



GUIDE POST

NORTH HIGH'S STUDENT NEWSPAPER

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FEBRUARY 2021
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CAPITOL RAID RESULTS IN 2ND IMPEACHMENT OF TRUMP

GISELLE MAKANI '23
STAFF WRITER

The world watched in disbelief as alleged Trump supporters laid siege on the United States Capitol building amidst news of President-elect Joe Biden's certification as the next president of the United States of America. The violent intrusion on Jan. 6 not only incited fear and threatened the lives of lawmakers who were forced to take shelter in the building, but left multiple people wounded and even dead.

The vast majority of North High students recognize this ordeal as an attack on our democracy and therefore condemn the actions of those complicit. Representative Mondaire Jones of New York said that it was a "complete disparate treatment and implausible to imagine a situation where we didn't know enough to have adequate resources to prevent the breach today." President Trump is accused of mishandling and inciting the riots, and consequently has been the first president in U.S. history to be impeached twice. The primary cause of the raid was the belief that the election was stolen from President Trump and that action must be taken to protect the legitimacy of the election.

It is widely agreed that Trump fostered the belief when he made comments that promoted the idea that the election was fraudulent. The morning before the raid, Trump commented during a rally: "I know that everyone here will soon be marching over to the Capitol building to peacefully and patriotically make your voices heard."

Not long after he made those remarks, the U.S. Capitol was stormed and vandalized by many of his supporters. Vice President Mike Pence was under fire



On January 6th, 2021, thousands of rioters stormed the US Capitol building during the confirmation of Joe Biden as President-Elect. (Photo: Bill Clark / Getty Images).

by Trump and his protestors for reportedly admitting that he would refuse to go along with Trump's demands: to illegally block the confirmation of Biden's Electoral College victory. This resulted in the mob becoming more ruthless and angry.

Trump tweeted, "Mike Pence didn't have the courage to do what should have been done to protect our country and our Constitution"...The USA demands the truth!" The supporters went as far as to send death threats to both Pence and his family. President-elect Joe Biden openly criticized the attack and followed by calling on Trump to reach out to the mob, hoping he'd convince them to stand back and leave the site. Trump responded by releasing a series of tweets that contained a video message that told his supporters to "go home with love and in peace."

In an effort to contain the mob and restore order, Washington Mayor Muriel Bowser requested the deployment of the National Guard and issued a citywide 6 p.m. ET curfew. For the most part, the two political parties have come to the same conclusion; the break-in was outrageous, unacceptable, and should not have happened.

Various items are reported missing from the Capitol building as a direct consequence of the siege. The individuals gained access to individual chambers and offices and remained at large within the Capitol complex for well over two hours. "Items, electronic items were stolen from senators' offices, documents and ... we have to identify what was done to mitigate that," said

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Boeing 737-500 Crash Leaves about Five Dozen Dead

BENJAMIN COHEN '23
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

A Boeing 737 passenger plane carrying 62 people unexpectedly crashed into the ocean shortly after take-off from Indonesia's capital, Jakarta, on Jan. 9. Currently, there has been no word or evidence of any survivors. The Sriwijaya Air plane disappeared from radar approximately four minutes into its journey.

Sriwijaya Air, founded in 2003, is a budget airline that flies to Indonesian and other southeast Asian destinations. The plane was en route from Jakarta to Pontianak, the capital of West Kalimantan province on Indonesia's Borneo island, on a flight that was expected to take approximately 90 minutes. Just minutes after takeoff, the plane dropped over 3,000 meters, in a short span of just 60 seconds.

Witnesses of the crash have affirmed that they had seen at least one explosion. This comes right after Boeing was cleared by the Federal Aviation Administration to fly their planes only three months ago after several dangerous crashes due to software malfunc-



The mother of flight attendant Isti Yudha Prastika, Iriyaningsih, weeps at the funeral of her daughter, who passed away in the Sriwijaya Air plane crash, on Jan. 16. Photo: The New York Times.

tions. Why the plane was cleared to fly less than three months ago if there were still problems in their hardware is a question that has yet to be answered.

This severe and fatal crash has placed Indonesia's poor air safety record under a new spotlight. According to the New York Times, a crab fisherman was working on the water when Sriwijaya Air Flight 182 fell out of the sky, just 300 feet from where he was fishing, with shards of plywood almost hitting his ship and nearly killing him.

"The plane fell like lightning into the sea and exploded in the water," he said. "It was pretty close to us, the shards of a kind of plywood almost hit my ship."

There were 50 passengers on board the plane - including seven children and three babies - and 12 crew on board, though the plane has a capacity of 130. Officials have confirmed that everyone on board was Indonesian.

According to registration details,

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BIDEN'S INAGURATION

LEILA BAKHSI '23
GUIDE POST STAFF

President Biden was sworn into office on Jan. 20, with the promise of a return to democracy and a silent prayer for those who lost their lives at the hands of the COVID-19 pandemic. Following the invocation of the ceremony given by Rev. Leo O'Donovan, the first national poet laureate, Amanda Gorman, read her poem "The Hill We Climb." Soon after, Lady Gaga performed the National Anthem and Jennifer Lopez sang "This Land is Your Land."

The president's Inaugural Address received much praise for its emphasis on bringing back the high caliber of ethics and integrity of past United States political leaders. "We have learned again that democracy is precious. Democracy is fragile. And at this hour, my friends, democracy has prevailed," declared President Biden.

U.S. citizens reported being able to sleep better that night, overcome with a sense of relief after the inauguration. Meena Harris, Vice-President Harris' niece, tweeted, "The air feels SO FRESH I can breathe SO EASILY."

The official 59th inaugural ceremony was unlike any other with large crowd size reductions in response to the pandemic. The main form of viewing the events of the day was switched to live-streamed broadcasts, including a televised virtual parade.

The famous Inaugural Luncheon was also drastically reduced in size from the average of nearly 200,000 guests to being completely closed off from the pub-

lic. Former President Trump's refusal to attend the inauguration was yet another breach in over 150 years of tradition. Besides the day's festivities,

Health Organization (WHO), an extension on evictions and foreclosures, rejoining of the Paris Climate deal, rescinding of the 1776 commission put into place by

change. Biden has already announced his intention to rejoin the Paris Climate Agreement which former President Donald Trump left. Biden also canceled the construction of the Keystone XL pipeline.

Biden has also signed executive orders in attempt to heal the racial divide that America is facing. Some key legislation that he passed includes limiting or ending federal contracts with private prisons, and has recomitted the federal government to respect tribal sovereignty.

Biden has also appointed one of the most diverse presidential cabinets in American history. Some of his most prominent appointments include Janet Yellen, the first woman to be appointed to the Treasury Department, and Deb Haaland for secretary of the Interior making her the first woman to lead a Cabinet agency.

Biden's administration planned his first ten days in office based around the main issue they want to tackle each day. After the critical first ten days, the plans become more broad as he approaches his next milestone of 100 days as president.

On the agenda are two central objectives, to assist families in need of financial aid and to act against the coronavirus pandemic. His first step to getting the pandemic under control is to vaccinate 150 million Americans in his first 100 days of office. This has raised much controversy, as some believe this number is unachievable in the time set, but Biden is moving forward strong with an authorization already sent for the Defense Production Act to increase the vaccine supply.

The country, along with the rest of the world, is on its toes to see how President Biden will spend the next four years.



Caption: Biden takes the oath of office at his inauguration on the West Front of the U.S. Capitol, declaring him the 46th president. Photo: Alex Wong

there was much work to be done by the new president and vice president.

Biden signed at least 17 executive orders on his first day and 30 total over the course of his first three days in office. These orders called for a mask mandate on federal grounds, return to the World

Trump, protection of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program (DACA), the end of the border wall constructions, the end of the travel ban, among many more.

One thing the Biden administration wants to focus on over the next several years is the fight against climate

A NEW WAY TO CELEBRATE VALENTINE'S DAY

REBECCA KARPEL '22
GUIDE POST STAFF
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CONTRIBUTING WRITER

In response to Valentine's Day approaching, the Fine and Performing Arts Department is holding its first performance of 2021. Since they cannot all gather in the auditorium like they normally do to commemorate a semester of learning music, by virtue of COVID-19 pandemic, this event will be held virtually for the first time.

"Typically the concert features students in the vocal music program that perform songs of their choice, usually having a Valentine's Day theme," said Dr. Levy.

This digital concert premieres around Valentine's Day, so students who take part in band and chorus are performing a variety of romantic and love songs to fit the holiday's theme and aesthetic. Sophomore Maverick Williams and junior Sara Rafael are the student presenters for the choir.

Holding a concert virtually comes with many challenges for the students and the conductor. "[We have had to] adapt in that we use a great deal of technology: Zoom lessons and audio-video recordings," said Levy.

To make the final concert run more smoothly, Mr. Rutkowski has the students send in an audio recording of themselves playing, and combines them all into a single audio. He then holds a Zoom for those students and records it with their combined audio to add video. Songs performed in-

clude "Falling in Love with Love," "I Love Paris," Isn't It Romantic," "My Funny Valentine" and "My Romance."

ic comes to an end soon, and we will have physical concerts once again."

During class, students are still lim-



Junior Chantal Sadighpour practicing singing "Just Another Woman in Love" by Anne Murray before North High's Valentine's Day performance. Photo: Dr. Levy

Yet some North High student musicians remain upset at the lack of in-person performances.

"[Even with all of this extra effort] the vibe is just not the same," said senior Daniel Choi. "I and many other musicians wish to perform with a live audience and play pieces without any cuts. Hopefully, the pandem-

ited with playing their instruments. Between masks and arising technical difficulties, Rutkowski had to completely change how he runs his classes. To avoid issues during class, the orchestra plays only when they are physically in school.

"The people on Zoom are usually muted, so Rutkowski either shares his screen and plays a video of a professional

orchestra playing and we follow along, or we just play on our own," said junior Angelina Dayani. "Rutkowski [also] allows the people who are remote to play, so the fully remote students can be heard."

Moreover, some students play woodwind instruments that require them to blow into it. Since students are required to wear masks at all times when in the building, those who play woodwind instruments cannot play during class, which can be a hindrance to their progress. Alternatively, they hum to the music during class.

"It is difficult for the students, especially since they surely miss playing together in a large group," explained Rutkowski.

Furthermore, Friday morning lobby music has moved over to Zoom. There is actually a Zoom link that you can join on Friday mornings that will bring you to the musicians in school that day who are playing lobby music in room 218.

This year has been extremely difficult for the music department as they cannot meet in person making it hard to play as a group. Despite all of the challenges they have faced, they are continuously working hard to make the first virtual concert as good as the previous ones.

And the efforts aren't all in vain: senior Katherine Smolens said that while she misses singing with various groups, she is also "really happy that [they are] continuing some of [her] favorite music traditions this year!" Although these traditions will be carried out differently, everyone is doing their best to make sure they are preserved.

NORTH HIGH CELEBRATES BLACK HISTORY MONTH

BRIELLE NASSI '23
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

In honor of Black History Month, several students from North High have designed a display located outside of the school library. This display features a multitude of books written by African American authors, introduc-

lie Lampione, Chloe Chu, and Ryan Mah, the club's presidents, have been working diligently to help draw attention to the influence of Black History Month and grasp the importance of celebrating African American culture.

"Our main goal for this project was to help integrate the idea of Black History month into our school and everyday



KELLY CHU '21
COLUMNIST

Farmers in India have taken to the streets in protest since the Parliament of India passed certain agricultural bills in Sept. 2020, deregulating the way farmers do business. The Agricultural Produce Marketing Committee (APMC) previously protected farmers from exploitation in the free market, as farmers could sell their goods at assured minimum prices that were carefully controlled by the government. The government acted as a middle man, mandating

INDIA PASSES NEW AGRICULTURAL BILLS

interference in the agricultural industry was a result of the famine and poverty-stricken time period of the 1960s in India. During this time, the country was struck by two devastating droughts, resulting in widespread famine. India then became dependent on the U.S. for food aid. It was only after India's government stepped in to regulate the market, control price floors, and offer support to farmers that the country was able to slowly recover.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, one of India's most dominant political figures, now faces significant backlash across the country for his efforts to re-



An Indian farmer working while trying to make enough money with the new bills passed in New Delhi, India. Photo: Anupam Nath



Set up in the library by North High's Human Rights Club are a display of books and works of literature conveying the important themes emphasized during Black History Month. Photo: David Kahan

ing the significance of black literature.

Some of these books have shown different perspectives of systemic racism, black history, and social justice. Other books focus on black protagonists in books including superhero comics or coming-of-age novels. Some books for display include "White Fragility" by Robin DiAngelo, "Medical Apartheid" by Harriet A. Washington and "We Are Not Yet Equal" by Carol Anderson."

Black History Month is the yearly celebration of achievements by people of color, and a time to appreciate and bring recognition to the central role that African Americans have played throughout U.S. history. Black History Month gives everyone the opportunity to share, celebrate and understand the importance of black heritage and culture.

Since 1976, all American presidents have designated the month of February as Black History Month, and endorsed each year as a specific theme. This year's Black History Month theme is "Black Family: Representation, Identity and Diversity."

Senior Aliza Fine and junior Sara Rafael were a major help in setting up the display. "I picked out mainly books on racism and the civil rights movement, but also a few other issues like homophobia, transphobia and antisemitism," said Fine.

In the entrance of North High, a poster board has been created and put for display. It reads "Celebrating Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.". The board contains information on how to honor Dr. King's dream, and for students to take positive actions within the community.

QR codes have been placed on the board to be scanned by students to receive information on how to take action, educate themselves, and volunteer within the community. Students can use a smartphone or iPad to interact digitally with these codes.

The Human Rights Club has been the primary catalyst for the Black History Month library display. Seniors El-

lie Lampione, Chloe Chu, and Ryan Mah, the club's presidents, have been working diligently to help draw attention to the influence of Black History Month and grasp the importance of celebrating African American culture.

"The library display is extremely important because it helps foster an awareness for Black History Month. This month is a time to remember the important people and achievements of the African community," said Mah. "The library display allows for more students to make contact and learn about black history, which would be vital in creating a more unified and supportive community."

While it is unknown whether the display will be continued in the upcoming years, it is safe to say that the work of the Human Rights Club will bring enough attention and support to become a new North High tradition.

In addition to the Black History Month library display, the Human Rights Club is also collaborating with the GSA and Social Justice Awareness Club to create possible fundraisers, posters in hallways around school, zoom meetings to discuss the importance of this month, and class speakers throughout the school. Each activity is aimed to bring awareness and recognition to this significant time of the year.

This library display introduces a new way to reach the Human Rights Club's goal of bringing awareness to Black History Month. With the help of North High's students, recognition towards the contribution made to our nation's culture by black citizens is remarked.

During this time, individuals are given the opportunity to reflect on how far the nation has come, and how far we are going to go. By understanding the struggles that our nation has faced, we will learn to fight our own.

how low the price of a certain product could fall. They ensured that farmers could not be exploited and forced to sell their goods at an unreasonably low price just to compete in the market.

With these price floors, even smaller farmers could rely on a minimum fixed income every growing season. The wholesale of agricultural goods was also limited only to the physical market yards of the APMC under this system, which was called the mandi system. These recent agricultural reforms, however, attempted to limit government involvement and to deregulate India's agricultural industry. These bills gave farmers the option of selling their products directly to private buyers with no guaranteed minimum prices, completely cutting out the middleman. These bills laid down the foundation for a nationwide transition away from the established system.

These agricultural reforms have been vehemently opposed by many farmers throughout the country. Of the country's 1.3 billion people, more than 60% work in the agricultural industry. With COVID-19 crippling urban economies, even more people now depend on agriculture for their livelihoods. Without the mandi system and protected minimum prices, farmers lose an essential bargaining chip. If a private buyer offers an unsatisfactory price, farmers will no longer have the mandi system as a back-up option, or even a minimum price for certain crops in order to at least guarantee a fixed income. Without these already meager government protections, many farmers fear that they will be completely defenseless against big business and corporate greed. Thus, these recent reforms have been immensely unpopular, especially as farmers themselves were not consulted before these bills were passed. Although these reforms were meant to increase private investment and to streamline the industry, opposers of these bills have deemed them "anti-farmer."

The large amount of government

shape the agricultural industry and liberalize the country's economy, or loosen government restrictions. He plans to nearly double India's economy by 2024.

Since the passing of the bills in September, protests have erupted all over the country, most prominently in New Delhi, the national capital. Although Modi and his administration initially tried to suggest that these protests were fueled by foreign interference and political rivals, his administration recently began engaging in peaceful negotiations with the leaders of farming unions. These talks, though a sign of how powerful the farmers' demonstrations are, have yet to come to a conclusion to break the standoff.

India's Supreme Court finally intervened after several failed rounds of negotiations. The court temporarily suspended the implementation of the new bills until it could assemble a panel of experts to consult both farmers and government officials in order to reach a resolution. Even this proposition, however, has been met with resistance.

"This is the government tactic to reduce pressure on itself . . . All the committee members are pro-government. All are people who so far justified the government laws—they are writing articles to justify the government law," said farmer union leader Balbir Singh Rajewal. "We have decided that our agitation will continue."

These fears, however, are not unfounded. Although the three Supreme Court judges were critical of the bills and the government's response to the protests during the hearing, the committee they assembled was composed of four men; three of whom had openly supported the new reforms and the fourth had tentatively expressed support.

"Today, the country's farmers are in trouble," said chief minister of Delhi Arvind Kejriwal who has openly criticized Modi's administration. "It is our duty as Indians to stand with them and serve them."

U.S. ROLLS OUT COVID-19 VACCINE

SOPHIE FRENKEL '23
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

With COVID-19 cases rising rapidly, the distribution of vaccines is critical to curb the spread of the virus and allow Americans to return to normalcy. The two authorized and recommended vaccines for the United States are currently the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine, which is in the form of two doses administered 21 days apart, and Moderna's COVID-19 vaccine, also in the form of two shots, administered 28 days apart. The Pfizer-BioNTech is recommended for people ages 16 and up, while the Moderna vaccine is only authorized for people 18 and older. On Feb. 4, Johnson & Johnson also announced a vaccine which is 66% effective in preventing COVID-19. The vaccine, unlike the Moderna and Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccines, only requires one dose. The FDA is expected to vote on whether or not to authorize the vaccine on Feb. 26.

Last December, the United Kingdom was the first country to start administering vaccines. Currently, 35 countries worldwide within Europe, Asia, the Americas, and Australia are gradually picking up the speed of vaccination, while African countries are behind in line. Eligibility for COVID-19 vaccines has been divided into phases, with each person's place being determined by several factors: age, occupation, and health status.

The first phase of vaccinations, Phase 1A, is being distributed to healthcare workers and long-term care facility workers. Phase 1B includes essential workers, as well as those with high-risk medical conditions, and adults 65 years and older.

Federal health authorities have announced that by Apr. 2021, vaccines will be available to anyone who wants one, but dates are subject to change due to the uncertainty of efficiency of distribution to the prioritized individuals.

During the first phase of the vaccine roll-out, medical providers were forced to throw out vaccine doses, because they were unable to find people who met the strict criteria of the state. Vaccine doses have a short shelf life, so many healthcare providers either administered the vaccine to those who did not

discarded. In response, N.Y. Governor Cuomo loosened restrictions concerning who can get vaccinated in N.Y. State, allowing a wider range of healthcare workers, essential workers, and the age group of 75 and older to be vaccinated.

Many people reported some side effects several days after receiving the vac-

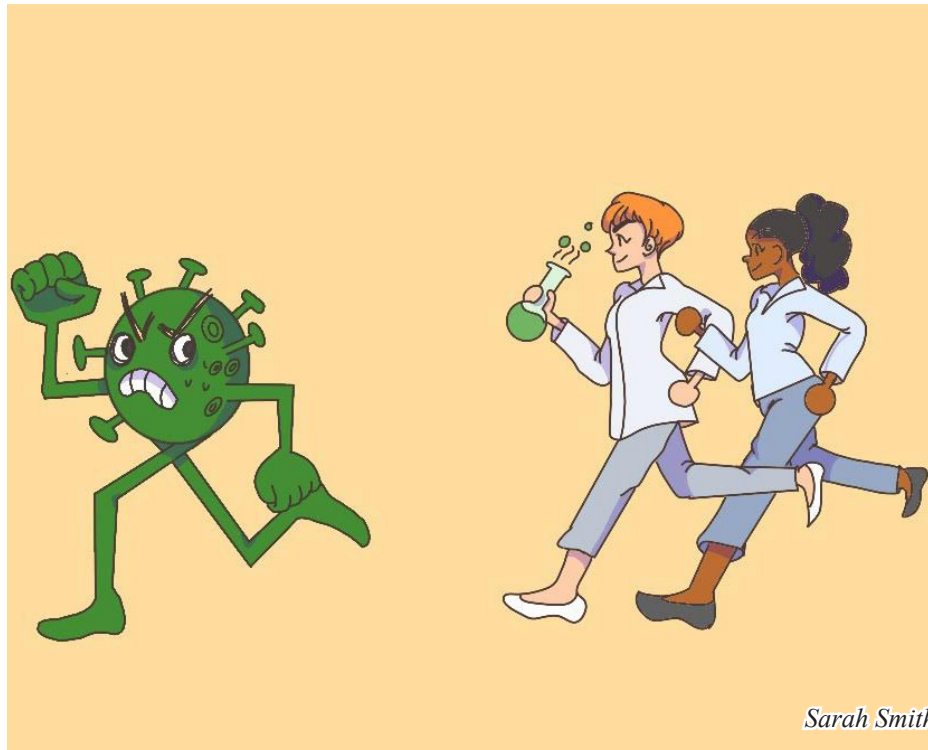
by the end of the summer. Biden has also announced plans to increase vaccine doses for state and local governments for the next several weeks, and to provide them more clarity going forward about how much supply they should expect. Biden hopes to vaccinate about 150 million people, almost 50% of the U.S. population, in his first 100 days of office.

Across the world, mutations of the virus have appeared. These mutations, discovered in South Africa, Brazil, and the U.K., are seemingly even more contagious than the earlier versions of the already contagious vaccines. Scientists estimate the South African variant to be nearly 50% more transmissible, with another suggesting that the U.K. variant being up to 70% more transmissible.

Many fear that the vaccine will not protect them from the mutations of the COVID-19 virus. Some studies have shown limited efficacy of the new vaccines against the British and South African variants, yet Moderna and Pfizer have both announced the development of booster vaccines to combat these strains.

North High faculty have shown their support in getting the vaccine. "I have already scheduled both of my vaccine doses," said Mrs. York. "The science behind vaccinations in general and this vaccine in particular is strong and has been vetted through the same channels as so many other medical advancements." York is hopeful that a return to normalcy is quickly approaching.

Likewise, Mr. Schad had similar views on the COVID-19 vaccine. "I am getting the vaccine; in fact, I have already made my appointment down at Jones Beach. I understand people's trepidation however I am confident that the vaccine will get us all one step closer to normalcy," said Schad. "Humankind's ability to eliminate smallpox and polio are widely considered two of the biggest humanitarian achievements of the modern era, and it was all possible because of vaccines."



Sarah Smith

meet the criteria, or threw out the expired doses. In an effort to speed up vaccinations after a rocky rollout, the U.S. government on Jan. 12 began encouraging states to start immunizing all residents 65 and older, along with those ages 16 and older with certain medical conditions.

Medical providers administering the vaccines were to be subject to a huge fine if caught giving vaccines to those who did not meet the criteria, even if they would otherwise have been

cine: pain and swelling in the area that the shot was given, chills, a fever, fatigue, and headaches. So far, the turnout for the vaccines has been larger than expected in several areas in the U.S. Yet the amount of Americans vaccinated per capita compared to other nations still lags behind.

The Biden administration plans to purchase 200 million doses of the Moderna and Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccines with the hopes of having the whole U.S. adult population vaccinated

CAPITOL RAID RESULTS IN 2ND IMPEACHMENT OF TRUMP

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U.S. Attorney for DC Michael Sherwin.

The raid resulted in massive consequences for the police force. The Department of Justice sent hundreds of federal law enforcement officers and agents from the FBI, ATF, and the U.S. Marshals Service to assist the Capitol Police in addressing the situation. Yet, there were claims that the police force was more lenient to the Trump supporters as opposed to the Black Lives Matter protesters during the protests that took place in the summer.

"If this had been a BLM protest, the police in full military gear would have been present and they would have moved to quickly arrest protesters or use chemicals to disperse them... it highlights the disparities in how U.S. citizens are handled when they protest," said political scientist professor Paula D. McClain.

Many argue that the police showed sympathy towards the protestors. However, the FBI has been working on identifying the attackers, issuing arrests, and warranting charges on those complicit in the attack. The charges prohibit the mob from boarding flights and fleeing the state or country and are followed by other restrictions and repercussions.

Additional results of the attack are the new impeachment papers and al-

legations against Trump. The impeachment of the House alone will not prevent Trump from running for office a second time, rather that decision rests with the U.S. Senate, whose trial began Feb. 9.

The Senate needs a two-thirds majority of its members to vote in favor of the conviction. This would require 17 Republican senators to defect from party line, an unlikely event. If convicted, the Senate is permitted to vote in order to prohibit from holding office in the future and running again.

Furthermore, supporters of the impeachment have professed that Trump is too dangerous to stay in office because of his potential of another destructive protest outbreak. Although the fate of Donald Trump's presidency remains unclear, as he departed the White House he stated that he would "be back in some form" in the future.

Defense officials expressed their concerns for a possible outbreak during President-elect Joe Biden's inauguration. In response, the Federal Bureau of Investigation installed 25,000 National Guardsmen to run security during the inauguration. U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff have signed a letter which was directed to U.S. military personnel, reminding them of their duty to defend the United States Constitution, with the note that Joe Biden was to be their next commander in chief.

Boeing 737-500 Crash Leaves about Five Dozen Dead

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the plane is a 26-year-old Boeing 737-500, not a 737 Max. The Boeing 737 Max was grounded from March 2019 until Dec. 2020 following two deadly crashes.

"The plane was in excellent condition [and] take-off had been delayed for 30 minutes due to heavy rain," Sriwijaya Air chief executive Jefferson Irwin Jauwena, told reporters.

The past crashes coupled with the recent one are sure to have a negative impact on Boeing's already damaged reputation as well as both social and economic consequences.

The plane flown during the incident was out of service for almost nine months last year because of flight cutbacks caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Airline and Indonesian officials announced it underwent inspections for possible engine corrosion, which could have developed during the layoff before it resumed commercial flying in December.

Authorities claimed to have determined the location of the crash site and black boxes of a Boeing 737-500 the following day of the incident.

"In my opinion, the Boeing plane crash story is very tragic," said sophomore Avishai Aghelian. "The plane was even checked and was made sure

it was safe, so the fact that it unexpectedly crashed makes it scarier for me to go on planes... My heart is with the ones that lost their families and loved ones as a result of this crash."

The Indonesian navy was reportedly deployed to look for the aircraft on Jan. 16. The head of Indonesia's National Transportation Safety Committee announced that a team from the U.S. National Transportation Safety Board arrived in Indonesia's capital to join the investigation.

The NTSB joined personnel from Singapore's Transportation Safety Investigation Bureau at the search and rescue command center at Tanjung Priok port in Jakarta to analyze some of the plane debris.

Officials believe they have identified the location of the cockpit voice recorder and flight data recorder, or black boxes, because emergency signals transmitted by the devices were detected by a navy ship's sonar system. Lancang Island, has become the center of this effort.

The local islanders are now surrounded by dozens of vessels offshore, that are searching for bodies, wreckage, and more specifically, the black box. Hopefully, once the black box is discovered, officials will be able to identify the issue that caused this terrible incident and stop it from happening again.

Staff Editorial:

The Kardashian Empire

The Kardashian-Jenner family has announced that their popular reality TV show, “Keeping Up with the Kardashians” (KUWTK), will come to an end in 2021 after 20 seasons. This show defies the odds as many claim it is a waste of time to watch, yet it still receives over 1.3 million viewers.

Over the years, the family has shared personal moments that involve their marriages, children, and careers with their fans. While they are often criticized

herself, she uses her platform to inform people of the often unaddressed issue. In addition, Kim announced her pursuit of a law degree in 2019. While the celebrity’s path is untraditional, as she did not attend college, she has shown a desire to help reform the criminal justice system.

For instance, in 2019, Kim spoke at the White House to advocate for Alice Marie Johnson, a woman who had been imprisoned for 20 years for a nonviolent drug offense. Through Kim’s actions,



Members of the Kardashian-Jenner family from left to right: Kendall Jenner, Kim Kardashian West, Kris Jenner, Kourtney Kardashian, Khloé Kardashian, and Kylie Jenner.
Photo: E! Television

for becoming ‘famous for doing nothing,’ each member of the Kardashian family has become an influence on topics ranging from celebrity, beauty, entrepreneurship, social media, and justice.

When KUWTK first aired, their brazen tackiness shined through the opening credits as the family dressed in glitter and sequins, posing for the camera. 13 years later, the family has shared personal, heart-wrenching stories that opened up global conversations on important issues. Kris Jenner’s ex-husband, now known as Caitlyn Jenner, became a symbol of the transgender community by publicizing her transition.

In Caitlyn’s interview with Diane Sawyer in 2015, both she and her family discussed their emotions about Caitlyn’s transition. The family advocated for the LGBTQ community and supported Caitlyn as she explained that she was “running away from who [she] was.”

Additionally, the Kardashian family has discussed the struggles that come with co-parenting. Kourtney Kardashian and Scott Disick had a tumultuous relationship with problems that stemmed from Scott’s drug abuse and mental state. Over the years, fans have seen the family’s continued support for Scott as he finds the help he needs. Kourtney and Scott have also drastically improved their co-parenting style, proving that parents who split can still maintain a healthy relationship.

Kim, arguably the most well known Kardashian, stands as an advocate against Armenian genocide. As an Armenian

Johnson gained clemency. Thus, by using her platform, Kim Kardashian has made positive impacts on the lives of many.

The impact of the Kardashians goes beyond issues like these, however. The family as a whole has had a major impact on fashion, social media, and the position of women in society. For example, they helped change society’s emphasis on being stick-thin, instead opening up acceptance for curvier figures. Furthermore, they have become some of the most successful women in the world.

Kylie Cosmetics, owned by Kylie Jenner, was actually valued at \$900 million in March of 2019. Meanwhile, SKIMS, owned by Kim Kardashian, has become extremely popular in the clothing industry. The sisters also play a role in popularizing products of other businesses. They often do advertisements on Instagram in order to promote products, allowing businesses which they support to take off. Therefore, the family has opened doors for itself and others.

When we look back towards the early 21st century, we will surely remember the Kardashians as game changers who took the world by storm and twisted the perspectives of many. Kendall’s modelling career, Kylie’s ventures in the beauty industry, and Kim’s fashion will all be seen as examples of success for women. While they may seem like they’re ‘famous for nothing,’ there’s no doubt that the Kardashians have made the most of every opportunity thrown their way and used their platform to forward society as a whole.

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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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Published by the Students of John L. Miller – Great Neck North High School

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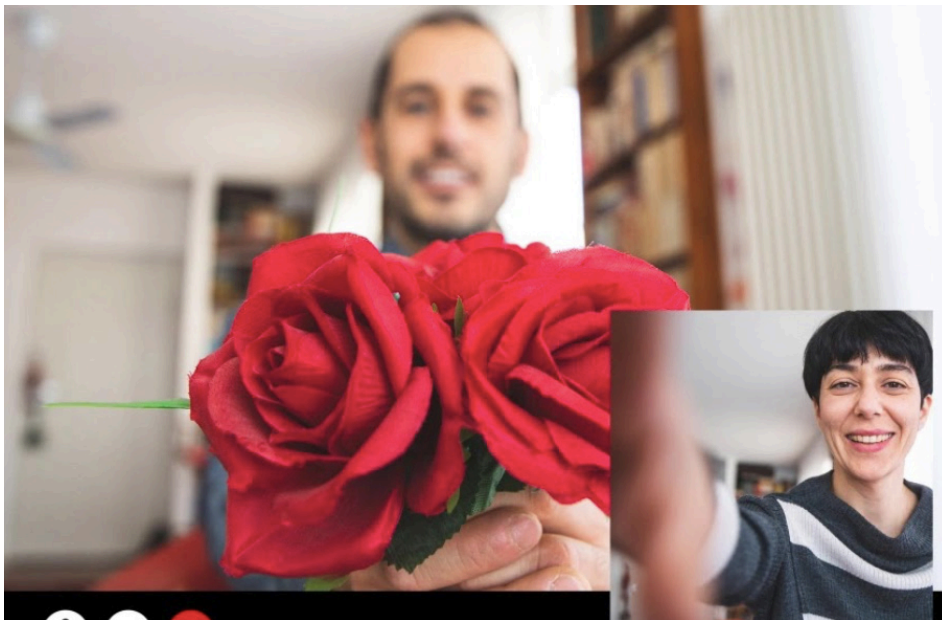
Love in Lockdown

KAYLA HAKIMI '23
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

If your best friend or significant other prior to the COVID-19 pandemic is still by your side, you two are surely meant to be. Regarding friendships, it was a great struggle to maintain memories and laughs, since the presence of others could only be accessed through a phone or device. Through lockdown in the spring, we realized that we had taken many social aspects of life for

the corner, this romantic holiday will either be celebrated by healthy or messy relationships. The COVID-19 pandemic had led to much self-reflection, potentially too much, which either brought couples together or pushed them away. Although couples couldn't interact in person unless they had quarantined together, many people used technological advancements, such as Zoom to stay connected.

One struggle that has broken apart many relationships and friendships during the pandemic is the lack of personal



Couples worldwide are figuring out safe ways to stay connected during the COVID-19 pandemic. Speaking through FaceTime and Zoom allows love to be celebrated on Valentine's Day risk-free. Source: MIT Technology Review

granted, especially the quality time we used to spend with our closest friends. People rely on friendships for security, encouragement, acceptance of their values, well-being, and especially laughter.

Friendships tend to quickly decay once social interactions are eliminated. Each of our friendships has a so-called 'decay rate,' according to Professor Robin Dunbar of evolutionary psychology at the University of Oxford. During the lockdown period, the decay-rate has been at the highest rate ever. Nothing can truly replace face-to-face interaction: not Zoom, not FaceTime, and not WhatsApp. There is something about being able to look through the eyes of another while being in-person that cannot replace contact through a screen. Being in person requires physical touch, such as taps on the shoulder or arm, which make a greater impact than we realize. Whether it was conscious or subconscious, the pandemic has caused many of our friendships to dissolve, decay, and fade away. We let some friendships slip right through our fingers, and for those very special friends, we tried everything in our ability to keep them. In some ways, quarantine helped us grow strong together because we knew we were not going through isolation alone.

Similar to friendships, romantic relationships struggled with adjusting to the challenging restrictions that came with a mandatory lockdown. Relationships were under great pressure as couples coped with the confusion, anxiety, and tension of the pandemic individually. During that period, some couples have improved their relationships. In other instances, however, the added stress may have contributed to many breakups.

With Valentine's Day just around

connections and the reliance on social media. With relationships, it's hard to experience adventures, connections, and growth when you are not physically with one another. "One of the foundations of a close relationship for many people - not all, but many - are physical closeness," says Dr. Sheri Jacobson, Clinical Director of Harley Therapy. She acknowledges that being separated from a partner is challenging and that losing this physical proximity is the most difficult to cope with. "[The pandemic has] strengthened my relationships with loved ones because I knew that if we could get through this, we could get through anything. Through quarantine, my girlfriend and I weren't able to see each other, and although that was a struggle, we got through it and proved to each other we are in it for the long haul," said sophomore Jesse Toro. He knew that these struggles were not going to get in the way of his relationship. This is just one example of the many relationships at North High that survived a global pandemic, although many did not and often ended in a breakup.

Even though quarantine may have been a difficult time for everyone, it was a valuable asset to many people's relationships. Although many relationships have failed over quarantine, the strong and healthy ones made it through, despite the tough obstacles on their path. If a relationship did not last, there was probably a reason why, and there is a lesson to be learned from it. With Valentine's Day coming up, we are now sure the lasting relationships in our lives are healthy and authentic. If two people stayed close during the pandemic, they are likely to survive any other obstacles that may keep them apart.

Smo LENS on Genocide in China

KATHERINE SMOLENS '21
COLUMNIST

On Jan. 19, the last full day the Trump administration was in office, Secretary of state Mike Pompeo announced the State Department's determination that a genocide is being committed by the Chinese government against Uighur Muslims in Xinjiang. The Communist Party authorities "are engaged in the forced assimilation and eventual erasure of a vulnerable ethnic and religious minority group," concluded Pompeo. Antony Blinken, secretary of state under President Joe Biden, also supported Pompeo's statement. Blinken agreed in a recent statement to the Foreign Relations Committee that "forcing men, women and children into concentration camps," is what constituted genocide.

Over the past two years, China has built over a hundred facilities in the Xinjiang region for the Uighur people, a group of people who are for the most part muslim. According to the U.N., authorities have detained as many as one million Uighur people, making this the largest mass internment of an ethnic-religious minority group since World War II. These camps are described as educational training centers, justified by Chinese authorities as an attempt to combat the terrorist threat imposed by the Uighur separatist movement as well as to teach people job skills. However, investigations have exposed the atrocities of these "reeducation facilities." Uighurs both inside and outside of these camps have been exploited for cheap labor. Additionally, former detainees claim that many were forcibly

marks the first major confirmation of genocide by this nation. The Biden campaign stated this past summer that Biden "stands against [the genocide] in the strongest terms." This statement, along with members of Congress speaking out on the issue, indicates a bipartisan effort to put a stop to this genocide. At the time this article is being written, the US is still the only country to officially declare the actions of the Chinese government a genocide. This action puts great pressure on other nations, particularly allies, to speak out against the atrocities being committed against the Uighur people.

It's also important to acknowledge the historical significance of the United States' confirmation of this genocide. The United States has often used the philosophy of "that's not my business" to justify a lack of intervention in times of genocide in order to avoid geopolitical conflict. The country did little to stop the Rwandan genocide, and as much as it proudly proclaims its role in defeating Hitler, the U.S. entered World War II only in response to the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. Their delay in intervening caused the Nazis to have already brutally detained, evacuated, and tortured the Jewish people for two years. To this day, calling the 1915 massacre of Armenians a genocide remains controversial in the U.S. because of its trade partnership with Turkey. The Trump administration's hesitation to declare the actions of the Chinese government a genocide may have been due to the administration's emphasis on building a stronger relationship with China. This declaration comes after years of torture of Uighur people and the erasure of their cul-



America is the first country to officially acknowledge the genocide against the Uyghur people in China and are protesting to stop this oppression and to take action. Source: Politico.eu

fed pork, which is a strictly prohibited in Islam. One recent investigation reported evidence that Uighur women were subject to forced sterilization. Beyond this horrific detention, Uighur cities have changed dramatically in recent years. Towns that once held thousands of Uighurs have been destroyed, and their mosques deserted—a literal demolition of the Uighur culture. Uighur language inscriptions have also been eradicated from street signs and buildings in Urumqi, the city that was once the center of Uighur culture.

Although American government officials from both parties, as well as international leaders have spoken out on the current issue, Pompeo's declaration

ture, but it's still an important initial step.

Hopefully, the Biden Administration will take further action on this extremely important and urgent issue, and the U.S. can be an example to other nations to stand up against China.

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

Travel Shaming

KATIE NG '24

CONTRIBUTING WRITER

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to affect almost every aspect of our lives, the question of whether or not one should travel has become a controversial one not only in the media but also in our Great Neck community. With February break getting closer and the release of the vaccine, many people, including influencers and typical families, may be tempted to travel. As nice as a warm vacation by the beach sounds, I sometimes wonder if the amount of people traveling not only across the world, but even here at North High is putting my health, my family's, and even our entire community's health at risk.

Ever since the pandemic hit, I have been yearning to escape to practically anywhere. Anywhere sounds way better than being stuck here. As much as I would love to hop on a plane and forget all my troubles, I can't help but wonder how could I possibly enjoy myself, knowing that it would be at the cost of other's health?

What do the experts have to say about traveling? Christine Bishara, MD, and founder of From Within Me, a wellness medical practice, who herself has traveled domestically during this pandemic while taking necessary safety precautions, classified trips into three categories: "low-," "medium-," and "high-risk."

Vacations including cruise ships

and bus tours would be high risk, due to a large number of people in a limited and confined space. The medium risk would be trains and air travel, as long as there is proper PPE provided, and all personnel takes proper COVID precautions, such as

ing. Many people argue that these influencers have a responsibility to be a role model, especially with so many people looking up to them. With the privilege of having such a huge platform, they should be taking this opportunity to show oth-

deeper than it seems," explained senior Alina Lyakhov. "They should be influencing the correct activities to engage in during this pandemic, which does not include posting TikToks on the beach."

It's inevitable that people within the North High community will travel during breaks, as it is impossible to control what each private family chooses to do. However, I do believe that it is necessary for the school to take the correct precautions to ensure the safety of those who choose not to travel.

The idea of enforcing a one-week remote learning policy after each break sounds great, but it may also lead to families simply extending their vacations. When traveling, families should be informing the school and making sure that they take the necessary quarantine precautions when doing so. This way, our North High community can stay as safe as possible.

If you or anyone you know is planning to travel, it is important to check the CDC website ([cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus)) for any precautions that need to be taken, along with any risks. A couple of months ago, the infection rate in New York had started to flatten, which to some people, was a sign that they could ignore the virus. However, it has been made clear that in order to stop the spread of this virus and to keep our North High community safe, people must be responsible when traveling, not only for the people around them but also for themselves.



Hundreds of maskless young adults are seen ignoring social distancing guidelines and partying together over December break. Source: [sunsetinel.com](https://www.sunsetinel.com)

sanitizing and maintaining social distancing. The low risk would be road trips. Before any trip, consider things like the infection rate in the area you're visiting or the company that you are traveling with.

Recently, social-media influencers have received a lot of backlash for travel-

ers the right and safe way to get through this pandemic. Influencers are not only putting their own health at risk, but they are also promoting the message that it is safe to travel during these times.

"Influencers have a job, and that is to influence. Sounds simple, but is a lot

Vaccine Distribution

REYNA KIM '22

STAFF WRITER

With the developments of promising COVID-19 vaccines from companies such as Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna, things finally seem to be looking up after a period of struggle caused by a global pandemic. In response to these recent breakthroughs, many nations, including the U.S., have developed vaccination programs designed to distribute vaccines to as many people as possible.

Carrying out an efficient vaccination plan is a priority for the U.S., as it has been struggling to adapt to COVID-19, particularly when compared to other similarly developed countries. Despite the U.S.'s recently improved approach to preventing the virus's spread, our nation's current vaccine distribution plan has major flaws that are affecting vaccine rollout.

The current vaccination plan relies on decentralized distribution, in which individual states and local governments are in charge of the process of personally delivering vaccinations to patients. "The goal of the U.S. government is to have enough COVID-19 vaccine for all people in the United States who wish to be vaccinated," states the CDC. The CDC has also recommended the groups of people that should receive the vaccine first. This group includes the country's 21 million health care workers and elderly citizens. The categorizations seem to be widely agreed upon and are reflected by individual state policies.

The New York Vaccination Plan contains a specific order of groups eligible to receive the vaccine, with high-risk

hospital workers and residents or staff of nursing homes at the head of the list. In order to receive the vaccine in New York, one must determine eligibility by completing a vaccine form. This allows for the retrieval of two doses of the vaccine.

Unfortunately, both nationally and locally, there have been issues revealed within the U.S.'s vaccine distribution plan and rollout. The lack of national uniformity and relative flexibility in regards to vaccination rollout has caused conflicts.

Examples of the infighting spurred by the vaccine's messy rollout includes the clash over distribution between New York Gov. Cuomo and New York City Mayor de Blasio, and limited cohesiveness within the nation. The vaccine delays were also worsened by underfunded and overly occupied state and local health agencies who received the vaccination, causing confusion regarding dosage allotments.

Additionally, according to Dr. Ju-



Thousands of U.S. citizens are receiving COVID-19 vaccines across the country daily. The struggle to maintain the vaccine supply continues. Source: [New York Times](https://www.nytimes.com).

lie Swann, who advised the CDC during the 2009 swine flu pandemic, the central focus of the U.S. vaccination plan is reducing mortality among high-risk populations. In contrast, she suggests that the country should

distribute the vaccine to as many people as possible, no matter their risk level.

Philip Palin, a supply-chain resilience expert, stated that this is resulting in vaccines being allotted to target groups, rather than to more "high-velocity supply chains," and that vaccine production is outpacing vaccine distribution as a result.

In contrast to the slow vaccine rollout in the U.S., Israel stands out in regards to its management of vaccination distribution, having succeeded in vaccinating 20.9 percent of their population, according to OurWorldInData. The United Arab Emirates and Bahrain follow Israel in terms of distribution.

Why has Israel been able to so quickly vaccinate its citizens, as opposed

to the sluggish rollout in many other nations? For one, Israel's relatively small land area, combined with a population of about 9 million people, means that the vaccines are less likely to spoil during shipment, due to the shorter distances.

Additionally, Israel has a universal healthcare system that is both centralized and digitized, which means that eligible citizens are able to easily access their healthcare service for vaccine administration. The nation was also the third country to approve the Moderna vaccine on Jan. 5, and was, therefore, able to launch its vaccine distribution plan before the European Union by more than a week. This is also related to the generally reassuring attitude and lack of skepticism towards vaccinations in Israel, where Prime Minister Netanyahu was the first Israeli to get vaccinated.

Clearly, the U.S. needs to make adjustments to its vaccination plan, especially since vaccine distribution must be administered to the broader population. "There is some kind of online system where you sign up with your information and location, and get informed when it's time for you to get your vaccine," Dr. Pinar Keskinocak suggests. President Biden, who is now responsible for carrying out vaccine distribution, has determined that the U.S. will attempt to administer 100 million COVID-19 vaccines in 100 days.

Given the criticisms that the Trump administration received for their unambitious approach to vaccine distribution, perhaps the new president will approach the issue in an improved and more effective way.

TRUMP'S FINALE

Uncomparable Protests

JONATHAN SANDERS '24
STAFF WRITER

Politics over the past month has mostly revolved around what unfolded at the Capitol. The country is currently healing under Biden's presidency and many Americans are drawing comparisons between the Capitol riots and the Black Lives Matter protests that occurred this summer. I believe that these two comparisons are misguided and it is appalling to see how many people con-

sider them to be morally equivalent.

On Jan. 6, former President Trump held a rally in a park south of the White House, trying to reverse the decisions of the Electoral College. Whether it was intended or not, Trump influenced the crowd, causing chaos as a result. A mob of Trump supporters marched to the Capitol building and broke in, with their intentions being to halt the counting of the Electoral College votes underway in the House and Senate.

Rioters entered the building holding gallows, state flags, and racist, antisemitic, xenophobic views. Congressmen and congresswomen had to flee the building as the rioters broke their way onto the floor of the House, desecrating the rooms and laying waste to much of the building.

As I was browsing social media the following day, I came across a video of a Capitol policeman posing for a selfie with one of the rioters whose MAGA hat blocked the view of the American flag in the background. I read more into this incident and discovered that many of the actions taken by the police on that day exacerbated the conflict. Capitol Police removed a barricade by the Capi-

tol building beforehand for the riot to commence. Right then, a strange sense of irony began to hit me. Hadn't the police cracked down with military force on left-wing protesters just this summer?

I had remembered correctly. In response to the Black Lives Matter protests in June and July, the Capitol steps were lined with officers holding military-grade equipment. However, there are even finer examples of hypocrisy on this matter. It was labeled that the Capitol riots were caused by "not 'peaceful protesters'... as the Democrats call them, they are THUGS," tweeted Trump.

The Tweet Trump sent addressing the rioters called them, "very special. You've seen what happens, you've seen the way others are treated that are so bad and so evil. I know how you feel, but go home and go home in peace," tweeted Trump.

It's hard to overstate how backwards the disparity between the responses are—Trump shamed Black Lives Matter protesters for their actions, or - more specifically - the few who betrayed the movement and looted, while he praised rioters who were threatening to harm government officials. Considering not only these two very distinct responses, the point made by some that the treatment of the two groups was based on race stands valid in my eyes.

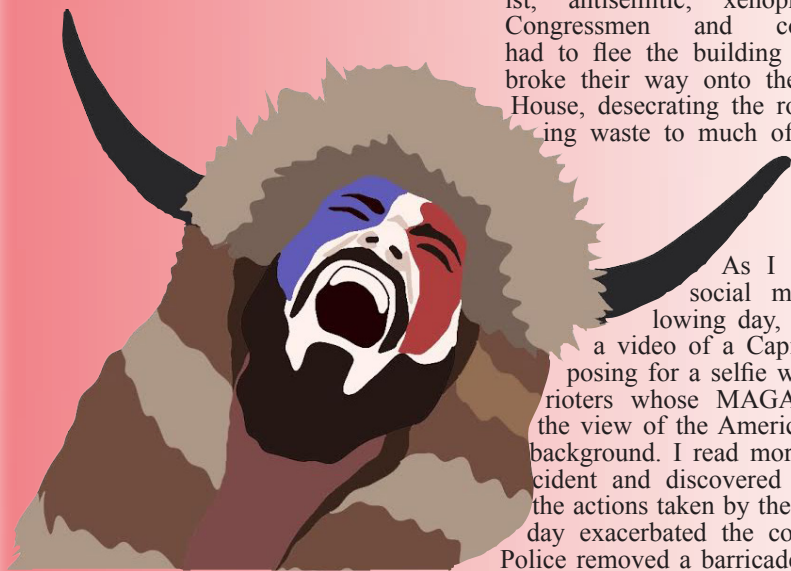
Biden's responses to the two events were much more appropriate. He took a stand with the Black Lives Matter protesters who were combating an unjust

legal system and centuries of oppression. The goal of the Black Lives Matter protests was to "protest such brutality [which] is right and necessary. It's an utterly American response. But burning down communities and needless destruction is not. Violence that endangers lives is not," blogged Biden. In opposition to this, the Capitol riots which were "scenes of chaos... [that] do not reflect a true America... what we are seeing is a small number of extremists dedicated to lawlessness. This is not dissent. It's disorder. It's chaos. It borders on sedition and it must end now," commented Biden.

Students' opinions on this topic are also divided. "Any rage that caused what can be considered rioting stemmed from the continuous systemic oppression of people of color for countless decades, said senior Chelsea Cohen. "What happened at the Capitol was a planned criminal act... that's not comparable."

However, others don't see "the difference between the left-wing fringe, Black Lives Matter that looted and engaged in violence, and what the people did in the Capitol. It all needs to be condemned," said Ari Fleischman.

Black Lives Matter protesters were fighting for their lives and the strengthening of democracy, while the rioters at the Capitol were trying to undermine it as an institution of our country. The difference between the two is simply beyond comparison.



Role in Riot

ZOE LYAKHOV '23
GUIDE POST STAFF

Thousands of support-ers of then-President Donald Trump gathered at the steps of the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6 to protest the results of the 2020 presidential election. A couple of hours later, the meeting quickly turned into a riot as the protesters overwhelmed the security and stormed the Capitol.

The violence continued for several hours, while the rioters occupied, looted, and vandalized the building. Because many of the rioters were evident supporters of Trump, the question of whether Trump himself was responsible for inciting the riot, became quickly a major part of the controversy.

Mainstream media and politicians on both sides of the political aisle, including top republican Mitch McConnell, blame Donald Trump for inciting the Capitol riot. "The mob was fed lies," said McConnell, "They were provoked by the president and other powerful people."

Hours before the riot, Trump held a "Save America" rally, during which he expressed his frustration with the Congress and even his own Vice President. He called on them not to certify the "rigged" election results. "We won this election", Trump said, "... we won it by a landslide." During his rally, he made statements such as "if you don't fight like hell you're not

going to have a country anymore", which could have foreseeably caused a riot.

Trump must have realized that given the state of the popular mood and the crowd dynamics, these lines could be interpreted not as mere calls for a civil political protest, but as calls for violence and insurrection.

"He constantly pushed the notion that the election was filled with fraud, and that put his supporters in a position where they thought that they had to stop the certification of the election," said senior Russell Harounian.

Although Trump did release a Twitter video calling on the rioters to "go home," its message was not strong enough and nor was communicated soon enough. He could have and should have done more to stop

the attack. People who are busy breaking down doors and shattering windows do not stop to refresh their Twitter.

On the other hand, many argue that the President's actions are justified by the First Amendment, the right to freedom of speech, which applies equally to everyone - the president or a private citizen.

To say that Trump's rally directly caused the riot is to ignore 99% of the content of his speech. His address lasted well over two hours. In that time, he explained why he contested the election results and provided anecdotal evidence of fraud and abuse of the election rules.

There was nothing said in that speech that explicitly called for violence. Trump even emphasized the importance of handling this matter peacefully. "I know that everyone will soon be march-

ing over to the Capitol building to peacefully and patriotically make your voices heard," Trump said.

Many of the rioters did not even need Trump's alleged encouragement to storm the Capitol. Investigations show that many of the rioters came prepared and even equipped for an assault and had planned their actions well in advance. Whatever Trump said or did not say on that day was irrelevant to them.

So, is Donald J. Trump to be blamed for the Capitol riot? From a legal standpoint, Trump is protected by the 1st Amendment. If judged as any ordinary citizen, he had every right to speak out against the election results and call on Congress not to certify them. However, the true question is if these are the correct standards to apply to the president of the U.S.

Although it's not clear that the vast majority of the Capitol rioters were inspired to act by the "Save America" rally, President Trump, as an experienced leader and public speaker, should have been more careful with his words.

Commander-in-Chief Trump lacked the appropriate use of his power during the riot and hence failed his presidential duty to defend the nation against harm. That is why I believe that on Jan. 6, Donald Trump let down his people, including his own supporters, and forever stained his presidential legacy.



TRUMP'S FINALE

Trump's No Show

ALEXA NISSIM '22
STAFF WRITER

After passing through the hardships of last year, 2021 started off in an unusual way. It was announced that Joe Biden had defeated Donald Trump in the election, which did not sit well with many Americans including Trump himself. Trump announced that he would not be attending Joe Biden's inauguration on January 20th. This is the first time the outgoing president will not attend his successor's inauguration since Andrew Johnson, 152 years ago.

There is no confirmation of Trump's exact reasoning behind not attending, many speculate that voter fraud and the idea of an unfair election played a role in his decision. Biden and Trump seemed to be having a political feud for the majority of the campaign period.

The presidential historian Douglas Brinkley said, "The fact that the incoming and outgoing presidents can't shake hands and co-participate in an inauguration means that something's off-kilter in the democracy." This is unusual for America and has only occurred a few times throughout history. This custom symbolizes the peaceful transfer of power that is crucial to American democracy. Trump's refusal to participate was unusual in its break from the national ideals.

Although Trump did not attend the inauguration, power was transferred to Biden as new president. It did not seem to be a significant factor that he did not at-

tend and there was peace. Some individuals anticipated riots and violence, however with prepared security, there were no issues.

Many Trump supporters agreed with the fact that Trump did not attend and support his decision. Regardless of his lack of attendance at the inauguration, it seems like they still would not accept the transition of power due to the rumors of fraud. Specifically those who partook in the raid at the Capitol feel strongly about such ideas and would not adjust their beliefs.

Although former president Trump did break some traditions, it was confirmed that he did leave

a note for Biden, indicating some form of acceptance on his behalf. The outgoing president traditionally leaves a note or letter for his incoming successor, while the First Lady invites her succes-

sor to coffee. Due to the frosty relationship between the Trumps and the Bidens, these traditions were stopped in their tracks.

The peaceful transfer of presidential power from one administration to the next is a distinctive feature of the American democracy. The White House Historical Association deems, "this transition, both peaceful and symbolic of continuity and change, continues to amaze the world and represents the best of American democracy".

The new president has just two months to plan a new administration and on Inaugural Day begin

move to the first family into the White House.

Although it was never deemed as mandatory, the inauguration was a long term tra-

dition followed by the majority of American presidents. Most presidents, such as former president Obama, attended the inauguration for Trump in 2016, which reflected a positive tone for his future as president. Biden supporters see that Trump does not reflect those same feelings and feels bitter about the presidency and election in all.

Overall, the inauguration of 46th president Joe Biden went well and with an amplified security and army, violence was nonexistent. Biden remarked that he was fine that Trump did not attend and was hopeful for his presidential future. Former Presidents Obama, Bush, and Clinton attended

On the other hand, when Trump left the White House, avoiding the inauguration. He stopped by and spoke to reporters. He did not take any questions and simply spoke out. When President Trump left the White House for the final time as president this morning, he stopped by to say a few words to reporters standing on the South Lawn.

However, former vice president Mike Pence did not attend; instead, he went to the inauguration. After the Capitol violence, Pence and Trump seemed to have a falling out as many have noticed.

Pence did acknowledge Trump in his farewell speech, by stating, "Let me also take a moment to thank President Trump and Melania for all they've done to make America great. I will always be grateful for the opportunity that they gave us to serve and the way they allowed us to make a difference in the life of this nation."

Silencing Trump

ZOE PAISNER '24
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

On Jan. 6, a mob of Trump supporters stormed the U.S. Capitol and protested the outcome of the 2020 presidential election. The rioters broke windows and severely damaged government property. Donald Trump has been accused of instigating the raid due to the various messages he spread through social media platforms.

During a rally that occurred shortly before the raid, President Trump riled up his supporters and sent out messages encouraging action. "You'll never take back our country with weakness," tweeted Trump. "You have to show strength and you have to be strong."

By saying these fierce, persuasive statements, Trump created anger and chaos amongst his supporters, which justifies the accusations against him for initiating the riot.

"These are the things and events that happen when a sacred landslide election victory is so unceremoniously and viciously stripped away from great patriots who have been badly and unfairly treated for so long. Go home with love & peace. Remember this day forever," read a Twitter post by Trump, on Jan. 6, referencing the events in the U.S. Capitol.

Trump promoted the remembrance of the day his supporters came together to

damage a national government building, where people were tear-gassed and shot. Additionally, he insisted that the 2020 presidential election was a fraud,

despite his lack of evidence to support this. Trump's supporters still believe him and desire to protest violently for him.

I agree with the decision to ban Trump from social media platforms. Not only has Trump used Twitter to speak about the riot at the U.S. Capitol, but he has also referred to COVID-19 as "the invisible China Virus" in numerous posts.

Actions like these have promoted the negligence of masks and social distancing among many U.S. citizens, along with the spread of false information. Trump needs to use his platforms wisely instead of promoting danger and potential

death. Using his social media platforms as a way to spread these ridiculous messages is violent and extremely dangerous. Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and

Snapchat viewed his messages as a violation of their guidelines and decided to ban Trump from using their platforms.

"We believe the risks of allowing the President to continue to use our service during this period are simply too great," CEO of Instagram and Facebook, Mark Zuckerberg, told the Hollywood Reporter. Trump's posts are harmful, as he uses his widespread influence to encourage his supporters to fight for him in an uncivilized way.

Unfortunately, many believe Trump's invalid statements regarding voter fraud and COVID-19, which

makes Trump's words influential in a negative way. Some people don't support the decision of banning Trump from social media platforms, as they believe it goes against the First Amendment, which grants freedom of speech.

However, no one is taking away Trump's right to say what he wants. Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, and Snapchat are all private companies that solely don't want Trump's violent words to be spread on their platforms.

"[Trump] riles people up on social media, causing them to be angry for no reason," said freshman Elizabeth Paisner, in favor of Trump's banning from social media platforms. He is still free to speak his thoughts at public events, but he and his supporters must respect that private companies simply don't want his manipulative words on their platforms.

When the President of the United States says things that are untrue with the sole purpose of pushing people towards violent outrage, it is not right and should be prevented by anyone who can take action.

We saw the results of this on Jan. 6. The idea of silencing people on social media is controversial because we are leaving it to private companies to decide whether or not to give somebody a platform. Still, social media companies have the right to take necessary actions to keep their platforms free from violent speech.



STUDENTS' HOPES FOR 2021

“Do well in my classes, organize my life, stay healthy :)”

CLARA GOLDMAN ‘24

“Maintain a healthy diet, build stronger bonds with my friends and to try my best to finish off the second half of the school year with impressive grades. The most important in my opinion would be to strengthen relationships that may have been weakened due to a lack of communication from COVID-19.”

CAMERON COOPER ‘22

“As a senior during this unusual year, I hope I can at least enjoy a somewhat normal first year of college. I hope everybody will either be used to life how it is now or be vaccinated. Either way, I can expect life to be very different in the upcoming year.”

DANIEL OHEBSHALOM ‘21

“To grow in a spiritual aspect and get my priorities straight. To value family more and grow to be the most independent, distinguished, successful version of myself.”

NATHAN RABIZADEH ‘23

“I hope that we can get out of the current situation with COVID and have things go back to the way they were.”

SOFIA BUZIASHVILI ‘22

“I hope to get better grades and to improve in many categories. I want to finish freshman year with very good grades and continue to get good grades for all of high school. I am focusing a lot more on school to do my best to make this happen.”

ETHAN PAIMANY ‘24

“Regular school.”

LAUREN BENHURI ‘22

“I want to play a ton of sports this year, get good grades, and enjoy life with friends and family.”

DYLAN CHAMAN ‘23

“I hope that we can begin the transition back to normalcy this coming year. Additionally, I would like to focus on helping others and myself attain our own goals whether it be academically or psychologically!”

GISELLE MAKANI ‘23

STUDENTS' SOCIAL JUSTICE AWARENESS

AVISHAI AGHELIAN ‘23
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

North High is proud to introduce a new addition to the abundance of clubs offered by the school: The Social Justice Awareness Club. “I actually started the SJA with Dr. Holtzman because I felt there was not enough being done to address social issues in our school, especially given current events,” said senior Chelsea Cohen, president and founder of the club. Cohen began by reaching out to assistant principal Mr. Levine with her idea, and he reached out to Mrs. York, Mr. Mannebach, and Ms. Knacke, who all volunteered to help with the club. “We want to bring awareness to different societal issues that affect us all,” said Mrs. York, who is now an advisor of the club. This club educates not only its members, but the entire school community. Recently, they arranged a Martin Luther King Jr. Honorary Day, spreading awareness about his impact on the Civil Rights movement. SJA encourages the expression of feelings about the topics being discussed. After the Capitol was stormed on Jan. 16, many had different opinions about it, but all were able to contribute to the discussion. “People have the opportunity to ask questions and to introduce their point of view about

these social issues,” said Mrs. York. Mrs. York reached out to be an advisor of this club because she feels strongly that it’s one of her responsibilities to thoughtfully question her students. Her goal is to be able to have discussions that allow students to feel like they can be heard even if they don’t have the same opinion as one another. “We are currently in tumultuous times,” said Mrs. York, “so it is important to make a brave space where we teach students as well as adults to thoughtfully engage in hard conversations about these issues.” Similar to other clubs, SJA has a routine for meetings. This agenda consists of the following: 1. Rundown: a recap of any social issues that are currently going on. 2. Progress check: an update on what everyone is doing individually, since everyone has tasks for the specific project they’re engaged in at the moment. 3. Breakdown: open space up for student discussions. Students can

freely discuss social issues. The members of the club joined for various reasons. Sophomore Evalina Alijaj said that she was excited to join because she “wanted to help make more change” in the school. “I just want to see the events that we plan out to educate students on things they had no idea about,” Alijaj said. It’s important to join this club if you want to foster change within the school. “The events that the school has done in the past have been nice, but this club allows every student to be more involved in both learning and teaching about social justice issues, and I think that’s great,” said Alijaj. “I joined because it’s really important to stay educated,” said freshman Nina Zar. “So many people don’t care enough to try, which is where a lot of intolerance comes from. If everyone put in just a bit more effort

to understand the struggles of others, we’d be in a much better place,” she said. Zar explained that if you are debating over whether or not you should join the club, then you should try it out. The club is currently planning its program for Black History Month, alongside other events. “Some of our upcoming topics include women’s rights, homophobia, and transphobia,” said Cohen. “For Black History Month, we are planning to collaborate with a lot of other groups to focus on ensuring we spread as much awareness as possible,” she said. She also hopes that they can bring in guest speakers to the club to help educate the community. Zar explained, “Nothing is finalized yet, but there are some ideas circulating.” The ideas include having a different discussion for each week regarding education on black historical figures, fundraising for the NAACP, and teaming up with other clubs. “There are quite a few good ideas, so we should have more distinct plans by one of the next meetings,” Zar said. We live in a world where not everything is perfect, which can cause hate. It is important to establish organizations like this in the community which seek to make improvements in the world. This club meets on Mondays at 4 p.m. It is not too late to get involved. Everyone is welcome to join. To participate, reach out to Ms. York, Mrs. Knacke, or Mrs. Mannebach. The Google Classroom code is 2e3n5xb.

Social Justice Awareness Club Contract

Due: Monday, December 14th

Name: _____ Grade: _____ Date: _____

- I agree to be respectful.
- I agree to protect the integrity of the club by respecting the privacy of others.
- I agree to be open and accepting of others.
- I agree to identify members and guests correctly.
- I agree to use non-gendered language when addressing the group.
- I agree to use positive, respectful language* and be conscious of my word choice to the best of my ability.
- I understand that I cannot invalidate one's lived experience.
- I understand and respect that my lived experiences are not guaranteed to be the same as my peers.
- I understand that this is a safe environment and agree to do my part to maintain that.

*Refrain from the use of slurs or other derogatory language.

By signing this, I agree to all of the above.

Student Signature: _____

Social Justice Awareness Club had its members fill out a contract before joining to ensure that discussions remain respectful and productive. Photo: Lauren Benhuri

A SHIFT IN SCIENCE RESEARCH



RENA GEULA '24
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

During these unprecedented times brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic, North High's Science Research program has been greatly affected. The students who are part of the Research Project Seminar are no longer able to conduct physical biological or chemical experiments within the school building.

Due to these restrictions, students have alternatively resorted to projects centered around psychology or data-focused research. Students that have been part of

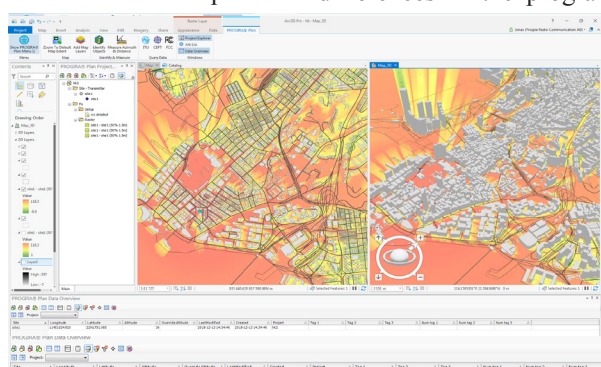
the program for over a year have felt the difference, but they work around it to continue conducting meaningful projects. This year, Research Project Seminar takes place every other day in the six-day cycle. This was done to accommodate students who do not

have any other free periods, as they would usually use Science Research as a time to eat lunch. Students are not allowed to eat in class anymore because masks are required throughout the entire school day.

"This causes us to be working in class much less, and has led to less motivation for the class overall," said junior

Leon Asnadi. This year's unconventional circumstances have raised the question of whether or not substantial research will still be able to be completed. Teachers and students have agreed that although this pandemic may hinder some aspects of research, it does not prevent them from conducting important research.

"In regards to my project, I think I am still able to do meaningful research. Given my project is actually based around the pandemic, the limitations that come along with the pandemic are actually to my benefit," Asnadi added. Although the differences in the program are definitely



Students use an ArcGIS grant provided by Esri to extract geographical data and use discovered relationships to form claims. . Photo: progira.com

felt among students, they remain confident that as long as they put in the effort needed, they'll produce purposeful results. "No matter the circumstances there is always a way to be successful. Whether that be using data online or working on the project at home more

than at school, there is always a way," stated senior Alex Geula.

With restrictions being placed on what can be conducted in school to extract necessary data, many students turn to alternate methods of gaining information.

"We are often limited to doing projects online through [the] utiliza-

tion of softwares such as ArcGIS or SLOOH. However, if we need to do a physical experiment, we could do one at home," says junior Lauren Benhuri.

If students continue with the program throughout their high school career, they are required to do summer research in preparation for their senior year project. Many students apply to do research at professional labs. Yet this year, while the process is similar, the situation is definitely unusual.

"As for summer research for senior year, the process of emailing mentors is more or less the same, but there

are also online programs to choose from," Benhuri continued. "Also, it is still uncertain if we will be able to go into physical labs by the summer, but we are hopeful," she added. With COVID-19 placing strict rules all across the country, students

face growing concerns about the difficulty of finding a mentor at a well-respected institution. "I think being accepted to research at a professional lab in these circumstances will be dependent on the university," added Asnadi.

"While the restrictions on hands-

on work does restrict our options, there are significant avenues of research still available to us by which we can conduct meaningful research," said Mr. Schorn, Science Research teacher for sophomores, juniors, and seniors. He has found that most students have been conducting research using online software instead. Some students have been conducting artificial intelligence projects using the TensorFlow platform, and other students have focused their projects on astronomy, mostly involving variable stars. They used SLOOH, an organization that robotically operates telescopes in Chile and the Canary Islands by which students



SLOOH is a service used by science research students that allows them to collect astronomical data from telescopes abroad. Photo: reaser-chgate.com

can set up specific observations. Another main category of research is Geographic Information System projects using an ArcGIS grant provided by Esri. Students look for spatial relationships among geographic variables, like CO-

VID case incidences and voting patterns or ocean acidification levels and the health of corals. The last major category of research conducted this year at the sophomore and junior levels is behavioral science, which are mostly related to COVID-19 and online learning, as both are relevant to the modern day.

Success in The Times

SOPHIE YELLIS '21
STAFF WRITER

Each year, The New York Times holds an annual personal narrative contest for high school and middle school students. This is a great opportunity for young writers to have their work published and to build their resumes. This year, three students from North High, Preston Chan, Scott Levy, and May Tun, were selected as finalists for this prestigious contest.

Junior May Tun entered the NYT contest merely because it was an assignment. Though she enjoys writing, she admits that would not have entered if Mr. Baluyut hadn't given the contest as an assignment for Community School students. In regard to advice, May explains, "I'm not really one to talk because I haven't even won the contest yet, but it'll mostly be to keep it personal and simple." In order to boost her chance of winning this prestigious competition, May advised that the writer should write about an experience that changed their life.

"A simple experience that you've had that changed you, in my opinion, would be the way to go," they said. Initially, Tun had paced her bedroom, trying to figure out what to write for the personal narrative submission, but found her inspiration for the piece through a foundation bottle on their dresser. The simple object sparked memories of the times

back in middle school when she would finish one bottle every three months, and how she has grown to have only used one bottle since March. Tun did not expect to

be selected as a finalist. She felt completely shocked when she received the email since she felt that "there are so many strong writers in this school that I truly thought I didn't stand a chance."

Senior Preston Chan, another finalist, also entered the contest because Mr. Baluyut asked him to. Unlike Tun, he didn't just enter the competition as an assignment. Chan wanted to have the chance to share his piece with other people. Chan's pieces of advice would be to "write honestly, make sure to check out for grammatical errors, and be real." He also believes that writers should "Choose

a moment that actually matters to [them] because [The New York Times] likes to choose pieces that matter to the writer himself." Chan added that if your piece

conveys a lesson, that's even better. He chose to write about a moment that really stuck with him and had a positive impact on his perspective of life. Chan added that he is thrilled that he was selected as a finalist, but believes it was somewhat random. To him, it was not

a big deal because it felt like a big, random guessing game of who wins and who does not. Chan believes that winning is irrelevant because the experience the writer goes through is the most important aspect of entering the NYT personal narrative contest.

Senior Adam Sanders won the con-

test last year with his piece "Cracks in the Pavement", a short narrative about a middle school geography bee in which a panic attack got the best of him. Similar to the three finalists of the contest this year, Adam also entered because it was an assignment in his journalism class. "Writing it was really cathartic for me because it allowed me to share a part of myself that I had kept quiet for so long," he said. Sanders also had the opportunity to continue working with the Times. The New York Times asked three winners of the contest to annotate their narratives. Sanders provided an audio clip of himself reading the piece, as well as annotations for each paragraph. The article even explains the literary devices Adam used throughout his work.

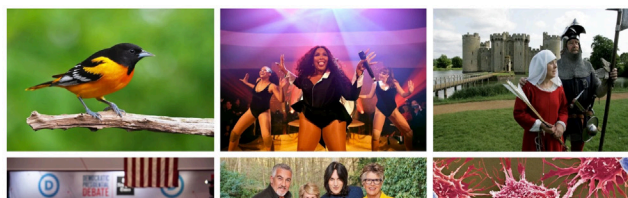
The prestigious personal narrative contest is not the only writing contest offered to high school and middle school students by The New York Times. The Annual Review Contest was offered to students this year until Jan. 26, with guidelines of reviewing a book, movie, restaurant, album, theatrical production, etc.

Additionally, from Jan. 19 to Mar. 2, students can enter the STEM writing contest, in which they explain a complex concept relating to science, technology, engineering, or math to a broad audience. If you are interested in writing and expanding your resume, check out the student contest calendar for The New York Times.

CONTESTS

Our 2020-21 Student Contest Calendar

From art and editorials to personal narratives and podcasts, a list of the 10 contests and challenges for young people we're running this school year.



The New York Times hosts a variety of contests for high schoolers and middle schoolers to enter. These contests are a great motivating opportunity for students to get their writing published in a professional paper. Photo: The New York Times

MOVING with Molly: → MENTAL HEALTH

MOLLY SHERRY '21
COLUMNIST

The COVID-19 pandemic has made quite an impact on students and individuals around the world. During this unprecedented time, I can't stress enough how important it is to be socially conscious by wearing masks and remaining socially distant. Keeping yourself physically healthy is extremely important; however, the lack of social interaction and isolation that have arisen as a result are jeopardizing the mental health of teens and adults alike. Months and months spent quarantining and video chatting have begun to hack away at one's mental state, no matter one's personal circumstances. As we are approaching the one-year mark of this pandemic, the mental health of our student body is a top priority; therefore, I have comprised a list of tips and tricks to improve mental health during these difficult times.

Taking a Break

We, as teens, often get caught up in the monotony of the school week and tend to resort to social media: endlessly scrolling through TikTok, sending pictures on Snapchat, or perusing Instagram. These activities, although entertaining, hinder our productivity

and harm our mental health. Comparing ourselves to idealized versions of other people is a threat to our self-esteem and emotional wellbeing. Cell phone use is proven to contribute to procrastination, lack of sleep, irritability, anxiety, and depression. When in need of some entertainment, or a break from the toughness reality can sometimes bring, I encourage you to engage in more positive distractions: binging a TV show, listening to music or podcasts, or flipping through a magazine.

I recommend the following shows available on Netflix: *Cobra Kai*, *All American*, *Lupin*, *The Queen's Gambit*, and *Breaking Bad*. Other interesting shows include *The Mandalorian*, which is available on Disney +, *Game of Thrones*, which is available on HBO, and *Rick and Morty*, which is available on Hulu.

Exercise

Exercising is another positive pastime that can lower cortisol levels and decrease stress. Simple activities such as walking, hiking, and biking are great ways to get fresh air and time to embrace our surroundings. We, as humans, are often bombarded with work and challenges and often forget to breathe and take a break.

The posts on social media, unread text messages or emails, unopened snapchats, and assignments will still be there when you get back. Take time for yourself and embrace each day to its fullest potential. A few hiking locations that you can enjoy on your next exercise outing are Sunken Meadow State Park, Cold Spring Harbor State Park, Long Island Greenbelt Trail, Trail View State Park, and Sands Point Preserve.

Sleep

Sleep is a necessity that we often think is optional. Especially with school work, college applications and decisions, and upcoming tests, we often are so 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 alert when you wake up. Sleep strengthens your immune system, helping your body to remain healthy and fight off diseases. We are more likely to win the lottery than predict the future, so do not allow overthinking to prevent you from

reaching your fullest potential and being your healthiest self. A few tips and tricks to try and fall asleep quickly include practicing mindfulness before going to bed, not using electronic devices 30 minutes before sleep, not bringing your phone into your bedroom, not exercising before going to bed, and reading a book before bed.

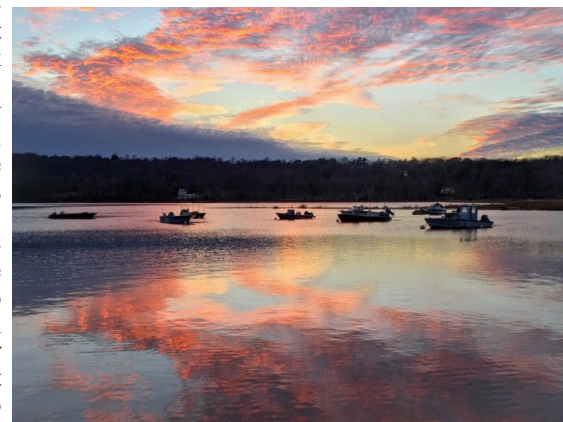
Reach Out

The last, and arguably most important thing to better yourself, is not being afraid to reach out for help. It is sometimes difficult to recognize that we are not going through this pandemic, and the accompanying feelings of anxiety, alone. Thankfully, there are numerous mental-health resources available! While reaching out to a trusted adult or friend can sometimes require a lot of courage, the effects surely make

up for it as discussing your struggles can be a truly relieving experience. If you do not yet feel comfortable enough to discuss with someone face to face, some apps that can aid in improving mental health during these unprecedented times are Headspace, Sanvello, MoodMission, Happify, and Moodfit. Other websites can also be helpful, like virusanxiety.com.



Headspace is a free guided-meditation resource that can aid in improving mental health during these unprecedented times. Photo: headspace.com



Cold Spring Harbor State Park is a nearby location that serves as a great way to get fresh air and time to breathe. Photo: hikingproject.com

Goodbyes On Netflix

VICTORIA SAKHAI '23
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

To start off the new year, Netflix, a television and movie streaming platform, removed many popular television shows from their platform. Many were upset to find out that Netflix was removing some of their favorite classics. Some even announced their disapproval by posting that they will switch and subscribe to other platforms. However, according to Netflix, some titles had to leave due to licensing agreements.

Netflix removed a total of over 50 shows and movies in January of 2021 alone, which raised concerns. Many were in pure disbelief to hear that their favorite shows were being taken off of Netflix after they had been on the platform for so long. A major grievance was that viewers only received a short notice before a show was removed, and had to rush to finish it. A handful of the most popular shows that were taken off of Netflix include "The Office," "Gossip Girl," and "Friends." Sophomore Michelle Wasserman said, "I

was extremely upset and disappointed when Gossip Girl was taken off of Netflix, because it was my favorite show that I would watch whenever I had any downtime." Another show's removal from the platform has upset many viewers because of its overwhelming popularity: "The Office." According to a podcast by Hollywood Breakdown, viewers spent more than 57 billion minutes watching "The Office" on Netflix in 2020, making it the most streamed show of the year.

"I'm so upset with Netflix because not only did they take off some of my favorite shows, but they also raised the prices, which I felt was extremely unfair considering their choices of shows are now poor and uninteresting," said sophomore Kaya Hakimi in response to the removal of "The Office."

Now, with the turmoil that Netflix has created, their competitors are at a great advantage. According to USNews, YouTube is now the most popular video streaming service in the United States,

with Netflix at second, and Hulu at third. While Hulu's popularity may seem far lower than Netflix's, with 26.5 million monthly users in America as compared to Netflix's 73.1 million, the public's discontent with Netflix may have them reinvesting their money into other streaming services, such as Hulu. Many fans of "The Office" have

tweeted out stating that if "The Office" leaves Netflix, so will they. In fact, sophomore Maya Ben Josef says, "I have never felt such disappointment, sadness, and anger over a TV show... there is no doubt in my mind that I will find somewhere else to go in order to watch the show." HBO Max, another one of Netflix's top competitors, is only becoming a more dangerous threat to Netflix. They are now carrying "Gossip Girl," "The Big Bang Theory," and "Euphoria," three hit shows that Netflix does not carry. However, although many have chosen to cancel their Netflix subscriptions, many others believe there is

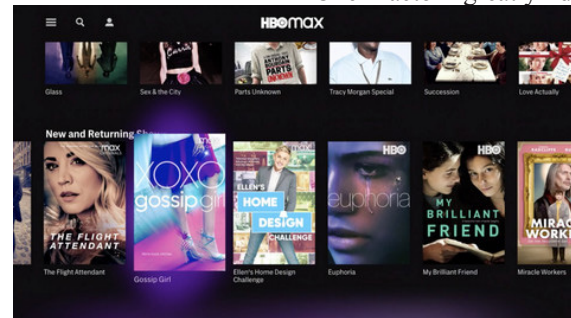
no great enough reason to do so.

Sophomore Rachel Tavazo says, "I don't think that just because Netflix is taking off some shows I watch, that it's enough for me to cancel my Netflix subscription." Tavazo goes on to say that there are still so many other shows and movies on Netflix that she loves to watch.

One factor greatly determining viewers' interests in streaming services is the price. Netflix charges \$8.99 per month for one screen at a time, \$12.99 per month for two screens at the same time, and \$15.99 per month for four screens simultaneously. Hulu, however, charges \$6.99 per month with commercials, and \$11.99 per month without commercials. HBO Max charges \$14.99 per month. Considering Netflix has 151 million members worldwide, with 73.1 million of them being in the United States, it would be hard for any change to cause a permanent damage to the platform. With that being said, it is still always important to keep viewers happy, especially with the amount of competitors that Netflix has.



"The Office", one of Netflix's most cherished tv shows, was removed from the platform in Jan. 2021, a decision that was upsetting to many devoted fans. Photo: medium.com



HBO Max is a rising threat to Netflix, as its discography becomes increasingly attractive to subscribers with its consistent addition of new shows. Photo: theverge.com

Student Personal Narrative:

THE COAT

JACK BRENNER '23
STAFF WRITER

We were visiting the Plaza Hotel during the holidays. The air was crisp; the schools were closed. I stepped into the lobby, walking sandwiched between my parents. Seeing the towering Christmas tree, I felt warm during the excruciating cold night in New York. Following our afternoon tea, we decided to venture downstairs to browse the shops. My mother wanted to take my little sister to the Eloise store, so my father and I tagged along. As my sister browsed the shelves with my mother, I walked around, growing more bored as the minutes progressed. I found a nice chair, and I took a seat. I took off my coat. I looked up. I thought about my day, about the rest of my vacation, and then, I began to think about my future. I was just a little boy, but I thought I already had my whole life planned out. I blinked. In an instant it was time to go. I stood up, and started towards the door, but before I even completed my first step, I looked back at the chair. I saw my coat, lying on the back of the chair. For some reason, I wondered if I should leave my coat behind. The thought soon became an urge, and I began to take another step towards the door. I reached a dilemma: I could reach

back, grab my coat, and enjoy the rest of my day, or I could just walk out the door and suffer the consequences later. Some mysterious force was pulling me towards that door. Maybe I was curious as to what would happen; maybe I was bored, craving the negative experience in the future to at least bring some excitement to my

cold out, and that I should put on my coat. "Where is your coat?" "Mom has it," I said, hoping she would miraculously pull it out of her pocketbook, like hypothermia-fighting Mary Poppins. But she had nothing in her arms, and upon checking her pocketbook, she found nothing. My father sighed in frustration and we turned back to look for the coat together. I felt terrible. As we walked towards the table that we had tea at, I built up the courage to croak, "It's on another floor." My father ignored me, and as we looked all around the table and the seats, I kept repeating my clue: "It's on another floor."

"What do you mean 'it's on another floor?'" I felt my stomach tighten. "It's at the Eloise store." "Are you kidding me? Why would you leave it there?" When we eventually got to the shopping area, I was disappointed to find out that the area had closed for the night. Luckily, my father found a security guard who was willing to go into the lost-and-found for that floor. As he came back with my coat in his arms, I breathed a sigh of relief.

I left the Plaza Hotel with my warm coat on, hugging myself. I felt cold, from the winter air and my own guilt. I was warmed by my coat, and the reassurance that came with it.



As mentioned in the personal narrative, this is the bright-pink store located in New York City based off the famous movie "Eloise at The Plaza". Photo: babyccino.com

day. So, I lied to myself and said that we would probably come back or the coat would find its way back to me on its own, and I left the shop. I decided to forget about the coat, and enjoy the rest of my afternoon. I'll never forget when we were about to leave. We walked through the lobby, and I felt increasingly anxious with every step. When we reached the front doors, my dad said it was very

YOUR
TEACHERS'
IDEAL PERSON
TO EAT
DINNER WITH



Ms. ANASTASIS
MAYA ANGELOU

Ms. BAYLIS
HER FATHER-IN-LAW

Mr. BONVICINO
HANK AARON

Mr. CONNOLLY
GEORGE ORWELL

Mr. CORRAO
KURT VONNEGUT

Mr. CUBINSKI
CHARLES BABBAGE

Mr. MARCHESE
HIS DAD

Ms. NASSIRI
ELIE WIESEL

Mr. RAGOT
JAMES BURKE

Mr. RODRIGUEZ
LEONARDO DA VINCI

Mr. SCHAD
HIS GRANDFATHER

Ms. YORK
ALBERT EINSTEIN

SCHOOL
SPORTS
RETURN

Sports have finally been returned to North High, an exciting event for all athletes throughout the school community. The winter season is currently underway. However, several conventional winter sports have been canceled due to COVID-19 precautions. Despite this, gymnastics, fencing, swimming, and winter track are all still being offered to students. As depicted in the comic, students take precautions by wearing masks and remaining socially distant during practice.



Sophie Frenkel

Play for Pay Delayed

ADDISON KLEBANOV '23
STAFF WRITER

Throughout the entirety of the National College Athletic Association's (NCAA) basketball history, college basketball players have never been compensated for their hard work and efforts. There have been many rumors, allegations, and protests against the NCAA Board of Directors surrounding athletes not receiving fair compensation. However, the NCAA is scheduled to discuss the possibility of landmark legislation, which would allow college athletes to monetize their names, images, and likenesses. Conversations between college presidents, conference officials, and athletic administrations are currently being delayed until there is more clarification about federal government action. The only state that currently has passed a bill allowing college athletes to be paid is California. States such as Florida, New York, Pennsylvania, Arizona and New Jersey, among others, have proposed bills that have not been passed yet. This brings up the question of if this delay is merely the NCAA trying to hold off on giving players pay, or if they truly believe there is not enough clarity about the law.

Since 2005, high school players have not been allowed to head straight to the NBA. Every high school basketball player has a choice to play overseas, play

in college, or go straight to the NBA G League. The G League is similar to the minor leagues in baseball; players that are more raw or inexperienced are sent there to develop their skills. In the past, the most popular option was the NCAA, but now high school athletes have started to redirect their focus to play in the G League rather than the NCAA. For instance, Jalen Green, the top-ranked high school recruit in the class of 2020, signed a contract for over \$500,000 with the G League. Many skilled high school basketball players would rather take the guaranteed money as early as possible rather than having to wait until they make the NBA to receive their first contract, which is why the G League is their best option.

The G League also offers guidance to NBA prospects, unlike college basketball. Former pros and veterans are there to help the younger players perfect their games. Time Magazine believes the most dominant schools in college basketball will remain in power, because they already pay for the best coaches, staff, and recruiters. This makes one wonder if schools with less money should be "penalized" for not being able to afford better players.

Tensions between the NCAA Board of Governors and athletes are rising. The New York Times reveals that "days after the NCAA's decision to consider allowing college athletes to profit

from the use of their names, images, and likenesses, a class-action lawsuit has been filed arguing that it was not enough — that athletes should be paid like employees." Not only has the Board of Directors not addressed wages, but they also have not officially passed the law to allow players to profit from their image. Currently, the NCAA is waiting for clarification from the federal government, but it is likely they want to hold off allowing players to brand themselves as soon as possible.

With multiple states offering different opinions on the topic, the NCAA Board is taking advantage of the confusion by waiting to give a federal announcement. According to Axios Sports, there is an exact 50/50 split between the states on student-athlete compensation legislation. The case is now going federal, and according to The Washington Post, "the Supreme Court announced it would get involved in the long-running dispute about how college athletes may be compensated." Unfortunately for the athletes, the Board of Directors caught a break and are waiting until the Supreme Court handles the case. It is imperative that the NCAA clears up everything soon, so they stop losing high-quality talent to the G League. Missing out on the big player causes the NCAA to lose marketing opportunities and the chance to advertise these new players.

Another issue with college athletes receiving no compensation is that it

enables many under the table, illegal deals to occur. A recent prime example of this is Zion Williamson, who was the first pick in the 2019 NBA draft. Williamson is being sued for \$100 million by Prime Sports Marketing. Williamson denies the charges, claiming he is an "amateur athlete." If the NCAA had clearer marketing rules about a player's image, likeness and name, then all of this would have never occurred. Another similar situation took place with the second pick in the 2020 NBA draft, James Wiseman. According to Billy Witz from The New York Times, "Memphis Coach Penny Hardaway, in 2017 when he was a high school coach, had provided Wiseman's family \$11,500 in moving expenses so they could relocate from Nashville to play for Hardaway at Memphis East High School." Wiseman was deemed ineligible and was not allowed to play for the rest of the college season. It is very questionable if Wiseman deserved to be punished and if Memphis should have been punished.

There are many questions still left unanswered between the directors and the players, and tensions continue to rise. Hopefully, the Supreme Court can put an end to the drama and officially make two important decisions: the first decision being if college athletes can monetize their image, name, and likeness, and the second being if college athletes should receive wages. Whatever the outcome is, it will change college sports forever.



Former Duke star Zion Williamson, the first pick in the 2020 NBA Draft, is being sued \$100 million for illegally receiving compensation while being a student.

Photo: SB Nation



James Wiseman played three games at the University of Memphis before being ruled ineligible by the NCAA.

Photo: CBS Sports

STRIDES IN WINTER SPORTS

NABI NABAVIAN '23
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

As countries all across the globe are complying with the protocols made to stop the spread of COVID-19, it's only a matter of time before the daily lives of students return to normal. With the opening of schools in September, there has been a major dispute on how sports should be conducted, if at all. With the consent of the New York State Public High School Athletic Association (NYSPPHSAA), North High is permitted to administer the winter sports season with new guidelines.

Since it's the first season in resumption since March of last year, GNNHS is only allowed to oversee "low/moderate risk" sports this season. The lower risk sports for the winter season include bowling, winter track, swim, fencing, and gymnastics. These sports will all have new guidelines in place while in cooperation with the CDC guidelines to the best of their ability. Wrestling, cheer, and volleyball are suspended until further notice. Basketball players must learn remotely during their season.

These sports all include contact between athletes and provide a major risk to all participants. In basketball, for example, the same ball would be passed around and touched by team members as people would likely enter a six-foot radius of one another. The NYSPPHSAA

is hoping that by next season, New York State will allow sports such as soccer, football, and volleyball to resume, and possibly even the high-risk winter sports to be added to the fall season as well.

With the start of sports teams resuming comes the question, many players and parents question how the practices will work, and if there will be any modifications made. Teams will have to adhere to COVID-19 guidelines in place meaning that practices will have their own separate rules notwithstanding the rules in place for attending school in person. Despite it giving an alternative to previous years' sports commitments, many athletes have mixed reviews on the subject.

Daniel Abda, a freshman on the bowling team who appreciates attending the sport on cohort days, remarked, "I honestly enjoy cohort days a lot. I find it hard at times to even commit half of my weekday afternoons to bowl as it's very time-consuming. Honestly, I would even support having three cohort days instead of two because it would offer me more time to explore other clubs, socialize with friends more, and of course have more free time to myself." Daniel

Abda's review raises a major question: How can students attend clubs and sports? At this point, there is no definite answer to that question. With sports such as swimming, which starts around 5:30, students can attend club meetings, but for sports such as winter track and fencing, where practice starts right after school, it makes it so that students have to attend clubs during practice.

However, coaches do know that academics come before sports, and of course, would let team members sit on the side to attend club meetings. But even sitting on the side for 15-30 minutes a day during practice will start adding up, especially in clubs in which officers are elected based on their weekly participation within the club. Ideally, by the time that fall sports start at the beginning of March, this problem can be resolved

and sports will start later on in the day. Although it is great that sports are back, some students resent the fact that they can't run with coaches every day. Senior Alex Geula had much to say on this subject: "I personally dislike the fact that practices are held on cohort days... It hurts the team chemistry, yet it could be much worse. I thought that for my senior year

we'd be out of sports for the whole year, but I'm extremely happy that we can even play school sports in the first place." Students are hoping that everything will be back to normal and that sports could resume with everyone practicing together.

One major part of high school competitive sports is the interscholastic meets, taking place multiple times per season. So far, all sports have either prepared or had meets, whether it being with or without other schools. Winter track, for example, has had multiple virtual meets already this year. However, there are still many restrictions on runners and which upsets many athletes. "I think that the guidelines in place affect my performances because during a regular season our meets would be indoors, but this season they're outdoors, which is much more difficult," said Geula. At this point, the school in cooperation with the NYSPPHSAA is doing the best of its ability to help aspiring athletes achieve their goals during the first season back in almost a whole year.

At this point it's a matter of time until COVID-19 cases drop nationally, prompting new guidelines to be put in place. The only thing that athletes can do at this point is cross their fingers and hope for the best for the upcoming months. Hopefully, by the time that spring approaches, all sports can resume and life can finally seem somewhat like it did before this unprecedented global pandemic.



GENDER INEQUALITY REFORM

JACK BRENNER '23
STAFF WRITER

When one hears about gender inequality in professional sports, the first case that comes to mind is usually unequal pay. A recent lawsuit filed by several players in the U.S. women's soccer team has revealed that the unfair treatment of female athletes entails more than just wages. Many facilities have been granted to the U.S. men's soccer team but not to the women's.

These matters led athletes from the women's team to sue the U.S. Soccer Federation on Mar. 8, 2019. Near the end of 2020, it was announced that both parties have reached a settlement on the issue of working conditions.

According to the payment, the U.S. Soccer Federation "denies that it did anything wrong." The federation states that it granted the women's team all of the facilities of the men's team in comparable quality. When such a talented group of athletes are treated so poorly in comparison to their male counterparts it becomes clear why legal action had to be taken.

It is certainly a step in the right direction that the U.S. Soccer Federation has provided adequate facilities for their female athletes, but it leaves one wondering about the obvious issue: equal pay. It turns out that in order to secure appropriate working conditions, the U.S. women's soccer team was forced to abandon the fight for fair wages in order to focus on what they felt was the more important problem: working conditions.

It is important to note that the FIFA Women's World Cup has only existed for thirty years, and the U.S. women's team has won four times, gaining their second consecutive title in 2019. The only other women's team with multiple World Cup titles in Germany, and they only have two. Meanwhile, the FIFA Men's World Cup has existed for ninety years, and the U.S. men's team has yet to even come close to winning the championship title.

After 2019's incredible season, the Federation awarded each female athlete a \$1.725 million bonus for winning the championship. In the 2014 Men's World Cup, which was the last in which the U.S. men's team qualified, the federation awarded each male athlete a \$5.375 million bonus.

Naturally, with working conditions out of the way, the U.S. women's soccer team has revived their legal fight for equal pay. The future re-

sult of this battle, however, is unclear and will be left up to further litigation.

But why does the U.S. Soccer Federation refuse to pay women equally? According to their court claim, it is obvious that it requires more skill and responsibility to play professionally as a man. The Federation went on to state that it was not a "sexist stereotype," but "indisputable science" that male athletes need to be more skilled to play at a professional level than females do.

In fact, according to the organization, even if the female athletes are as talented as their male counterparts, it does

not matter because laws regarding equal pay explicitly apply "to jobs that require equal skills, and not to employees that possess equal skills."

Because the job of a female soccer player "requires less skill," the skill level of the player in question does not matter, and they still don't deserve equal pay even if they are just as talented as a male athlete. Evidently, the judge agreed. In response to the controversy regarding the incredibly

higher bonuses of the male and female teams in their most recent World Cups, the Federation claimed that the female athletes, unlike their male counterparts, simply chose a contract plan that focuses more heavily on basic pay than bonuses.

Since the decision, this lawsuit has gained national attention. President Joe Biden released a tweet in support of these activists on May 2nd, 2020. After a judge initially rejected claims for equal pay, Biden tweeted, "To @USWNT: don't give up this fight. This is not over yet." This fiery tweet from the U.S. President shows just how important this issue is to many.

Later, Biden and his wife, Jill, held a 40-minute Instagram live session with

female soccer star Megan Rapinoe, where the three discussed social justice issues. This is in strong contrast with Donald Trump's relationship with the team.

The final results of this case have long-reaching impacts: not only is the lawsuit an important battle in the crusade for feminism

and gender equality, but it will also show how wage equality laws should be interpreted going forward in professional sports and even in other areas of the workforce.

The U.S. Soccer Federation has announced that they will work with the women's soccer team in the future to fix their relationship. Despite gender being an issue that many women in the world face, these progressive steps by the federation and the pending legal battle provide hope for the future of women in sports.



Players on the United States international women's soccer team celebrate at the Rat Verlegh Stadium in Breda, Southern Netherlands, in a match against the Netherlands.

Photo: Dailynews.com



The US team celebrates winning their fourth title after their triumph at the 2019 FIFA Women's World Cup. Photo: Vox.com

Athletes Shatter Safety Protocols

NOAH BERKOWITZ '22
COLUMNIST

Being some of the highest paid professionals in the world, athletes grasp the public's attention easily. Whether it be on or off the field, athletes are tasked with presenting a positive image of themselves and setting a proper example for all of their fans, which includes aspiring young athletes.

Within recent weeks, certain athletes have not been fulfilling their social duties of properly presenting themselves, even tasking certain league administrators to step in and take action. These conflicts

have demonstrated the immense responsibilities athletes must carry in our country.

On Jan. 19, Brooklyn Nets point guard Kyrie Irving was fined \$50,000 by the NBA for violating the league's COVID-19 protocols, after missing his sixth straight game due to "personal reasons." There have been rumors and speculation surrounding Irving's absence recently, but little concrete information exists.

Despite there being little evidence, a video circulated this past week of Irving appearing to be maskless while celebrating at a family birthday party over the weekend in New Jersey.

The NBA, NFL, NCAA, and a majority of other leagues have all done an incredible job of ensuring that athletes, coaches, or even entire organizations are punished for disregarding COVID-19 protocol. Yet, the superficiality of these punishments is too overwhelming to ignore.

Monetary punishments may fulfill their intended purpose, but they have little to no impact on the athletes themselves. While Kyrie Irving's disappearance is considered to be one of the harsher COVID-related punishments, he was just forced to give up \$50,000.

To put this in perspective, this is just 0.00014% of his \$33,460,350 salary. If sports leagues truly want their punishments to hold meaning, they must also hold meaning to the athletes; not to look good in the headlines, but rather to better their athletes.

Many colleges take the initiative to punish more accordingly through fines, suspension, and expulsion for breaking colleges' COVID-19 health and safety rules. These athletes are playing for an opportunity to compete in higher-level leagues, and if not, these students still aim to be contributing members of society following university.

Suspension and even expulsion can be detrimental to both of those aspirations, holding the athletes to the expected standards. College spokespeople say the steep punishments for flouting

coronavirus rules send a "strong message" to students. If entire teams are unable to maintain a safe environment for their staff and athletes, then the NCAA has the authority to extensively fine.

Kyrie Irving was not the only athlete partaking in immature actions recently, as he has been sharing sports headlines with retired swimmer Klete Keller.

Keller, 38, was a member of three U.S. Olympic teams, and he won medals at three Olympics, including golds at the Athens Games in 2004 and the Beijing Games in 2008 as a member of the 4x200-meter relay team. He won silver in the event at the 2000 Sydney Games. A powerful

freestyler, Keller produced his signature moment in 2004 in Athens.

A video posted by a reporter from a conservative outlet, Townhall, appeared to show the 6-foot-6 Keller towering over a crowd that was pushing and shoving with police officers who were trying to clear the Capitol Rotunda. Several former teammates and coaches said they recognized Keller in the video because of his size, and because he was wearing a U.S. Olympic team jacket that had "USA" printed across the back and down the sleeves.

Despite Keller's

extensive apologies and remorse, nothing could undo what had been done. A man who had once fought so proudly for his country is now partaking in the destruction of it.

While high school athletes are not receiving nearly as much publicity as professional athletes such as Kyrie Irving and Klete Keller, the same responsibilities are intact. The Code of Conduct, which is read to all high school teams despite skill or experience, is typically taken in a light-hearted manner.

This code is read, of course, to advise players and ensure that they are performing in peak condition, but it is also implemented to preserve the image of who they are playing for. Videos of student-athletes acting immaturely, during a party or other large event, could be detrimental to a school.

Poor representation by a high school athlete could hurt other athletes associated with the school, faculty, and even underclassmen who aim to fill their role one day. Similarly, athletes who have made recent headlines for missing games and acting irresponsibly off the court have negatively impacted those who play alongside them as well as the next generation of athletes who have aspired to be like them their whole lives.

Good athletes do more than play games. If there's one thing that sports teach, on any level, it's that the best athletes are the ones that play for the name on the front of the jersey, not the back.



A screenshot from the Jan. 6 U.S. Capitol insurrection allegedly shows gold medalist swimmer Klete Keller wearing an Olympic jacket.

Photo: Daily Mail



THAILAND OPEN 2021



LIORA KAYA '23
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

The Yonex Thailand Open, the first of the three Badminton tournaments to be held in Thailand in January 2021, was also the eighth tournament of the 2020 BWF World Tour. This tournament was organized by the Badminton Association of Thailand and authorized by the Badminton World Federation (BWF).

The Yonex Thailand Open is part of the Thailand Open Championships, and it is a series of international badminton tournaments that take place in Thailand. The Thailand Open has been held in Thailand since 1984 but did not take place in 1986, 1998, 2002, 2010, and 2014. The BWF classified the Thailand Open as one of the seven BWF World Tour Super 500 events in the BWF tournaments since 2018.

This year the Thailand Open championships consist of the Yonex Thailand Open and the Toyota Thailand Open.

The BWF World Tour is a grade-two badminton tournament series that is authorized by the Badminton World Federation. It is a competition open to the top world-ranked players in men's and women's singles and men's, women's, and mixed doubles.

Many world-famous badminton players are looking forward to participating in the BWF World Tour Finals. Participation in both Thailand Opens is mandatory to qualify for the 2020 BWF World Tour Finals.

This year, the tournament took place at the Impact Arena, located in Muang Thong Thani, Nonthaburi Province, a northern suburb of Bangkok, Thailand. It began on Jan. 12 and concluded on Jan. 17. This tournament consisted of five rounds: round one, round two, quarter-finals, semifinals, and finals. Both singles and doubles matches are scored as the best-of-three games. The first side to reach 21 points wins a game. A point is scored on every serve and awarded to the side that wins the rally. If the score is 20-20, a side must win by two points to win the game.

But, if the score is 29-29, the first side to get the 30th point wins. A point is won if the birdie hits the ground on the opponent's half of the court. Therefore, a point will be given to the opponent if a shot goes outside the court boundaries, if the birdie hits the net or passes through/under it, or if a player hits the birdie twice. Players have to wait for the birdie to cross the net before hitting it. If the net is touched with one's body or racket a point is given to the opponent.

Denmark's Viktor Axelsen and Spain's Carolina Marin won the men's and women's singles titles, respectively. Greysia Polii and Apriyani Rahayu of Indonesia played an emotional game against Jongkolphan Kititharakul and Rawinda Prajongjai of Thailand in the women's doubles.

Polii and Rahayu ended up winning in straight games. After the win, Polii paid tribute to her late brother. Lee Yang and Wang Chi-Lin won the men's doubles final against Goh V Shem and Tan Wee Kiong in three games. As for the mixed doubles final, Dechapol Puavaranukroh and Sapsiree Taerattanachai won against Praveen Jordan and Melati Daeva Oktavianti in three games. The singles winners were awarded \$70,000 and the doubles winners were awarded \$74,000.

Due to COVID-19, four out of five world champions withdrew from all three tournaments including the Chinese, Japanese, and Indonesian badminton players. The Chinese team withdrew from both the Yonex Thailand Open and the Toyota Thailand Open after failing to get permission to travel to Thailand. Furthermore, the Japanese team withdrew from the tournaments following the positive COVID-19

diagnosis of Kento Momota, who is ranked no. 1 in men's singles in the world. Following Indonesian badminton player Kevin Sanjaya Sukamuljo's positive COVID-19 diagnosis, he and Marcus Fernaldi Gideon, who play in the men's doubles event, withdrew from the tournaments.

The Yonex Open was played under a series of strict COVID-19 guidelines designed to protect players and other participants. No fans were allowed to attend this tournament, and games took place in a biosecure bubble. Moreover, there were rounds of mandatory testing that every player had to take part in. Overseas participants were tested 72 hours prior to departure from their country of origin and completed "Fit to Fly" documents.

Once they arrived at their hotel and before entering their rooms, they took another Covid-19 test. After this re-test, they remained confined to their rooms until the test results were

known. Once a negative test was confirmed, athletes were permitted to begin training. Practice facilities were offered to one country at a time. Once players from one country concluded their practice, staff disinfected the location to allow the next country to come in for practice. Only players and support staff were allowed within prohibited areas of the practice zones. The competition area was divided into zones, where only the participants and support staff were allowed. Also, participants' warm-up locations were identified.

The Yonex Thailand Open was the first major BWF event held since the COVID-19 pandemic began. BWF Deputy President and Badminton Association of Thailand head Khunying Patama

Leeswadtrakul said, "We have tremendous support to deliver these historic badminton tournaments in Thailand under strict control for the safety and health of everyone." Moreover, Leeswadtrakul stated, "The tournaments will make people proud of the country because it is the first time that three tournaments of this kind will be held in one month in one country."

Although the Yonex Thailand Open was secure, in terms of making sure the right COVID restrictions were put in place, it was inevitable that at least one player would contract or bring the virus with them. According to BWF, a total of four players had initially tested positive, two from India, one from Germany, and one from Egypt. After retesting the same specimens, three of these players were found to be negative were retested. Unfortunately, former world No. 1 Saina Nehwal and men's world number 28 HS Prannoy, both from India, were among the four international players to initially test positive for COVID-19. According to the Badminton Association of India, both players have pulled out of the tournament and were isolated in a Bangkok hospital for 10 days. The BWF stated, "The entire Indian team has been categorized high-risk by Thai health authorities and all players and their entourage are currently self-quarantining in their rooms at the hotel."

One night, during the tournament, the BWF sent out a press release stating, "We can confirm that one German coach and a team entourage member from France who are participating in the Asian leg of the HSBC BWF World Tour in Bangkok, Thailand are positive for Covid-19." Fortunately, after all, players were retested for Covid-19, all results came back negative.

Overall, under the given circumstances, the Yonex Thailand Open was successful in the sense that it brought the fans a badminton tournament to lift their spirits amid a global pandemic. Although it was not the ideal tournament due to the absence of fans, ultimately it fulfilled its purpose of bringing fans a badminton tournament. With a sports event such as the Yonex Thailand Open taking place, the sports world is getting closer to bringing back a normal lifestyle.



On Jan. 17, doubles champion Dechapol Puavaranukroh and Sapsiree Taerattanachai won their first BWF World Tour Super 500 title at the Singapore Open.



Badminton champions Carolina Marin and Viktor Axelsen hold up their awards after their strong performances on Jan. 17 at the Toyota Thailand Open tournament.