a full four quar-

tained a well-balanced section by bringing important global news to North High's attention while still keeping an eye on various school happenings.



A screenshot from Journalism class featuring editors of the 2020-21 Guide Post staff.
(Photo: Gracie Tropp-Levy)

ters of North High gone digital. We can be negative sometimes – the transition has not been easy – but so many innovations arise from times of unrest, and we're just beginning to see how these new developments will improve the high school experience. School will hopefully return to a more normal state next year, but some of these changes will probably stick around for the long haul.

Although Google Classroom and the implementation of school-wide iPads had already begun this process, the shift to digital assignments and exams made necessary by remote learning has been a godsend. Students have so much more flexibility now when it comes to doing work, and taking exams on iPads means they can be graded much more quickly than before.

While many clubs struggled to keep members engaged in a virtual setting, moving to a digital format has inspired so much out-of-the-box thinking when it comes to keeping our school community alive. Clubs have invited speakers and collaborated with student groups from around the world through Zoom.

At the start of the year, it seemed like the thriving arts scene at North High we knew and loved couldn't possibly continue with masks and social distancing. Instead of throwing in the towel, though, student arts groups experimented with using technology to augment performances.

Of course, amidst all these changes, Guide Post had to learn how to adapt as well. Despite the oxymoron of releasing Guide Post Print online and the closure of our beloved Mac Lab, each section of Guide Post remarkably found a way to keep publishing informative and visually striking issues.

Buoyed by David's inappropriate questions and Shaina's sweet demeanor, the current News team truly represents journalism at its finest. In an especially tumultuous year, they main-

In arguably the most noticeable change in format from the print editions, the Opinion section adapted to a shift in the fundamental structure of their section flawlessly, still managing to create cohesive and interesting spreads issue after issue. Sophie's fearless leadership and Rebecca's ice cream addiction exemplify the yin-yang dynamic of the Opinion section, keeping persuasion and information in balance with every spread that graces our eyes.

Features has consistently put together original and engaging issues and introduced new staples to the section, such as personal narratives, somehow successfully improving an already perfect four pages. The powerhouse duo of Maya and Karina regularly amazes us with every bright and fun layout they send our way.

It only seems fitting to close the editorial with the Sports section, since they helped conclude each issue with a captivating back page layout, replete with interesting articles and inventive designs. Leading man Tyler paired with the fastidious Harrison is a cast list for success anywhere, but at Sports, this team managed to elevate coverage and forge strong bonds as a staff.

Our experience on Guide Post has coincided with years of great change for North High. We entered freshman year with a new principal and are graduating in the wake of a pandemic that has altered the very fabric of our school community. Nevertheless, we can't leave North High without acknowledging how growing with these shifts has propelled us forward as learners and journalists – and there's nothing better than reporting on the things that matter with a staff we cherish so dearly.

Thank you, Guide Post.

Sincerely,

Adam Sanders and Gracie Tropp-Levy

GUIDE POST • STAFF 2020-21

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Guide Post strives to inform and entertain the student body, provoke conversations and debates, and provide insight on student and community life, while preserving and promoting journalistic integrity.

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CUOMO CONSENTS TO CANNABIS

SUSANNA LEE '23
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Governor Andrew Cuomo has recently signed a legalization bill for marijuana in New York, including a restriction of up to three ounces of cannabis per use. The bill authorizes the Office of Cannabis Management to cover medical, adult-use, and cannabinoid hemp. Additionally, the bill expands New York State's existing medical marijuana programs and provides licensing in the cannabis market, and creates a social and economic equity program to help individuals impacted by cannabis who want to participate in the industry. The people who have been convicted of marijuana-related crimes in the past will now have their records cleared allowing them to have more opportunities.

Personally, when I first heard about the legalization, I was surprised and wondered why New York allowed this legalization, but it pushed me to dig deeper into the many reasons and benefits behind it.

"I think marijuana should be legalized in New York if it's used for medical purposes, and not necessarily used for recreational purposes, as it can cause detrimental effects to a person if used irresponsibly," said junior Andrea Lin. The legislation will now allow people with a larger list of medical conditions to have access to medical marijuana.

Prior to the legalization of marijuana in New York, becoming eligible for a Medical Marijuana Card was a complicated and lengthy process. One would have to fit in one of the illnesses that were necessary to qualify for these

case. Education in regards to the effects of marijuana is more crucial than ever, especially to a new generation that will grow up with marijuana as a legal drug."

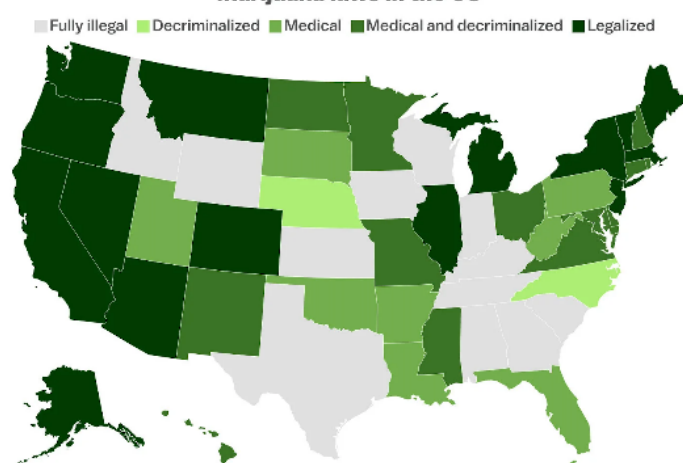
People have also begun to question whether or not the legalization of marijuana will influence students on their decision to use the drug. "Legalizing marijuana will only increase the number of students and other individuals who try it since they are not getting punished for it," said senior Carolyn Liu. Some U.S. states showed no difference between the number of students using marijuana before and after it was legalized, but we cannot use that as our reasoning because every state has different types of people.

However, it is also important to consider that now that marijuana is legalized, people will have more knowledge about the drug, and be able to use it in a controlled matter. Instead of adults simply hiding away the drug and attempting to keep it from ever penetrating their children's lives, educators will now have no choice but to speak and teach about marijuana and its potential benefits and harmful effects.

Now that marijuana has been legalized to three ounces in New York, the state will receive more taxes from cannabis, which will benefit the economy. More activities such as investing in job skills, mental health and education programs, adult education, and other services can be funded.

New York state is willing to provide loans and encourage people to participate in programs in the cannabis industry. I find this an advantage when it comes to the legalization of marijuana for New

Marijuana laws in the US



Map of the legal status of marijuana in all 50 states. New York is the most recent state to legalize marijuana. Source: Vox

cards. These include PTSD, Parkinsons, chronic pain, ALS, and cancer.

After asking around the school about people's opinions regarding this controversial topic, I came to see that most students saw the more positive side to this bill, while most adults remained rather conservative.

Health teacher Mrs. Carpenter explained, "As a health educator, as well as a parent, I am opposed to the legalization of marijuana for recreational use. Marijuana has been shown in several studies to have medicinal benefits for those who have certain health conditions." Carpenter went on to say that "one of the main concerns that I have about the legalization of recreational marijuana is the potential message it may send to the general public, particularly teenagers. In my experience, many teens that I have worked with have equated legalization with 'safer' than other substances, which is not the

case. Education in regards to the effects of marijuana is more crucial than ever, especially to a new generation that will grow up with marijuana as a legal drug."

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Smo LENS on The Results of the Derek Chauvin Trial

KATHERINE SMOLENS '21
COLUMNIST

On Apr. 20th, former Minneapolis Police Officer Derek Chauvin was convicted on all charges of George Floyd's death. Chauvin will face up to 40 years in prison for second-degree murder, up to 25 years for third-degree murder, and up to 10 years for second-degree manslaughter.

George Floyd was killed in Minneapolis last May by Chauvin, who knelt on Mr. Floyd's neck for nine minutes, suffocating him. Captured on cell phone video, Floyd's death was seen by millions,

not eradicate the faults within the police system, but it is a moment of relief that represents the power in joining together and pushing for systemic justice. This case is a celebratory milestone and a turning point toward greater change and justice. When appreciating this verdict, however, it is important to keep in mind that there is still justice to be served. "We think it is a step towards accountability, but also want to be clear that accountability isn't justice," said ACLU Police Policy Advisor Paige Fernandez in a recent tweet. "Justice would be George Floyd being home with his family, his loved ones, and his community today."



On Tuesday, Derek Chauvin was convicted guilty on all charges of the death of George Floyd, causing a wave of relief among racial equality activists. Chauvin faces three separate charges, including second-degree murder, third-degree murder, and second-degree manslaughter. Source: Reuters

sparking global awareness, anguish, and action against the systematic killing of black Americans by police officers. After almost a year of fighting to demonstrate that Floyd's life matters, along with all other oppressed minorities, the eyes of the world turned to this case again. This time, the world searched for accountability. In a rare instance of justice for Black Americans, Chauvin was convicted on all charges for the murder of Floyd.

This monumental decision marks only the second time in Minnesota history that a police officer has been convicted of murder. It was, however, the first time that such a conviction was against a white officer who killed a black man. The historic verdict evoked a widespread emotional reaction and a collective exhale. Americans embraced in the streets, some dropping to their knees, overcome with relief. All around the country people embraced, cheered, and raised their fists in the air. Danielle Frasier, the teenager who recorded Chauvin kneeling on Floyd's neck on her cell phone last May, expressed her relief upon the guilty verdict. She posted that she "just cried so hard" upon hearing the news. The now 18-year old, along with her 9-year-old cousin, will forever have to bear the burden of witnessing Floyd's death. For advocates of racial equality, the decision affirms that the year of protests had not been in vain and that the cry "justice for George Floyd" had been heard and answered.

For many Black people, this verdict carries a great personal significance. "As Black people, we've been carrying these 29, 30 deaths that have happened at the hands of police officers," said Rema Miller, a retired juvenile counselor, in a New York Times interview. Of course, Chauvin going to prison does

Fernandez expressed that the organization was glad to see that the jury brought back the verdict, but that it was in no way the end of the fight. "Today, a jury did the right thing. But true justice requires much more," said President Barack Obama on Apr. 20. Mr. Floyd's family responded similarly: celebrating the success of the decision, yet acknowledging that the decision doesn't indicate that the fight against police brutality is over.

Even amidst the monumental case, injustices against Black Americans have continued outside of the courtroom. On the Sunday before the last week of testimony, another Black man was shot and killed by the police, only ten miles away from where the trial was being held. Daunte Wright was fatally shot by Officer Kim Potter, who says she mistook her gun for a taser, during a traffic stop. The proximity of the shooting to the trial highlights the apparent need for wider reform of the police system. Although Floyd has been granted justice, other victims still await their justice.

This is not the end for Attorney General Keith Ellison, the lead prosecutor in the case against Chauvin. His office plans to present another case in the upcoming months, and the success of the Chauvin trial has only further encouraged people to continue the fight against racial injustices and police brutality.

All cartoons on pages 8 through 9 are drawn by Hannah Fishman.

Great Neck Under Construction

STEPHANY BARBU '24
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

In the past year, we have all experienced different life-changing events at school, with our friends, and with family. Standing united has helped us get through this difficult time period. Now that we are trying to recover from the pandemic, stimulating our economy is more important than ever. Biden has already started this rebuilding process, as he issued the Infrastructure Proposal this past March. The proposal is aimed to modernize the U.S. and help it get over these harsh times. The pandemic has caused our country's economy to destabilize, due to massive unemployment and lack of spending, and Biden is hoping to use his plan to fix these issues. The funding will come from raising corporate taxes, which are the taxes companies pay based on their income. Biden's plan is supposed to take eight years to implement and he projects that 15 years will be sufficient to raise taxes to cover the cost. The infrastructure proposal will distribute \$2 trillion to different needs of the country including transportation, boosting manufacturing, and rebuilding public schools. At first glance, \$2 trillion is a huge amount of money, but after the breakdown, one can understand where all of it is needed. The biggest allocation was dedicated to renovating roads and limiting greenhouse gases. It makes sense that this was made the top priority, seeing as

the safety of Americans should always come first. Greenhouse gases are also a global issue that many political leaders and scientists are faced with. These gases have recently become prominent due to the U.S. rejoining the Paris Agreement, a legally binding treaty on climate change. One way Biden is planning to limit greenhouse gases is by investing in building 500,000 electrical car-charging stations by the year 2030. He will also be investing in tax incentives to buy American-made electric vehicles, such as Tesla or the Ford Mach-E.

The amount of money provided for funding public schools, colleges, and research should be higher on the list since this is where the future leaders of our country are made, and where new advancements in science and technology are created. Biden's investment will help to encourage companies to restart their businesses and with this comes the

possibility of the economy restabilizing after so many months of uncertainty.

Great Neck can face an overall favorable impact from this proposal. The renovation of roads and highways in this area can help with traffic to New York City, and the construction of new bridges and tunnels may reduce commute time,

allowing families to spend more time with each other.

"Biden's infrastructure plan will definitely help Great Neck," said sophomore Ethan Vegon. "The renovation of

roads, especially the ones filled with potholes, will definitely improve the living conditions and make it a lot easier to get around town." Job availability is also very important due to the fact that many people no longer have a set income. Finding a job can be very difficult, especially in a town like Great Neck, where most busi-

nesses are family-owned. With this proposal, hundreds and thousands of jobs will become available throughout the country and in our own town. However, there are difficulties that come with attempting to rebuild massive portions of a town. Things like roadblocks, traffic, and safety hazards all come into play when considering reconstruction. Since the beginning of October, road construction has taken place on Middle Neck Road, moving to a different location 15 feet away from the preceding one each day. The Island Now, an online newspaper that serves the North shore of Nassau County, released a statement, saying the town has decided to replace a 112-year-old water main. However, over these past two months, multiple construction sites have taken place very near the front of the school and surrounding roads, preventing students from getting to school on time. "I can't tell you how many times I've been late to first period because of the traffic near the school due to the constant construction," said sophomore Brielle Nassi. Fortunately, infrastructure proposals, such as Biden's, will likely help Great Neck not only supply more jobs to people in the Great Neck community but hopefully make this process faster. Even though the Infrastructure Proposal comes with negative side effects, overall it can greatly help the U.S. emerge stronger from the destruction of the pandemic. New ideas will benefit the well-being of the country and will help it reach higher possibilities.



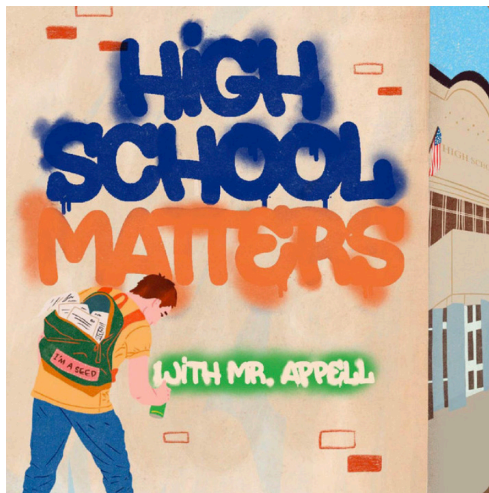
Construction workers block off a section of a busy street, Middle Neck Road, in order to rebuild roads and fill potholes. Source: Rebecca Karpel

Appell's Right to Record

ALEXA NISSIM '22
STAFF WRITER

Mr. Appell, a science teacher, just released his podcast, "High School Matters," where he interviews his former students to see how high school impacted their lives. He exposes certain aspects of Great Neck, confirming and shutting down many of its stereotypes through his raw questioning.

Appell was inspired to start the podcast during last year's quarantine. He started to think about how great it would be to reconnect with his former students and talk about how high school impacted their lives in the long term. Appell also likes to listen to podcasts in his free time, which was the reason he decided to start a podcast. He worked on two seasons of his podcast for 11 months prior to the publishing of his first episode. The process was long as he had to learn several new skills and adapt to the challenges that COVID-19 posed. The pandemic made it hard for Appell to coordinate meetings with his former students, but he was tenacious and met with enough people to record two seasons.



Mr. Appell's first episode of "High School Matters" was released on April 15, and is now available on Spotify with this featured podcast cover. Source: Spotify.

At first, the podcast was a fun activity to do during the summer, and over time it evolved into this "unbelievably special" concept. Despite Appell's high hopes, some doubts also arose during the long journey. He initially questioned whether a student would want to speak to their past teacher. Nonetheless, the students were engaged in the conversation and everything went smoothly. Appell continues to express his concerns about his podcast being public, saying that it is "nerve-racking."

Having a public podcast is a tough thing to do for any person, but as a teacher with numerous people looking up to you, the difficulties are amplified. Appell's podcast acts as an example for all to display your true identity and not to be afraid to be yourself. This is a good lesson for students who may be trapped in their shell and feel as if they are unable to share their true thoughts. Appell even commented

on the real topics being discussed in his podcast, and he did not shy away from things that are considered risky by the public. That is extremely commendable since most teachers don't share their per-

sonal opinions, but Appell does because he is confident it is for the greater good.

Concerns arose about the controversy surrounding the podcast. For instance, some people feared that it would not be appropriate, but I believe it is irrational for people to question this as no one is forcing students to listen and everybody should have the right to say what they believe as long as it doesn't hurt anyone. Appell meticulously ensures that his words are thought out and considerate. Overall, Appell had good intentions in the creation of his podcast as he wanted

to guide his students through high school with the help of former alumni. With over 1,000 listeners from around the world for just his first episode, Appell has been making his mark. Particularly, this podcast has been popular amongst students at our school. The podcast was "very interesting, and showed me a different perspective on our school" said junior Jayson Soleimany. While some aspects of the podcast are

"pure entertainment" as Appell described, other parts cover "really deep issues that students are dealing with." All in all, Appell wants the students of North High to relate to former students who were in their exact situation at some point. As Appell mentioned, "struggle creates strength" and he wants students to know that. This can show his students that he really does mean well when he makes them struggle.

Appell stated that he is currently in the first season of his podcast. In his first episode, he interviewed his former student, Sam Eshaghoff, about his SAT



Mr. Appell welcomes guest and former student to the second episode of "High School Matters", David Nowinsky from North High's class of 2010. The two revisited their past experiences at North High and shared their thoughts. Source: Mr. Appell

s c a n d a l from 2012, when he was paid to take the SAT for various students. He already has a second season coming soon, but he does not want to spoil anything coming in the future. Appell does not truly know what is to come in the future of being in public. He recognizes it is completely different from when he simply shared it with his friends and family to get opinions and advice. He feels like he put himself out in the world, which is scary but also exciting.

North High's Next Steps

Alterations to Assemblies

ELIZABETH PAISNER '24
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

COVID-19 has brought many changes to North High this school year, some that may remain after the pandemic. One of these potential long-term changes may be the switch to virtual assemblies.

At the beginning of the year, Sami Steigmann, a Holocaust survivor, spoke to North High students about his experience with the Holocaust, what he learned from it, and the importance of our school motto, "No Place for Hate" via YouTube Live. If not for COVID-19, Steigmann would have been able to come to the school and students would have gathered together in the auditorium.

Face-to-face presentations have been proven to be much more effective at spreading their intended message, whereas virtual presenters tend to lack in a key category: forming a connection with the audience. Without the ability to make eye contact, answer questions, or see the audience's reaction, hosting an interesting and engaging assembly becomes very difficult.

Because some of these modifications have been beneficial, once the COVID-19 pandemic subsides, I believe these modifications, including the switch to virtual school activities and assemblies, should continue to be carried out. "Although in-person assemblies are definitely more entertaining and easier to en-

gage in, virtual assemblies still provide us with the basic elements of presentation while keeping us safe," said sophomore Gili Gavriel. Having assemblies through YouTube live or over Zoom allows students to remain in their classrooms and while being engaged in the assembly. "At least the assemblies are still happening rather than being stopped altogether," said freshman Gabby Feder.

Even without COVID, I still think that virtual assemblies would be a good solution when it comes to location, transportation, weather, or dealing with absences. Some people who give presentations at assemblies live far away, so having it over Zoom instead might be more convenient for them. As for the weather, if it is snowing or heavily raining, it may be challenging and dangerous to drive, but, luckily, a livestream would be an effective alternative in an emergency scenario.

Even though challenges can arise and create a change in the initial plan, at least the assembly can still happen. Leaving the option of having an online assembly open may prevent cancellations or any further hassles. Apart from assemblies, clubs and annual events, such as DECA and NYS-SMA, have also taken a virtual approach in order to ensure the students' safety. DECA, for example, went fully remote and NYSSMA students had to pre-record their performance as opposed to performing in-person. I think it is unfortunate

that students can not get the normal experience of presenting in front of a judge and showing off what they have learned. Despite these changes, there are still some benefits, including that students who get anxious about speaking in-person to judges are now able to effectively present their ideas without this obstacle.

So, how long should these alterations remain in place? The answer to this question isn't a simple date, rather a conditional one that may change as the pandemic hopefully comes to an end. Although COVID-19 cases seem to be getting better, these rules should still remain in effect until most, if not all, people are vaccinated and rates stay low.

However, if COVID-19 rates are inconsistent and unpredictable, then I think that virtual assemblies and the other changes that have been made to accommodate the pandemic should stay this way

until COVID-19 settles down for good.

Having too many assemblies and activities online may lead to students feeling less involved with their school life, as it becomes more challenging to ask questions, communicate, and engage while being online.

"Being online makes me feel less connected to the school life and spirit,"

said sophomore Brielle Nassi. "I have a hard time already listening to my classes, let alone an hour-long assembly. It feels very isolated, and I have a hard time connecting with presenters."

Even though changes have been made that are not in everyone's favor, it is important to note that the modifications in place are helping

North High's students and teachers lower COVID-19 transmission rates.

Hopefully, we will be able to gather again, but it may be in North High's best interest to consider keeping some of these modifications.



"Optional" Standardized Tests

TALIA NAZARIAN '23
CONTRIBUTING STAFF

In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, standardized testing dates were either canceled or postponed. As a result, many college admissions offices have elected to become "test-optional" this academic year, easing the stress of two of the most challenging aspects of junior year: the ACT and SAT.

The optional status on the two tests sounded like a godsend to many students, but others were left discontented with the change. Some students experience test anxiety and their performances on standardized tests do not accurately reflect their academic skills. The absence of the test requirements allowed these applicants to express themselves and shine in other areas that would have otherwise been overlooked by colleges. Contrastingly, for students that did not receive satisfactory grades, this testing policy harmed them by causing other factors to become increasingly important to their admissions, such as their GPA and extracurriculars. Following this year's college acceptance process, it has been clear that many colleges have been especially selective in accepting students.

In terms of current juniors applying to college, Cornell University announced early in February that they will stay test-optional for another year, and many other highly selective schools have followed suit.

Other colleges have even extended their policies for another two years. Many students will have a more difficult time getting into colleges as schools become more selective in the aftermath of the pandemic.

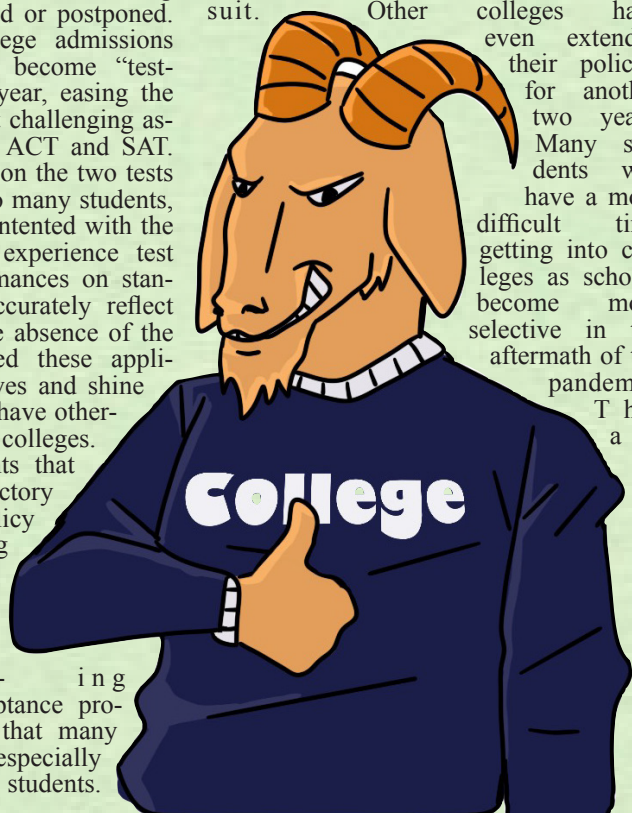
The ac-

ceptance rate at NYU, for example, has fallen to 12.8%, and the admissions office has announced that the Class of 2025 was the most selective and diverse class in the university's history. In the future, I think the admissions process will become more selective and the college applications process will become more difficult for students. The admissions process was especially difficult for many seniors in North High's Class of 2021 who were not able to visit the colleges on their list. "It was difficult to navigate the college process this year especially because I wasn't able to visit many of the schools that were on my list due to COVID," said senior Anushka Gupta. "I learned about each school through their virtual information sessions, but that wasn't the same."

As much as many students want standardized testing to be phased out of the admissions process, I think colleges will continue to require the conventional SAT and ACT in the future. However, as long as the pandemic persists and remains as a central concern, the "test-optional" approach will remain in place. Standardized testing can bring out the best of many candidates, but it can also be seen as an unworthy solution to the admissions process by others. I believe that colleges should make standardized testing entirely optional, and it should be the student's choice to submit a score that could either make or break their acceptance results.

Submitting standardized test scores can boost the strength of the application, especially for students who do not have many extracurricular activities, above-average grades, or leadership roles in school. "The college application process comes with its many challenges: stress, anxiety, and tears; but the most important part of it all is having confidence in yourself and your application [and] understanding that you will end up at the college that is meant for you," said senior Madison Yousefzadeh.

As the pandemic subsides, students will hopefully be able to go back to school and experience in-person class once again. I vehemently believe there will be a greater appreciation for educators and their services each day. Although virtual learning enables students to be more flexible in terms of completing assignments, it also makes it difficult to concentrate. Fully remote students have found it extremely difficult to interact with their classmates and physically engage with one another as a result of the pandemic. "I believe that schooling will resume normalcy and that standardized tests will be required as part of the college application process [following the pandemic]," said sophomore Brielle Nassi. This year has taught many students the importance of in-person learning and in-person interactions. Hopefully, the application process for college will change for the better and put students at a higher advantage post-pandemic.



North High's Next Steps Reuniting in the Classrooms

AVA ASSARAF '23
STAFF WRITER

For the past year, students and teachers have been taught to learn and teach both in-person and remotely due to COVID-19. While students struggled to maintain focus on a computer screen for hours at a time, teachers faced communication issues with their students. Some Long Island schools, such as Jericho and Syosset, have given students the option to go back to complete in-person learning. This was able to transpire because of the present technology and knowledge that we have on COVID. Most significantly, it was found that COVID does not rapidly spread in schools. Also, the faculty is no longer at risk because the overwhelming majority of them have been vaccinated. This brings about a lot of controversy as to whether North High students should return to the classrooms permanently as well.

The countless drawbacks from remote learning have caused both students and teachers to face mental, social, and academic problems. Having more children in school will bring normalcy into our lives after a chaotic year.

One of the negatives of remote learning is the sudden change in social life. Online school has limited the number of people that students interact with due to the hybrid schedule. In addition, students are not able to choose which days they prefer attending school which can cause them to be separated from their friends. Consequently, this

has made my school year unbearable and extremely tiresome. All the interactive group activities that I used to do are now nonexistent and replaced with individual and Zoom activities. This makes my classes tedious and repetitive. For many students "the hybrid schedule is preventing them from seeing their friends as often as they used to and their classes are just so quiet and unexciting now" said sophomore Salome Assaraf.

Moreover, some may feel that the uncomfortable relationship between students and teachers is a result of remote learning. Many feel uneasy when participating on Zoom or asking questions when not present in the classroom. This is why returning to school in person "will benefit the students and the teachers both academically and socially," said Ms. Bokhour. Considering the fact that teachers do not see their students as often as they used to, they cannot get to know their students as well as they could have prior to COVID-19. This could also prevent teachers from recognizing what their students are having trouble with. In my opinion, online work is not an accurate representation of how much of a curriculum students truly understand.

There have also been drastic mental health effects for students who learn virtually. For slower learners who need to physically be in the classroom in order to comprehend the lesson, online school is especially difficult. This is because one must be especially attentive during class when in a home

setting because "you are more prone to getting distracted when there is no one monitoring you. It's also really hard to understand what the teacher is talking

for several hours straight, which will inevitably lead to a loss of concentration. Some students may even be compelled to learn from their beds which causes the situation to further worsen.

Most people are hesitant to go back to school in person because of the risk of spreading or receiving COVID-19. This is one of the main reasons why "we definitely won't go back to in-person school.

At least not until next year," said social studies teacher Ms. Gallagher. Although the spread of COVID-19 is a possibility, the

long and short-term effects of remote learning are significantly alarming. This raises the question as to how long students and teachers are willing to wait to improve the problems that COVID-19 has implemented into their lives.

If we simply sit back and wait for everything to get better on its own, the problems of COVID-19 will only become worse. By improving the way we are handling school during this pandemic by adding more devices to prevent the spread such as plexiglass, we should be able to return to school. This would allow us to move on and correctly adjust the lives of high school students and teachers.



Limiting Sport Spectators

ZOE PAISNER '24
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

As spring sports return, the issue of having spectators during games remains controversial. During winter sports, no one was allowed to watch the games in person because most of the sports were indoors, making it less safe when it comes to preventing the spread of COVID. This spring, players are allowed to bring at least two adults to spectate the games that take place outside. This excludes students from attending. As a result of these regulations, the spirit that our school typically brings in during sport seasons is now limited. With that being said, I completely agree with this decision because

ers were to get sick as a result of the audience, their season would likely end.

Issuing regulations such as everyone being outside, wearing masks, and six feet apart, will cause COVID to less likely spread. However, it is extremely difficult to guarantee that these protocols will be followed by game spectators. In profes-

sional sports leagues, such as the MLB and the NBA, fans are now allowed to spectate games because the league has ways to make sure that COVID safety rules are being followed. A negative test or a full vaccination

card is required in order to enter an NBA game. As for the MLB, 20 percent of the stadium's capacity can be filled. Once in-

side, masks and social distancing are required at all times. Unfortunately, these regulations are simply too much to ask for in a high school. In terms of limiting the capacity outdoors, it is a huge expense to start hiring guards to make sure that the rules are followed. Without people enforcing these safety rules, students may choose not to follow the COVID protocols if they are not supervised. This could also cause issues for the coaches as well because if students do not follow these rules, the coaches will have to intervene, which will make them less attentive to their players. Limiting spectators to only adults lowers the risk of issues transpiring during the games as "it is too challenging to control the amount of people coming into games, no matter what restrictions are set," said freshman Lizzie Paisner.

Although players love being cheered on by fans, "the dangers of COVID far outweigh the desire for the energy crowds might typically bring," said the girls track coach Mr. Corrao. The only way to return to a more spirited school in future years is to obey the restrictions we have now. Even if that is the case, "when you are on the field and you hear no cheers, it feels like a massive part of the game is missing," said freshman Chloe Hedvat, a member of the girls' field hockey team. Nevertheless, some student-athletes have found creative ways to keep school spirit alive.

For instance, the boys soccer team wore ties and dress shirts on game days in a form of united spirit. Students also compensate for the lack of spirit by cheering their own teammates on when necessary. During soccer, for example, students were encouraged to cheer on their teammates. This "created a special bond and all the players were always cheering [on] one another," said freshman Rena Geula, a member of the girls soccer team. This year the spirit and motivation had to come more from within the team itself rather than from outside fans and spectators.

COVID has been a challenge to so many for the past year and the whole world along with schools are yearning to go back to how life was before the pandemic. In order to do this, schools must do their part to contribute to preventing the spread of COVID, even if it means limiting our typical energetic and spirited crowd. By prioritizing the safety of the players and students, sports have the opportunity to continue even though spectators are limited. Although it may seem that the absence of student and adult spectators would cause a lack of motivation and enthusiasm among players, it has instead united them together during challenging times. With the bonds between them stronger, future games without Covid restrictions are bound to be even more meaningful and exciting than they are now.



TEACHER SPOTLIGHT: MR. RUTKOWSKI

RENA GEULA '24
STAFF WRITER

Mr. Rutkowski is the beloved teacher who single-handedly keeps the instrumental department at North High running. As a part of a multigenerational family of musicians, Mr. Rutkowski has enjoyed playing music with his father, uncle, brother, and sons. At the age of eight, he started playing the accordion as his first instrument. In junior high school, he began to play the clarinet, which he has not skipped a day of practicing in his 38 years of teaching high school music. Then when he reached high school, his life was altered by his band teacher Laurance Sobol, who was a master clarinetist and performed regularly at Carnegie Hall. His teaching career started in the fall of 1983 at Stuyvesant High School.

Q: What inspired you to go into teaching?

A: Getting a job that would allow me to raise a family was the reason I turned to teaching. I wasn't making enough money by getting pick-up orchestra jobs and recording sessions. At the age of 28, Sobol instructed me to go back to school and get certified to be a high school music teacher. YUCK, I said. But the woman I was dating told me her mother wouldn't let her marry me unless I had a steady job. But I really wasn't inspired until I was taking [the] teacher certification program course[s] and had some dynamite college professors.

Q: Have you always wanted to be a teacher?

A: NO! I would rather be a musician, a baseball player, a stand-up comedian, or a clown. That was my thinking until I turned 30 years old.

Q: Have you always had a passion for music?

A: Yes; from seeing how much my dad loved playing music and what music did to people who were sad. I once remember my Uncle Joe saying: "Whenever I visited your father's house... he and his family were always happy when they were playing music together, no matter how miserable and poor they were." My passion for music grows and grows every single day. I love music more today than I did yesterday.

Each with their own respective instruments, Mr. Rutkowski and his sons love to spend time playing music together as the "Rutkowski Trio." Photo: Joseph Rutkowski



Each with their own respective instruments, Mr. Rutkowski and his sons love to spend time playing music together as the "Rutkowski Trio." Photo: Joseph Rutkowski

Q: How did you end up working at North High, and how many years have you been teaching here?

A: I really never wanted to leave Stuyvesant High School. It was such a special high school that was more like an Ivy League college than a public school. But Watras [the Music Chairman at Stuyvesant at the time], warned me that if I did not get experience

taking interviews for Chairman of Music positions, I might not get his job at Stuyvesant when he retired. When I saw a Music Chairman job opening in Great Neck, I sent in my resumé. They called me for an interview, but it was on the day of the Stuyvesant High School Spring Concert. I told them I couldn't take that day off to attend the interview. The Assistant Superintendent in Great

Neck called me a few days later and told me that the committee was "so impressed" with that reason to miss the interview that they wanted to come and see me teach. On May 22, 1991,

four administrators, including Superintendent Dr. William Shine and retiring Music Chairman Earl Higgins from Great Neck came to the city to watch me teach... They offered me the... job on the spot, warning me that I should not expect the students in Great Neck to accept the idea of playing scales and such serious music, but I should do that anyway. The first year was horrible. Half [of] the students quit and almost all the rest...

gave me such a hard time. Their parents called the principal and superintendent and wanted them to fire me. Luckily, there were a few students who were really serious and they convinced enough of their friends to try it Rutkowski's way... It took almost 10 years to get the program where it would start to flourish for the next 20 years. But it was worth the effort. I am SO glad I came to Great Neck.

Q: What are some of your favorite hobbies/things you like to do in your free time, outside of your job?

A: Watching baseball, going to plays and concerts, playing baseball and music with my two sons; reading and watching Netflix with Mrs. Rutkowski, AND practicing my clarinet, piano and accordion.

Q: What do you offer for students looking to play more beyond band or orchestra class?

A: From my first year in Great Neck, I invited the students to come after school to spend extra time playing the music we worked on in class. No scales after school — just music. Ten years ago, we started the Chamber Music class during ZERO period as an addition to the band and orchestra classes for students who had a desire to play duets, trios and quartets.

This year's class has 32 students who also attend the band and orchestra classes later the school day. Those 32 students are very special because they have been performing weekly concerts for all 29 weeks of the school year. I don't know of ANY other high-school music ensemble that has had that many performances THIS year.

Reviving Senior Prom

XIOMARA TRINIDAD PEREZ '21
STAFF WRITER

Even though the COVID-19 pandemic has led to the cancellation of many traditions and events, senior prom is not one of them. After the event was canceled last year, North High's Class of 2021 will mark the closure of their senior year with the reinstated, much-anticipated annual prom.

Last year, for the class of 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic made the final months of senior year take a drastically different tone than years prior. Due to the cancellation of various events — among those, senior prom — the Class of 2020 left with a different view of their final days of high school. However, after months of planning and discussion, the Class of 2021 will still be having its long-awaited prom. This year, the senior prom will be held at the Swan Club, Roslyn, on June 21. In order to maintain the safety of students and staff, the event will follow social-distancing protocols, and students will be required to wear a mask and get tested prior to the event.

With all the additional restrictions and protocols due to the pandemic, the event will not feel the same as it did in prior years. Some seniors were asked their opinions about this disparity. "I understand that in order to have a safe prom, we will need to follow the restrictions, but I wish that we

could have a normal prom like every other year," said senior Sophia Mahfar. "I know the school is doing the best they can with what they have been given," she continued.

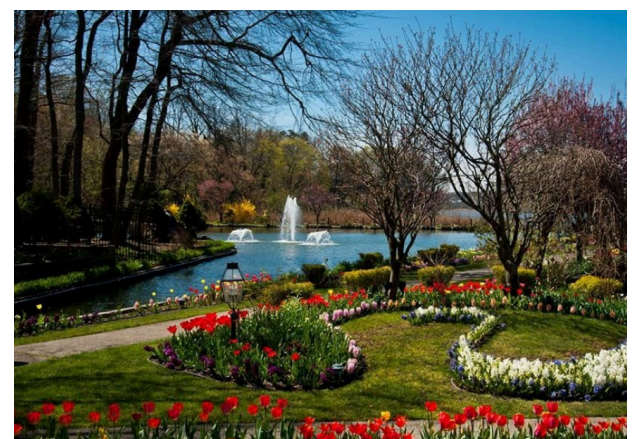
It took months for seniors to finally confirm whether they would be able to have a prom or not. This is due to the complexity of finding a venue that followed COVID-safe guidelines and had the capacity to gather the whole class. Another senior, Kate Needham, said, "Although I do wish that the rules were less strict, it completely makes sense for there to be those restrictions for us to be safe...overall, I'm really happy that we're having a prom despite the strange year we've had!"

Senior Charlotte Kamali is one of the five senior class officers who took part in the planning of this event. She, along with other seniors, worked tirelessly to make this event possible. "The process for planning has been extremely stressful because we feared not being able to have a prom, or any culminating event for that matter, to properly close out our last year all together," said Kamali. "It was not until recently that we received the official OK from administration and the district to organize a senior prom, and when we did, the original plan was very different from the one we have in place right now because of changing COVID restrictions."

As explained by Kamali, plans for senior prom are different from the original ideas. Earlier in 2021, many were hearing rumors amongst seniors of prom taking place in two separate locations, which would have

made the experience significantly different. But fortunately, the event will take place in one venue, the Swan Club in Roslyn. The Swan Club holds a reputation for its beautiful gardens filled with many kinds of flowers, as well as many small lakes and rivers that can be crossed by small bridges. Outdoor seating is also available for events. The location also holds several spacious, indoor ballrooms, perfect for a senior prom event.

With the exciting news of prom taking place, the highly-anticipated traditions of outfit hunting and promposals can finally begin. Even though COVID-19 has compromised the normalcy of seniors' final year at North, prom allows for students to engage in a classic, memorable experience.



The location for this year's senior prom will be at the Swan Club of Roslyn, a beautiful venue filled with many scenic gardens, lakes, bridges, and indoor ballrooms. Photo: swanclub

Fighting Asian Hate with Art

REYNA KIM '22

STAFF WRITER

The emergence of COVID-19 has brought on a significant increase in the number of racially-motivated attacks against the Asian American community. According to advocacy group Stop AAPI Hate, there have been over 2,800 reports of hate crimes against Asian-Americans nationwide throughout the last several months. Oftentimes being blamed for the spread of the coronavirus, Asian-Americans have been facing workplace discrimination, refusals of service, and incidents of physical assault. In New York City, the NYPD has reported a 1,900% increase in racial violence against Asians, which differs from the subtlety of anti-Asian bias in existence before the coronavirus. Some attribute the recent swell of anti-Asian sentiment motivating these attacks to the actions of political figures, such as former President Trump's comments dubbing COVID-19 "China Virus" and "Kung Flu."

These events are relevant to our Great Neck community, where a significant proportion of the student body of North High is Asian-American. Currently, North High is making attempts to spread awareness and offer support for its Asian-American students. In order to address recent assaults and the ideologies that influence violence, North High's Art Club has collaborated with Asian Culture Club in creating a tribute advocating for Asian-American rights: The Anti-Asian Violence Awareness Campaign.

The Anti-Asian Violence Awareness Campaign seeks to draw attention to this ongoing issue through 'artivism,' which is

activism through works of art. To contribute to this campaign, students are submitting original works through any art medium, whether it be drawing, photography, or sculpture, that respond to the recent discrimination and hate crimes.

According to Mrs. Man, the advisor of the Art Club, the tipping point for the Asian-American community was the Atlanta spa shootings in March, in which eight people were killed, six of them being Asian women. "Students in Art Club raised the issue and asked if there was something they could do to raise awareness and bring attention to the matter," Man explained. "The sentiment from the students seemed to be that they needed an outlet and way of expressing what they had been experiencing and seeing and wanted to take

some kind of action," she continued.

One of these students, freshman

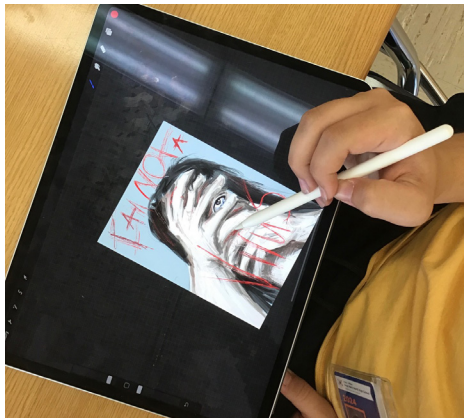
Maurice Zalta, who plans to contribute artwork to this campaign, is doing so because he believes "we should all live in a world where it doesn't matter your upbringing, sexuality, gender association, race, or religion." He also expressed how "with the increase of Asian hate, it's more important to spread this message, and by using art, [he] will be able to do just that." Many feel that because of the abundance of Asian-Americans in Great Neck, students should feel morally obligated to spread awareness of current social issues.

Senior Stephanie Kim, a key creator of this art campaign, explained how she felt that "some sort of support was needed for the hundreds of Asian stu-

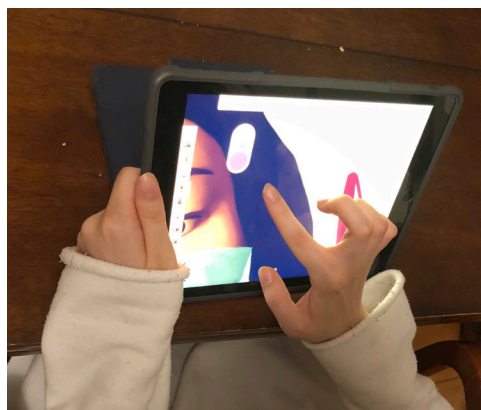
dents at North who are greatly affected by the surge of hate crimes and discrimination that emerged in this COVID era." In describing what she hopes for this campaign to achieve, Kim said it "aims to promote understanding and acceptance in our community by encouraging students to submit original artworks that raise awareness of anti-Asian violence, share student voices, and support those affected by the hate crimes."

Though Ms. Man is leading this project, she notes that her role is actually "very minimal in a way, as this [campaign] was initiated and carried out by students themselves." Man is proud of her students' involvement in the campaign, as well as the outcome of the artwork. When asked about how she feels about this initiative, Man also said, "I'm just here to support them and as an Asian-American myself, I'm really proud to see students taking an active role in expressing themselves, raising awareness, and spreading positivity to combat this discrimination."

By offering students a chance to make creative pieces that represent the messages and experiences they wish to convey, this campaign intends to give our school an opportunity to reflect on the social issues surrounding Asian-Americans. Students can expect to be able to view the artworks featured in this tribute in the May or June edition of Guide Post. The campaign members also plan to have the artworks displayed on the school website, and to distribute stickers advocating for Asian American rights. Many hope and believe that this campaign will combat ignorance and hatred against Asian-Americans while inspiring reflection and discussion.



Maurice Zalta (above) and Reyna Kim (below) work diligently on their art pieces for the Art Club's showcase dedicated to displaying their support of the Stop Asian Hate movement. Photos: Emily Man



COMMITTING TO COLLEGE IN 2021

SOPHIE YELLIS '21

STAFF WRITER

The 2020-21 academic year has been far from conventional for students universally. However, considering the circumstances of solely virtual college visits and the advent of test-optional applications, seniors who are currently handling the college admissions process are having an experience that is especially untraditional.

Seniors in the past have always complained about the difficulty of the college application process, and this year was no different. Groans about standardized test scores, decisions on which schools to send applications to, and worries about the schools that fellow classmates applied to gave rising seniors harsh expectations. Unlike the majority of the class of 2021, senior Sarah Smith found this year's unusual college process relatively manageable. Smith described her experience applying to college: "It was a bit different in that it was much more simple than expected." Unlike many other seniors, Smith only really wanted to attend one college, which she was accepted to through early action, a process that allows applicants to apply to and potentially gain admission to one or more schools before the regular decision release dates. Smith said she recently committed to SUNY New Paltz "because it fulfilled everything that [she] wanted out of col-

lege." Some factors that attracted Sarah to this liberal arts school were its affordability, welcoming community, her desired major, and its many clubs and activities.

For most seniors, the pandemic has made it harder for them to choose where they want to spend the next four years of their lives. Senior Halle Schatz said that the college process was different than she imagined. "Deciding on a college is a lot more overwhelming than I thought it would be," she said. What made the decision process especially difficult for her was having to manage the financial aspect of college. Nowadays, college tuition and fees are rising, which leads to reduced higher-education budgets for state schools and increasing student debt burdens. Halle will be majoring in education, and she was accepted into great undergraduate programs tailored to it. As of now, Halle has not committed anywhere for college and is still narrowing down her top choices.

A few lucky seniors are fortunate enough to receive admission through the early-decision process, which allows students to be informed of their acceptance far earlier than regular-decision release dates. Applying early-decision also means that students must enter a binding contract that requires them to attend if admitted. Senior Aliza Fine applied to Brandeis University through the early-decision process and was accepted. She said Brandeis made the top of her college list "because of its focus on social

justice principles, high Jewish population without being a religiously affiliated institution, close proximity to a major city (Boston), [and] good programs [for] topics [she's] interested in." Before actually applying during her senior year, Fine was lucky enough to have visited schools during the February 2020 break, just before the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. "Going to info sessions online or going on the school's website is going to [portray] purely the content [the college wants] you to see, while being [at the school] physically doesn't allow [for] as much of a filter," Fine says. The application process for Aliza was not that much different from what she imagined. She never realized the importance of visiting schools until she visited them for herself.

Although elite colleges, especially the Ivy League schools, have always been difficult to get into, the coronavirus pandemic made admissions even tougher. On Ivy Day, which was on April 6, 2021, schools such as Harvard University and Columbia University revealed record-low acceptance rates. From the prior year's 6.1% acceptance rate, Columbia's acceptance rate dropped to 3.7% for Class of 2025 admits.

Since COVID first hit the United States, high-school seniors have faced many hurdles during the application process. Many schools temporarily made the requirement for SAT and ACT scores optional, encouraging more stu-



Senior Aliza Fine celebrates her early-decision commitment to Brandeis University, undecided about what she will major in. Photo: Aliza Fine

dents to apply to their dream colleges. Due to an increase applicants at some of the nation's top schools, waitlists have become longer. But, despite all the challenges the pandemic has caused for the Class of 2021, we all wish them the best of luck on their college journeys.

MOVING with Molly: TEST TAKING EDITION

MOLLY SHERRY '21
COLUMNIST

With the school year coming to an end and the summer months approaching, students tend to become stressed over their upcoming final exams. AP tests are coming up in the next few weeks. Furthermore, the COVID-19 pandemic has made quite an impact on students as the transition to remote learning has made studying for exams and coping with stress even more difficult than usual. Therefore, I have comprised a list of tips and tricks to aid in test-taking as well as minimize stress during these tough times.

Eating Right

Before going into your early morning AP exams, I can't stress enough how important it is to eat a good, hearty breakfast to keep you full throughout the day. An adequate meal will give you the energy to perform well and feel comfortable throughout the duration of the exam. A 2003 study has even shown that students who ate breakfast less than



Photo: @openclipart

five times a week receive lower annual school grades than their peers who regularly ate breakfast. Moreover, often there are breaks between sections of exams. It is a great idea to make sure to bring a bottle of water to keep you hydrated or a quick snack to keep you full. This will allow your mind to be focused on the task at hand rather than your next meal!

Practice

Practice is extremely important when it comes to studying for exams in order to ensure that you truly know the material. AP Classroom offers many practice problems and even review videos breaking down every unit and topic. Additionally, there are many free, online resources for practice such as Quizlet, Fiveable, Khan Academy, and YouTube. While practicing, ensure that you are writing down information and problems in the way you will be taking the test. For example, if you are taking an exam remotely, try to practice multiple choice or free response questions in an online format to get you used to the online format. Also make sure to practice timing yourself during full-length practice exams, so you are able to get used to managing your time well during the real test. And avoid distractions such as keeping your phone near you or the TV playing in the background. The more you practice efficiently, the easier it will be for

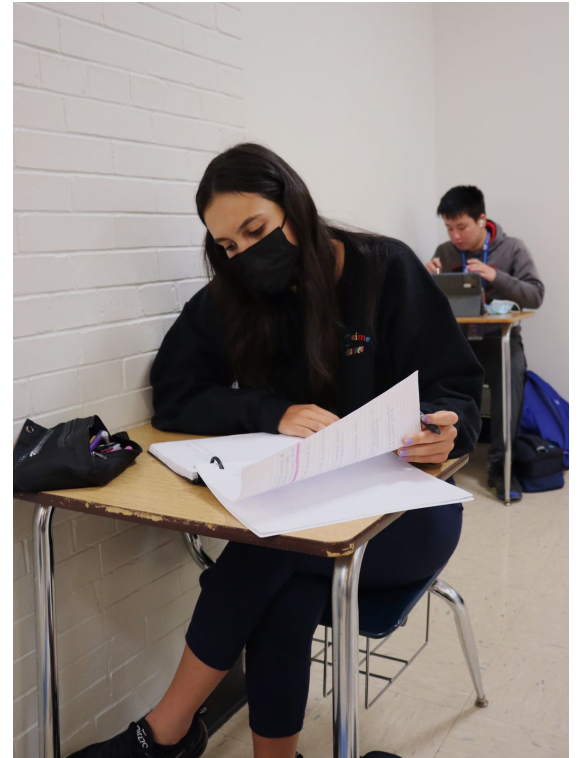
you to take exams and do well.

Exercise

Exercising is a great way to lower cortisol levels and decrease stress during exam times. Simple exercises such as walking, hiking, and biking are great ways to get fresh air and time to breathe. We as humans are often bombarded with work and challenges, and we often forget to breathe and take a break once in a while. Taking a break is so important when studying for exams and will aid in increasing your retention and concentration. When you feel overwhelmed or worn out from studying too long, remember to go outside and move your body, especially with the warmer weather that May brings. Secondly, there are studying methods that incorporate taking timed breaks, such as the Pomodoro Technique, to allow you to process information and rest your mind.

Sleep

Sleep is a necessity that we often think is optional. Especially with school work, college applications, and upcoming tests, we often get caught up in predicting our future that we forget to embrace the present and get our much-needed sleep. Sleep is a restorative process that allows your body and mind to recharge, leaving you refreshed and



Sophomore Dorin Baladev studies for her upcoming final exams. Students often make detailed review sheets to organize the material they need to go over. Photo: Audrey Bichoupan

alert when you wake up. Sleep strengthens your immune system, helping your body remain healthy and able to fight off diseases. Getting a good night's sleep will aid in memory retention and allows for better concentration during your test.

Battling Body Image On Social Media

VICKY SAKHAI '23
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Throughout the past decade, people have been trying to take progressive steps in shedding light on important issues previously left in the dark. With body image becoming one of the most pressing social issues of this generation, many have begun to advocate for body positivity, including celebrities and students here at North.

Body image is defined as one's perception and thoughts of his/her own body. Though seemingly unproblematic, maintaining a positive body image has become a huge struggle in recent times. In fact, according to Katharine Philips, a New York-based psychiatrist internationally recognized for her work with self-image, one in 50 people struggle with body dysmorphia (a mental disorder that leads to negative obsessions over one's own appearance). What is especially concerning is that this illness often begins in the young teens, with diagnoses being recorded in patients as young as 13 years old. As a result, the body positivity movement has been on the rise, created to eliminate damaging societal standards of beauty in an attempt to empower individuals to feel comfortable with their bodies, no matter the shape, weight, or size. Given that body image issues have been much more prevalent among young women, this movement especially targets females, seeking to teach them to accept and love their bodies. Before the body positivity movement arose,

social media had been credited with being greatly responsible for the growth of body image issues among the current generation. As teenagers scroll through social media, they are unaware that the images people choose to post are often unrealistic. In fact, sophomore Rachel Tavazo feels strongly that "toxic comparisons to bodies on social media can be harmful, while seeing a body type that matches yours, no matter where it lies on the spectrum, is comforting and empowering." Influencers are not just putting out their best, often referred to as "highlight reels," but also editing their photos heavily, unbeknownst to a large portion of their audience. This decision can be attributed to the immense pressure celebrities feel to look their absolute best on social media. As a result, audiences are left with unsatisfied and damaging thoughts towards their bodies.

Despite the growing support of body positivity, there are some people who feel



Khloe Kardashian, alongside plenty of other celebrities, post highly edited versions of themselves on social media, creating unrealistic expectations for their impressionable fans. Photo: Extra.ie

that this movement forgets to include all types of bodies, including ethnically diverse, disabled, scarred, and hairy bodies. A group of opposers to the movement feel that healthy living should be prioritized, and are fearful of the effects of potentially embracing bodies that exhibit unhealthy habits.

Recently, reality star Khloe Kardashian has received a lot of backlash from supporters of body positivity and has been accused of promoting false beauty standards. Kardashian has taken legal steps to get a photo of her that she deemed unflattering taken down from the internet. People believe

that by removing this photo, Kardashian was refusing to show people how she really looks, only showing edited photos where she makes herself look "better." In response to this resentment, Khloe livestreamed on social media to show her natural body. However, she also tweeted that "[she] should have every right to ask for [the picture] to not be shared," especially "as someone who has struggled with body image her whole life."

Sophomore Iyana Kaiman, a supporter of the body positivity movement, feels that "celebrities should be able to do whatever they want with their pictures, as long as people know that it can be unrealistic to look like some pictures they see." However, Khloe Kardashian isn't the only celebrity who has been criticized for promoting harmful beauty standards. Time and time again, singer and influencer Madison Beer has been harassed for denying plastic surgery that much of the public believes she has had. People found her response unapologetic and insincere when she said via Instagram live that "It's really unfair that, like, I'm being told that I set an unrealistic beauty standard... Why do I have to be the beauty standard? I don't want to be the beauty standard. I'm not perfect." As the body positivity movement has recently been gaining popularity, it's safe to say the movement has definitely made an impact on the whole of society, as people continue to advocate against unrealistic standards.

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Student Personal Narrative:

The Quadruples

MAYA MISHAN EZRONI '23
GUIDE POST STAFF

Middle school is the year where making your friend group is essential to your future—whether you're popular, a nerd, or just there. When you enter the cafeteria, a person would see stereotypical groups of friends in certain spots on the long tables as if it were assigned seats. If you withdrew from your flock, accusatory glares will follow you until you return to where you belong. I don't know about others, but that was middle school for me and those exact stares were directed at me.

It was fifth grade and I had a friend group of four. I'm pretty sure we were considered losers. At recess, while the other kids would play basketball, talk on the side, or do anything considered normal, we would instead use our imaginations to play out made-up scenarios, where one of us was the hero while the other was the villain in which we then proceeded on with an ultimate fight. That's what we did, so I'm assuming when people looked at us they probably thought we were crazy and were just waving our hands around like weirdos, but in our minds we were superior.

We called ourselves the Quadruples.

However, like every other friend group, there will always be a time where it comes to an end.

I was, unfortunately, the one to bring about that end.

In my mind I wanted popularity—to be honest, I think we all subconsciously do. The feigned feeling of being above others and being the center of attention. With these influential thoughts in mind, I made the abrupt decision to abandon my friends and sit at the "popular" end of the lunch table. It was a small school so we all knew each other but no one said a word at first.

A girl finally said something.

She turned her head, slowly looking me over, "Hey um, what happened to your friends, you don't sit with them anymore?" she questioned, her voice insincere.

"I just got into a fight with them," I replied back. "Ohh and I'm not friends with them anymore." I quickly added.

"Oh okay," the girl responded, losing interest as she proceeded to ignore me for the rest of the period.

I don't know how long this phase

of mine lasted for, but it was exhausting.

I was exhausted of the stupid talks of irrelevant gossip, the new songs that people felt the need to memorize, and the unhealthy obsession with social media. I missed our fictional games, competing over higher grades, and talking among ourselves, but most of all I missed who I was.

It took a lot of apologizing but of course, my true friends welcomed me back with open arms. After a few laughs and tears at the whole ordeal, things went back to normal and it was never talked about again. We moved forward in life and left it in the past—although I'll always feel guilty.

However, as time went on my friendships evolved, causing me to become accepted into both groups and become friends with everyone, no longer wanting to be labeled. I shifted myself from only one side of the table to the center with my old friends and my new friends on either side of me.

When it comes to friends, there's always a moment when you finally admit to yourself that you've been changing who you are, not for yourself but for others. In the end, I've realized that just being true to myself is the best feeling in the world, and being surrounded by people who accept that, makes that feeling so much more special.

YOUR TEACHERS' HIDDEN TALENTS

MR. BARBACH
SINGING AND PLAYING PIANO

MRS. LYNCH
SINGING IN A CHOR AND PLAYING CLARINET

MR. RAGOT
MAKING HIS STUDENTS THINK HE'S FUNNY WHEN HE'S NOT

MR. RODRIGUEZ
COOKING AND PLAYING THE GUITAR

MR. RUTKOWSKI
MAKING PUPPETS OUT OF A PLAIN PIECE OF PAPER

MR. TURKOVICH
HAVING TWO GREEN THUMBS

MR. WU
EATING AN ENTIRE PIE OF PIZZA IN A SINGLE SITTING

TAKING ON TESTING

Sophie Frenkel



With the end of the school year around the corner, cumulative tests and finals are also coming up. It is a time of high pressure for many students, which can result in feelings of overwhelming stress, lack of motivation, and tiredness. However, there is always light at the end of the tunnel, with end-of-the-year celebrations and summer approaching.

SNEAK PEAK INTO SPRING SPORTS

AVISHAI AGHELIAN '23
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The last sports season of the school year is upon us, and it is time to preview the teams that will be playing. Due to COVID, it is quite obvious by now that there will be protocols that will be put in place for each sport. The sports next season will be baseball, golf, lacrosse, tennis, spring track, girls badminton and softball. For all of these sports, there are CDC rules and regulations that need to be followed, such as wearing a mask, social distancing, and even more. The COVID protocols for all of these sports are very similar to those of last season. To provide a healthy atmosphere for all, athletes are required to follow rigorous mask-wearing and social-distancing guidelines during practices, with opportunities offered to step out and take breaks if necessary. Temperatures are always taken each morning before school and on weekends before practice begins, as is customary. All outdoor sports for the new season will have protocols. It will be required that students wear masks during the entire period of practice and games. If needed, they may step 12 feet away from everyone and pull down their masks.

While students are not necessarily mandated to get vaccinated prior to the

season, it is imperative that any student-athlete who exhibits signs of COVID-19 notifies their coach as soon as possible, and that everyone follows social distancing guidelines while practicing. Moreover, it is very important to remember to wear a mask throughout the entirety of the spring season, during both practices and games. It is also important to note that coaches encourage their athletes to respect COVID guidelines outside of athletic settings to ensure that the season runs smoothly.

Students have mixed opinions regarding this; some believe that they should be able to take off their masks, while others believe it is necessary to have a mask on at all times. "There are more benefits of wearing a mask than drawbacks. We want to save this virus from spreading further. So, if wearing a mask reduces the chances of COVID, then have at it," sophomore Joseph Kahen stated. Many students have also adapted to many of these guidelines and much opposition from students about wearing masks has eased overtime. He also said, "for the same cause, social distancing is important. Also, I have gotten used to it by now, so wearing a mask while playing a sport is not that much of a problem."

When the demands of the sport and healthy participation do not accommodate, students engaging in sports would be

required to adhere to the CDC guidelines, and in certain cases, more strict masking and social-distancing expectations. The administration, athletic directors, and coaches will need to formulate specific facets of each sport and each of our facilities, which will be completely articulated to students and families as soon as possible. These standards will accompany the athletes as they travel to different schools and locations. Students who refuse or are unable to adhere may not be permitted to participate.

"I do believe in taking the correct precautions during school hours. However, we should be able to enjoy our after school activities without wearing a mask. If people sign up for a sport, they should not have to wear a mask, because the players should be able to play their sport freely," sophomore Ethan Hassid said.

Wearing a mask can be irritating for some, especially when running around and playing the sport. Some students even believe that they should not be wearing a mask while playing their sports. "Wearing a mask negatively affects the players' output during practices and games. The vaccine is not a reason for which we should stop wearing masks. It's a reason in which specific circumstances such as these we should be able to enjoy the sport without worry," Hassid added. Although masks are needed to pre-

vent the spread of COVID, athletes can't perform at their peak with the masks on.

"I don't like the masks at all when we're playing sports. We're running around and sweating. We need to be breathing fresh air. Especially sports like baseball when we're literally socially distanced," sophomore Beckett Hakimi said.

It is very fortunate that we even have the privilege of playing sports this season. Although we have to wear masks and follow safety precautions, it is truly amazing that the sports season is happening, despite these conditions. Sophomore Eitan Zargari, an avid lacrosse player, echoed this sentiment, saying "even if we do have to wear a mask during the season, I think it is fantastic that we get

to have a sports season. Wearing a mask can be cumbersome, but that is something we must do in order to have a season and enjoy it. It also ensures the safety of the world and our communities."

However, sophomore Doron Sedaghat, another lacrosse player, said: "I don't believe there needs to be heavy mask wearing because we are outside in the hot weather."

These are unprecedented times, but in order to stay safe, we must adhere to these conditions. Even though these safety precautions may seem irritating and at times infuriating, we must follow them, because those are the rules to keep us all safe.



Girls' softball players Iyana Kaiman, Alana Shapiro, and Giselle Makani on the field for the first time since last year. Photo: Audrey Bichoupan



Sophomore lacrosse players Aaron Harouny and Doron Sedaghat throwing a ball before their first team practice on April 23. Photo: Menash Harooni

Hole in One At The Masters

ADDISON KLEBANOV '23
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The Masters tournament: fans, trophies, money, and more. Players endorse four major golf tournaments, each run by the Professional Golfers' Association (PGA). Being the largest of the four, the Masters Tournament premieres each Spring with a large following.

In Atlanta, the Masters takes on some of the world's greatest modern golfers, competing for the most renowned trophy in the industry: the Green Jacket. With skill and experience comes reward. Last year, Dustin Johnson won \$2.07 million for earning first place. Cameron Smith and Sungjae Im tied for second took home \$1.01 million each.

Top scorers aren't the only lucky ones. With everyone in the top 60 earning at least \$25,000, the Masters serves as one of the most costly, and competitive tournaments on the planet. In years past, the United States has dominated the tournament and an American has ended up taking first place.

The most recent event, in 2021, marks the first time someone from Japan won the tournament. Hideki Matsuyama edged out American Will Zalatoris by one point and American Jordan Spieth by three points. Matsuyama's victory is a huge deal for Japan. He is now one of the most famous people from Japan and has brought honor and glory to his

country. His face is on numerous billboards and posters. Tenth grader Joelle Kokhabi describes Matsuyama's victory as "defying the odds" and "progressive".

Heading into the Masters tournament there were many concerns about COVID-19 spreading. Golf tournaments require lots of people. Typically, each golf player competing has their own caddy who manages clubs and drives their golf cart.

There are tens of thousands of spectators at a Masters Tournament. PGA requires spectators to wear a cloth mask, N95 mask, KN95 mask or a surgical mask. Spectators are not allowed to wear masks with ventilators, face shields without a mask, and a bandana as a mask - distancing protocols are also required. If any spectator is suffering from any sort of sickness they were required to stay home.

Finally, all payments must be contactless. To qualify for the Masters Tournament a player must win or place very high in another big tournament such as the British Open Champions or the US Golf Open.

Hideki Matsuyama is going to receive more than fame and \$2 million. Matsuyama is going to be one of the biggest targets for sponsors. Sponsors will pay large sums of money to partner with the 29-year-old Matsuyama. Sportspromedia.com mentions, "Bob Dorfman, a sports marketing executive at Baker Street Advertising, later told Sportico that a Masters triumph 'is easily worth US \$600 million to Matsuyama.'" The two million Hideki Matsuyama earned is nothing compared to what he could make from sponsors. Hideki Matsuyama being the first Japanese born player to win first place at the Masters



Hideki Matsuyama posing with the 2021 Masters Trophy, wearing the iconic green jacket that is reserved for Augusta National members and golfers who win the Masters. Photo: NBC Sports

Tournament only adds to how much sponsors are willing to pay. Currently, Matsuyama "earns between US \$8 million and US \$10 million a year from his partnerships with the likes of Lexus, Srixon and Nomura Securities" (Sportspromedia.com). Those figures were before he won the tournament when he was at 35-1 odds. Now, those sponsors are going to either increase their pay to Matsuyama or let him leave for other sponsors willing to pay more.

Ethan Schulman, a sophomore, said: "I think Hideki Matsuyama truly has a unique one-of-a-kind opportunity to appeal to Japanese people strictly but not fully limiting to the fact that he is Japanese." Mr. Schulman's quote embodies how valuable Hideki Matsuyama is in terms of talent, potential, fame and progressiveness.

There were a few key moments in Hideki Matsuyama's win at the Masters. Although he dominated throughout the tournament, he was in trouble a few times. On the last day Matsuyama bogeyed on the opening hole. A bogey is one over par with par being the expected shots it would take an expert to hit the ball in the hole.

Considering the Masters Tournament contains the best players from all over the world, a bogey is pretty awful and Matsuyama should be getting birdies. Nevertheless, Matsuyama recovered and had consecutive birdies to take the lead on the front nine. Ultimately, Matsuyama edged out Will Zalatoris for the win.

The Rise of Sports Cards

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The sports card industry has grown by 142 percent in the last year alone, and the growth does not seem to be slowing down anytime soon. The industry has made a massive impact on culture, with certain cards being valued in the millions — and it has even begun to expand into the online market.

Sales in every sports card category grew by a wide margin last year as collectors, investors, and fans pounced on both current and vintage cards in what has become an explosive growth market in collectibles. According to eBay, sales

of soccer cards have increased by an astronomical 1,586 percent from 2019 to 2020. The industry-wide surge in collecting and flipping trading cards can be largely attributed to people staying at home and finding new ways to spend their time, turning to cards while

there was a lack of sports on TV. Many of these people are young adults, who have turned to cards as a side hobby in order to make money. Jesse Toro, one of many GNN students who have gotten into sports cards, said “since the pandemic started, sports cards have become a lucrative and rewarding hobby of mine. I find the market very interesting to observe and to be involved in.”

With such a rise in the market, investors view sports cards as another profitable investment to diversify their portfolios. As the sports card industry continues to rise, so does the outrageous prices of the rarest cards. On August 23, a one-of-a-kind Mike Trout rookie card sold for a record-breaking price. The ultra-rare collectible, a 2009 Bowman Chrome Draft Prospects Superfractor card signed by Trout, sold for \$3.936 million during an online auction held by Goldin Auctions, according to Reuters. That price easily tops the \$3.12 million the T206 Wagner sold for in October 2016, which previously held the lucrative record. The sale price marks a dramatic increase in value since the Trout card was last sold in 2018 for \$400,000. This substantial increase in card value certainly reflects the rise of the industry in which it exists.

The most expensive trading card sale to date was the sale of a baseball card. It was a Mickey Mantle card which sold for \$5.2 million in 1952. The second most expensive card sale was of young basketball phenom Luka Doncic back in February. The 1 of 1, original Logoman autographed card sold for \$4.6 million.

There are certain icons in the industry that are very influential. Such icons include Gary Vaynerchuk and Dave Oancea. Gary Vaynerchuk, also known as Gary Vee, spent the past few years on social media hyping up the sports-card market, encouraging ardent sports fans to purchase professionally graded cards of top legends and emerging prospects. In 2019, Vaynerchuk signed a deal with Topps that included his own insert set in Topps' flagship series, as well as a limited-edition standalone set he personally curated. “I had an insert in Topps Series 2,” he said. “Go to the five and dime, go to 7-Eleven, go to a sports card store, open a pack, and there I am. I mean, even right now, I can't stop smiling. It's just insane.”



Gary Vaynerchuk is one of the most prominent figures in the sports card industry, and has invested millions of dollars in the market. Photo: Forbes

card, everyone said I was crazy for spending almost half a million on a piece of cardboard,” says the 43-year-old Oancea, who claims he bought the 2009 Trout, a “superfractor” made by Topps' Bowman collection, from a Taiwanese collector he met on eBay in 2018 for \$400,000.

With the sports card industry gaining serious attention, as well as the prospect of non-fungible tokens (NFT's), the NBA partnered with the Canadian-based Dapper Labs to make its own version of a collectible digital asset, called NBA Top Shot. NBA Top Shot, put simply, is an online forum for trading virtual basketball cards. Fans can buy and sell video clips of their favorite players, called “moments,” from recent seasons. These “moments” are crypto-collectible, meaning consumers can purchase them as an NFT. Essentially, even if somebody makes a perfect copy of the highlight video, it will instantly be recognizable as a fake.

With the sports card industry continuing to gain momentum and attention across the world, it would not be a surprise to see more lucrative business in the coming years.

Sports cards certainly have and continue to have an impact on culture. With the shift towards a greater dependency on the internet came a younger group of card collectors; as a result, “group breaking” was born. Collectors are using social-media platforms now more than ever, showcasing their exciting attempts of opening limited or valuable cards.



Photo: Sports Collectors

Soccer Leagues in the COVID Age

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One year ago, the preeminent soccer leagues within Europe such as the Premier League and Bundesliga felt the looming presence of COVID-19. The virus altered league schedules, diminished teams, and ultimately brought the single most impactful sport in the world to a standstill. A common practice that every single country in the world shares, soccer has the ability to unite people, becoming the foundation of many countries' national identity. The sport did just that, uniting to overcome the rampant effects of COVID; yet, now European soccer faces an arguably greater threat. An unprecedented menace, threatening to obstruct its natural order.

On April 18, 12 of Europe's leading soccer clubs came together to announce they have agreed to establish a new mid-week competition, the Super League, which would be governed by its founding clubs. The 12 football clubs of AC Milan, Arsenal FC, Atlético de Madrid, Chelsea FC, FC Barcelona, FC Internazionale Milano, Juventus FC, Liverpool FC, Manchester City, Manchester United, Real Madrid CF, and Tottenham Hotspur founded this league and anticipate the induction of three other clubs prior to the beginning of the season. When complete, these 15 teams will have a solidified spot within this League and

five additional teams will be added every year based on previous performance. According to the founding clubs, each team will continue to take part in their domestic leagues. This league will take place in additional mid-week matches. Two groups of 10 will take part in home and away matches, with the top three in each group automatically qualifying for a knockout stage. Teams who place fourth and fifth in each league will compete in a two-leg match to see who qualifies for the knockouts. Then, those remaining eight teams will take part in two-leg knockout format to reach a single final, which will take place at a neutral stadium.

One of the claims made by organizers of the Super League claim that it will, as Real Madrid President states, “save football” by increasing interest within the sport, ensuring that each match will be entertaining and competitive as the league is composed of elite teams. The harsh reality is, however, that the reasoning for the creation of the Super League is money. The owners of each team that joins would benefit extensively from the monetary rewards of joining. Each founding member stands to gain around \$400 million merely to establish a secure financial foundation. That is four times the amount Bayern Munich received for winning the Champions League, the Super League's main contender. Additionally, J.P. Morgan has agreed to underwrite an initial \$4.2 billion with a possibility that outside investors will be

offered the opportunity to participate. This increased revenue could nourish the fiscal hole left by COVID's restrictions on some of Europe's most influential soccer teams.

Despite the great economic effects the Super League would have on the teams joining it, the remaining leagues and teams could suffer immensely. Various leagues have already announced that the clubs taking part in the European Super League will not be allowed to play in their country's league. If the 15 teams joining the Super League are removed from the respective league, there will understandably be a drop in viewership as the quality of those leagues will be affected as well. The Premier League, the most notable league in Europe, is losing six teams (Manchester United, Manchester City, Liverpool, Arsenal, Chelsea, and Tottenham Hotspur) to the Super League and will feel their loss greatly. The monetary holdings that each Super League team gains will only ensure a continuation of their dominance as they will be able to poach players from smaller teams with relative ease through irrefutable contracts.

The abrupt announcement of the Super League initiation resulted in immediate backlash from soccer's top regulatory administrations. The UEFA, the organization that runs international soccer in Europe, threatens to ban players who follow their clubs to the Super League from the World Cup and European championship. FIFA, the international association that governs soccer, has also indicated that it will block players from outside of Europe from representing their nations in the World Cup should they follow their clubs to the Super League. FIFPro, the global player's union, although claiming its opposition measures that would block players from representing their country in international events, stated that the Super League could negatively impact the cultural identity of the sport.

While administrators have taken a significant stand to prevent the insinuation of the Super League, it has been the fans who have had the largest impact in fighting the league and its detrimental effects. Fans, who have been a vital component of European soccer since its creation, feel as though they have been ignored within the establishment of a Super League. Soccer fans are so passionate about the sport they witness due to its simple familiarity. Fans have had a large impact publicly speaking out against the Super League. Even fans of some of the Super League clubs are against the move, as demonstrated by the Liverpool fans that protested against the proposed Super League in front of the club's stadium on April 19.

Fans feel threatened by the warning to the traditional order of the sport they admire so much, and rightfully so. They are witnessing just another example of their sport, created by the poor, being stolen by the rich.



Fans are outraged by the recent abrupt announcement of the Super League, as they feel as if they are being betrayed by the teams that they have so long admired. Photo: Sports News

BLAZERS TAKE ON PLAYOFFS

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With the fall season winding down and many teams having successful seasons, it is a good time to recognize the athletes in our school and their great achievements. The unforeseen COVID-19 pandemic has posed many restrictions that coaches and students must adhere to in order to ensure that sports in our school will be played in the safest conditions possible so student-athletes can continue pursuing their passions. Luckily, many students chose to make the best out of the given situation, and despite the tough situation, they have excelled in their athletic endeavors.

Despite the tough conditions due to the pandemic, varsity volleyball player Christine Zhou commented, "The season was really good. I love the people on the team and everyone was super supportive of one another. I think everyone improved despite the challenges we faced in the midst of the pandemic."

The playoffs, postseason, and/or finals of a sports league are a competition played after the regular season by the top competitors to determine the league champion.

Varsity boys soccer did extremely well this season and made it to the playoffs. Before their championship game, Denis Rivera, a player on the varsity team, remarked, "I can say that it was a tough start to the season. We did not know how to play with each other, but every day, we were learning new things that would help us in the second half of the season and the results we wanted finally showed up." Persistence, along with commitment and passion, were tools that many athletes utilized to consistently motivate themselves during the fight to reach their athletic and academic goals. He mentioned, "I, along with some other guys, were moved to varsity after the

junior varsity season ended, but we are not on the roster with the varsity team because of COVID, which is a bit confusing."

The spectator guidelines state that Great Neck Public Schools are not allowing visiting spectators at any games. No visiting or home spectators are permitted to view indoor sports games. In an outdoor sports game, two adult spectators or Great Neck North athletes per player are permitted. No students unaccompanied by a parent or guardian are allowed to spectate. There is a lot of controversy surrounding these restrictions. Now that the world is slowly recovering from the pandemic, more lenient restrictions likely are going to be administered. There is a possibility that sometime soon, as more sports are going to be played outdoors, that visitors will be allowed to accompany players in support.

Athletes have worked very hard this year to work their way through the hindrances of high school and the pandemic yet they have managed to persevere and better themselves in the sports of their choosing.

Senior Julia Zalta, who is attending the University of Delaware for volleyball in the fall, explained, "Great Neck North volleyball is a program I will forever be grateful for. This season, no matter what the records showed, was by far one of the most talented teams we have had since I've been in high school. There was so much growth and improvement from each player on and off the court, and we as a team did an amazing job at being respectful and composed as we faced adversity." Julia had a particularly strong season. She was a top 25 player on Long Island and went all-county. She continued, "Winning the sportsmanship award for our conference was just proof of our ability to be supportive of each other and other teams we faced. The players all played for each other and making it to the play-

offs was an accomplishment on its own."

Fellow varsity player Claire Kamali said: "despite losing in the first round, playoffs were still an amazing and rewarding experience for our continued hard work. Not only did everyone work tirelessly every day this season, but the individual effort and teamwork from all years prior led us to solidify our spot in the playoffs." The girls worked extremely hard this year regardless of the obstacles presented to them by the present conditions in the world. Our team didn't make it to the playoffs last year, but all pieces of the puzzle fell into place so that we were able to solidify our position this year. We hope to come back strong next year and make Great Neck North girls volleyball history by being the first team ever to make it past the first round of the playoffs."

Although there were no playoffs this season for our bowling team, an exceptional member, junior Caitlin Liu, crushed the final game of the season against rival Great Neck South earning an astounding score of 198, which was also her personal best. Liu said, "I'm glad this season was still conducted during the pandemic. This season granted me the opportunity to improve my skills. I was allowed to grow relationships with more fellow athletes and peers, and I am very grateful for it all, even with all of the challenges that came with this season. This team is so amazing, and even though we did not get the record we hoped

for, it was a terrific season regardless."

The inclusivity and togetherness of all of Great Neck North sports teams have evidently been helpful for the athletes as they often credit their hard work and success this season on the team effort by their teammates.

Boys varsity soccer's playoff game against Glen Cove commenced on April 25th at 7 pm. Great Neck North advanced to class A championship with a 2-1 win. Torofsky and Avakook scored the two goals that resulted in an incredible victory. Jared Ohebsalom remarked on their team's success by stating, "One team, one dream, one family."

After the semifinals, the Blazers played against Garden City to compete for who wins the county championship. Garden City was undefeated this season and only allowed two goals the whole season before they played against the boys' varsity soccer team. The Blazers were the underdogs in this game as they were the 10th seed going up against the previous county champions.

The Blazers were down 2-0 in the first half. However, in the second half, Alex Geula scored the first goal, keeping the Blazers' spirit alive. In the final 30 seconds, Ben Avakook scored the game-tying goal to keep the season alive. The game reached double overtime, but in the end, the final score of this game was 2-2 as both teams were named co-champions of Nassau County.



On April 22, Alex Geula scored the only goal for Great Neck North High to advance them over South Side in the Semifinals. The final score was 1-0. Photo: Varsity Media