



Catching Up With The Class Of 2020

By: Lauren Hagen and Sophie Rosencrans

The year 2020 was an unprecedented one. COVID-19 struck the U.S. hard in early March and all were mandated to stay at home and quarantine apart from those outside of their households. North Shore students wondered when they would return to school as two weeks turned into four, four turned into six, six turned into eight, and then suddenly the rest of the school year had slipped away. For the seniors of 2020, their remaining moments of high school were spent virtually. Upon reaching this pivotal moment in their lives, the seniors had to say good-bye and move on without full closure. To check up on how some members of the Class of 2020 have been since their graduation, we interviewed them about their experiences this past Fall.

Q: What is a lesson you learned in high school that you actually applied/made use of during your first semester of college? How so?

Trevor Kunkel: I learned to not be afraid to ask for help. I had teachers in high school who were super supportive and in college, although you are held to a different standard than in high school, professors are still willing to help you if you're open to it.

Mary Sotiryadis: I applied the time management skills I picked up in high school to college. Whenever I had a lot of work, especially during finals, I allotted my time differently depending on what needed to get done and when it needed to get done.

Anthony Katok: There are so many things that high school gave me that prepared me for my first semester of college. Mainly, I would say I've worked up a lot of mental discipline I otherwise would not have had. Time management is another huge skill I mastered in high school that I could not do without.

Nicole Schneider: The time management and communication skills I learned in high school were helpful in my first semester because there is significantly less 'hand holding' in college, so reaching out to my professors and establishing a relationship with them helped me a lot.

Sierra Hiner: Something that I realized towards the end of senior year is to take every opportunity you can get. I believe everything, no matter how small, leads to something bigger, and you truly won't know what doors you can open until you try. There's really nothing to lose- and you will only grow as a human being from taking these chances. Another thing I learned from a school year cut short: live in the moment. You'll never know when you'll wake up in a pandemic.

Q: So far, how does your college curriculum/workload differ from that of the classes you took in high school?

Trevor Kunkel: I would say that I definitely struggled with the transition from high school to college at first. There's different assignments for very different classes, which are all due at the same time. I feel like high school assignments were a little more predictable than college assignments.

Mary Sotiryadis: College is less of a steady workload. There is minimal work during the semester, but a lot of work in the middle or at the end during the weeks of exams.

Anthony Katok: I would say that the workload between my first semester of college and senior year of high school are generally pretty similar. In high school there's more classes and more work, but the work tends to be on a smaller scale while in college there are only a few courses, but there are typically pretty heavy assignments, like projects, papers, etc.

Nicole Schneider: My workload is slightly less now, but the curriculum is much more interesting

Sierra Hiner: There are so many less tests in college! I had a few quizzes here and there (but not for all of my classes), and two exams for most classes (a midterm and a final! That's it!). In high school, I felt like I could approach teachers easily, go to extra help, etc. Going into college I expected professors to be way less available/accommodating, but I found my professors to be super reachable and supportive. One notable memory I have of this past semester is how my Environmental Studies professor gave her students so many extra credit opportunities and study sessions for the midterm exam. You'll likely find yourself really enjoying your courses and wanting to study because you are taking classes that you chose and are passionate about.

Q: What was the highlight of your first semester in college?

Mary Sotiryadis: It was incredibly exciting to be invited to do research at my university. After working diligently my first semester, my school has given me the opportunity to choose a department to work with and study a topic of my choosing in my spring semester, which I'm still deciding on.

Nicole Schneider: Even though I didn't get to go away to college, it was fun being able to run and hang out with my friends from high school.

Avery Goodman: An exciting moment for me is when I found out I had earned a 4.0 GPA!

Sierra Hiner: There's honestly so many. I am so grateful that I was even able to be on campus during the Fall semester! A big highlight was finally meeting now one of my best friends in person after "meeting" each other on our class's

Facebook page, facetimeing, and texting during the Spring quarantine. Another amazing highlight was playing with my friends in our first UVM Symphony Orchestra concert, and my solo cello performance in the recital hall where I got to listen to other cellists as well from my studio!

Q: What did you do during the break?

Trevor Kunkel: I was looking to work somewhere locally for my last few weeks home, but I also saw some of my friends from college and reconnected with friends and family on the North Shore in a responsible, but semi-normal way.

Anthony Katok: I was trying to find a part time job locally for the spring semester since I'll be home, but generally I spent the break hanging out with friends who were home for the holidays. I also traveled upstate a bit, to relax and to recharge.

Nicole Schneider: I stayed home from the University of Delaware during the Fall semester and worked two jobs while 'going' to school and running. This Spring semester I will be dorming at the school while still taking virtual classes so I took the break to prepare for that.

Avery Goodman: I worked for my dad's law firm doing data entry and other miscellaneous tasks.

Sierra Hiner: I did internships this past break! I interned for Multicultural Solidarity (a small anti-racist organization on Long Island), and Vermont Dance Alliance. Both of these internships were remote and I made my own hours which was helpful. Social justice and the performing arts are two of my many passions so I was happy to work with such amazing non-profits!

Q: In what ways have you surprised yourself during your first semester of college?

Trevor Kunkel: I never realized how independent I could be until I was forced to be self sufficient at college, a pleasant surprise.

Mary Sotiryadis: I was surprised at how well I was able to successfully advocate for myself when I ran into issues with my classes/grades.

Sierra Hiner: I was very independent and cared for myself well during my first semester of COVID, and I'm proud of myself for that!

Q: How did COVID restrictions impact your first semester college experience?

Mary Sotiryadis: I was able to stay home this year, which was nice, but not living on campus restricted the amount of friends I made.

Nicole Schneider: Staying home during the first semester made it hard for me to stay motivated.

Sierra Hiner: Vermont has had the lowest amount of COVID cases of any state for a while, and it is because they are very strict about social distancing and taking precautions. We must wear our masks everywhere, except while in our dorm rooms, even when we are outside and six feet apart. Still, most of my classes were in person, but it was hard at times not being able to hang out with a bunch of different people inside- but we made the most of it, and were able to avoid shutting down.

Q: What do you plan to do differently during the second semester and why?

Trevor Kunkel: I plan to reach out to more people in my classes and form study groups for each subject, which are always helpful.

Mary Sotiryadis: I plan to try to get involved in a few more clubs and extracurricular activities in order to meet people.

Nicole Schneider: I plan to be more proactive with my studying this upcoming semester, as I am taking harder classes in the Spring than I did in the Fall.

Avery Goodman: After doing my first semester from home, I'm now getting the opportunity to go live on campus at my college, the University of Southern California. Though classes are still online and I will be following restrictions, I definitely plan to branch out and make friends at my school.

After reflecting on the responses from last year's seniors, we took away a few general themes. These takeaways include: not being afraid to ask for help when needed and making sure to manage one's time well. By reaching out for help and maintaining good time-management skills, these graduates were able to excel during their first semester despite COVID-19 restrictions. Additional skills that served these students well in college were independence and self-discipline. While many of these students had to take online classes, they credited North Shore for giving them the tools they needed to stay focused, advocate for themselves, and be self-sufficient. Although these students are now our former classmates, we are excited to see where the next few years will take them. Once a Viking, always a Viking.

Wishing All A Very Happy And Healthy 2021!

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2020: The Year Of “Manly Men”

By: Jamie Holzmann

We live in a world where the concept and terms of masculinity have not only been ingrained into the public’s perception of gender qualities, but also within the fashion industry’s influence on dressing “gender appropriately” and social media standards. For years, kids have been taught the widely accepted concept that girls wear dresses and skirts, while boys wear pants and suits. While none of these “rules” of fashion were ever formally announced, society has continued to conform to them over time.

To put it simply, no girl enters the world wearing a dress, and no boy a suit. These concepts of what gender should look like are encouraged perceptions by previous generations as a part of the overall misogynistic message defining femininity as inferior to masculinity. Yet, as society progresses past the established gender standards, and women become more vocal in regards to their rights and preferences, a large percentage of people continue to live by these classifications. Regardless, a recent breakthrough of a more feminine image of masculinity has begun to make its way through the media. This image starkly contrasts the typical portrayal of the “working man” that has stood as the model of masculinity over the years. In this scenario a man’s role is to provide for his family while maintaining a professional and respectable persona. As this clear divide of characteristics has become more controversial, public figures of all genders, along with fashion companies, have started to shatter the gender precedents. Although many men have started to dress in a feminine way, the change in gender expression from the established societal norms is something society has yet to deem acceptable. The question which has held importance from the beginning of the movement is: Does something as insignificant as the clothes a man chooses to wear impact his level of “masculinity”?

On November thirteenth, Instagram flooded with reposts of pop singer Harry Styles’s post, revealing new shots from his photoshoot with *Vogue* magazine, along with an announcement that he would be on the cover of *Vogue*’s December 2020 issue. The front cover featured Styles wearing an extravagant, flowy, ruffled gown made by Gucci, with the quote, “anytime you’re putting barriers up in your life, you’re limiting yourself”. With this quote Styles reminds his fans that he is always in support of self-expression. His feminine style, previously shown through his concert attire and in countless photoshoots for well known fashion companies, was nothing out of the ordinary to his fans. With over six million likes, fans all around the world applauded him for his unique taste in fashion.

Despite the positive feedback, some were less than thrilled with Styles’ outfit choices. Candace Owens, an American conservative author and political activist, shared her criticism of the photos via Twitter. She replied to *Vogue*’s announcement of the issue saying “There is no society that can survive without strong men” and that “In the west, the steady feminization of our men at the same time that Marxism is being taught

to our children is not a coincidence. It is an outright attack”. She followed this tweet with a statement that she later referred to as a “movement” she had created, titled “Bring back manly men”. Based on Styles’ well-known tendency of being mainly inactive on social media, a response to the criticism was unimaginable to his large following. Nevertheless, weeks after the tweet had surfaced, once a response had seemed out of the question, Styles spontaneously posted a photo via Instagram. It included shots from his most recent photoshoot with *Variety* magazine in which he eats a banana while wearing a frilly blue suit, captioned with nothing other than the title that Owens had claimed so proudly as her own “Bring back manly men”. As expected, Owens did not hesitate to add fuel to the fire, posting a nine minute “IGTV” Instagram video in response, claiming that she had inspired “global conversation” with the creation of her movement.

In terms of the disagreements that arise with people’s interpretation of masculinity, the argument stands at a person’s right to freedom of speech and how it may interfere with one’s right to freedom of expression. As much as Owens has the right to criticize Styles’ interpretation of masculinity, Styles, along with *Vogue* or any other company that endorses his feminine style, has the right to broaden the spectrum of what is constantly seen as feminine and masculine. A man who incorporates feminine aspects into his physical appearance for the sake of his own satisfaction can be and feel just as masculine as a typical “working man” in the East that Owens uses for comparison. The reality is, nothing that a man does increases or decreases his level of masculinity because there is no universal definition of it.

What Harry Styles achieved through this controversy ultimately played into the concept of shock factor in the media. People pay attention when lines are crossed, and regardless of the content of Owens’ response, the fact that she felt strongly enough to share her opinions for millions of people to see further emphasizes his success in this category. The concept of masculinity has been altered to fit the freer vibe of more recent generations, and is open to all genders, including women. There is a fluidity in gender and sexuality that has allowed for gender expression to be primarily preference based. The bottom line is, a man wearing a dress does not threaten the masculinity of any other man. Regardless of his flowy pants and pink blouses, Harry Styles has been and remains to be a figure that others view as being comfortable with his masculinity. The ability to acknowledge a sense of style as well as a certain “look” that fits the style of his music does not divide his fans, but instead brings them a sense of comfort. This comes with knowing that his confidence allows him to create an image that defies typical gender norms.

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Your Town?
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Prison Or Summer Camp?

By: Lauren Hagen

While America tends to pride itself on being one of the most progressive countries, it is lacking in one major department: the prison system. America incarcerates its citizens at globally unprecedented rates; for every 100,000 residents, 716 of them are jailed - three and a half times that of the average European rate (Wagner). Simply put, five percent of the world's population lives in the U.S., but 25% of the world's total prison population is composed of United States' citizens (Lee). Despite the constant rate at which America imprisons its citizens and implements measures for supposed safety of the population, the mass incarceration rate has not proven to have an effect on public safety. One aspect of the prison system that is blamed for such high populations is its multipurpose functionality; the U.S. tends to rely on jails more than institutionalized care (mental health needs, substance abuse issues, homelessness) (Lee). As a result, many mentally ill people who are jailed remain undiagnosed. These undiagnosed inmates, with the strict confinement and harsh punishments instituted in prisons, worsen, and when released, pose a threat to society.

While America struggles to contain its bursting prisons, it seems Norway has perfected the institution, which is more often referred to as a summer-camp than prison. The most famous Norwegian prison, Halden, is hailed as the most humane prison in the world, with the sole purpose of rehabilitating inmates (Zoukis). The prison guards at this facility are trained to motivate the prisoners rather than intimidate them. The guards are required to attend a two-year educational program in which they study a mix of criminology, law, welfare, applied ethics, and social work, and learn how to "see the person behind the offense" (Dreisinger). This prison is also regarded as one of the most beautiful, with stylish shared housing units known for being bright and airy (and with no bars on the windows), art filled walls, uplifting court yards filled with trees and chess sets, state of the art workout facilities, a prison choir, book clubs, drug treatment programs, therapy opportunities etc. This atmosphere is created to inspire change as well as the inmates' desire to strive for better lives, rather than punish the prisoners, which the Norwegian government feels is accomplished just by the loss of freedom that comes with being in jail.

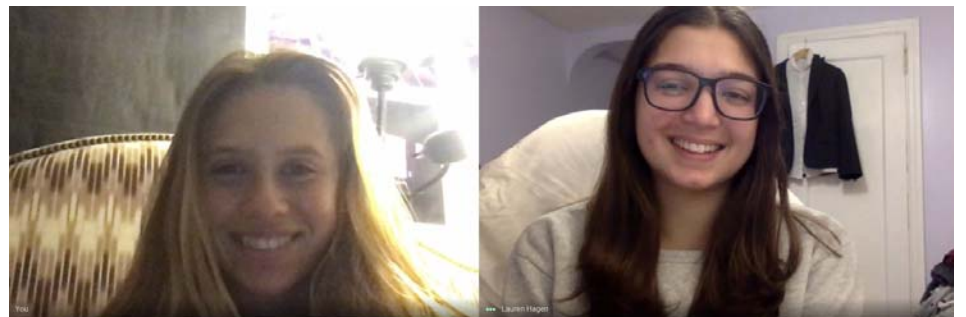
The treatment of inmates in Norway is not the only aspect of Norwegian prisons that Americans find shocking; Norwegian visiting rooms bear almost no similarities to American prison visiting rooms. Offenders have separate, unsupervised rooms for when loved ones come to visit, rather than the big, depressing visiting halls in American prisons. Offenders with children have rooms stocked with toys, and those with significant others are provided with sexual protection. The prison system allows this intimacy between family

members because they believe that the people who love them are the most capable of "correcting" them, and therefore should be given the chance to do so in a comfortable environment (Dreisinger). This emphasis on allowing inmates to connect with their family members corresponds with the prisons' emphasis on forming relationships and shaping active members of society.

Additionally, the idea of open prisons is an idea that's foreign to the U.S. Open prisons categorizes 30% of Norway's prisons, and allow prisoners to come and go from the institution throughout their sentence (Dreisinger). When prisoners are within three years of release, they can apply to one of these prisons, which allows inmates to get jobs they can commute to each day, and return home to their families on occasion. The most notable of these prisons is Bastoy. This prison takes up the entirety of a small island and is labeled a nature reserve. Prisoners live in log cabins and roam the island freely, performing tasks to keep the prison running. Bastoy prisoners grow 25% of their food on the island and tend to farm animals which are not only used for food production, but are also part of the prison's method of teaching empathy to its prisoners (Dreisinger). These prisoners have unlimited access to phones and are encouraged to reach out to family and form bonds with other prisoners as well as the guards. The near-freedom prisoners experience at this prison makes acclimating back into society after years of imprisonment easier on the inmates.

Norway's prison system is often mocked for not being hard enough on crime, or for having all the "nice" criminals. In truth, both Halden and Bastoy house some of the country's worst offenders, both including violent criminals and those arrested for drug related crimes. The governor of Bastoy (prison refrains from using harsh terms like 'warden') explains the prison's ability to inspire change in their inmates as follows: "We say 'is that really the same guy you called difficult?' It's really simple: Treat people like dirt and they'll act like dirt. Treat them like human beings and they'll act like human beings" (Dreisinger). The prison system believes that a prisoner's actions are a reflection of how they are treated and so, treating them as if they're respected members of society will help them grow and reach that expectation. While there are many skeptics who view this system as ineffective, they couldn't be more wrong as the recidivism rate in Norway is the lowest in the world, at 20% (Zoukis). For some perspective, in the U.S. more than 70% of freed inmates are re-arrested within five years. This overwhelming gap in statistics cannot be explained by the U.S. having more violent offenders (which is an idea not supported by statistics), and so must be the result of a faulty system, which dehumanizes the prisoners and often worsens their behavior.

Thank You To Those Who Are Helping To Make The Viking View Possible In 2020-21.



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Some Of Our Editors and Staff Members Are All Smiles. They Must Be Thinking About Their Next Assignment For The Viking View.

The Reality Of Voter Fraud

By: Jackson Best

In a year packed with chaos, the last thing the American public needed was more drama. But 2020 was an election year, and a memorable one at that. Democrats managed to flip Wisconsin and Michigan back to blue, and scored victories in deep red states like Georgia and Arizona. While Donald Trump comfortably won Florida, a potential swing state, nearly all other purple regions were taken by the now confirmed President, Joe Biden. However, over a month after the election was called by the Associated Press, many Americans still believe that widespread voter fraud swung results to favor Democrats, and that the election was stolen from Donald Trump.

Before discussing the possibility of widespread voter fraud, the actual election itself must be analyzed. Due to the novel coronavirus spiking across the country, many Americans opted to vote by mail. While existing long before 2020, no other election had seen such a large number of mail-in ballots filed. According to the Pew Research Center, 46% of votes were from absentee or mail-in ballots, nearly outnumbering the remaining 54% of in-person votes. Mail-in ballots take longer to process than votes cast in-person, and as a result, election results in various states were delayed past election night. This was a major cause of concern for many Americans, but in reality, the results displayed on election night were media projections and not official counts. In fact, some states were not required to certify their results until December. Just because counting took much longer than usual in 2020 is no cause for concern, and if nothing else, it reflects a commitment to accuracy.

Now, many Americans worry that mail-in ballots are susceptible to fraud or manipulation more so than in-person voting. And it should be stated that mail-in ballots, by their very nature, are more vulnerable to fraud since they are filled out without the supervision of poll workers. However, in regards to the 2020

Presidential Election, fraud by mail-in ballots did not alter the outcome of the election at all. The Heritage Association, a conservative think tank, reported 1,302 instances of confirmed voter fraud, with its database stretching back to 1971. While certainly not a definitive database, 1,302 cases over the course of nearly 50 years is far too low to shift the outcome of a presidential election. In smaller state elections that are often decided by dozens of votes, voter fraud is a legitimate concern. However, even if all 1,302 fraudulent votes were cast during 2020 and in a critical battleground state like Georgia or Arizona, Biden still would have legitimately won. What's more is that claims of widespread voter fraud imply some nation-wide conspiracy theory against Trump, when Republicans actually performed very well in Congressional elections. Claims of voter fraud then rely on contradictory assumptions: a calculated attack on American democracy by pro-Biden liberals occurred, and those same liberals voted Republicans into Congress.

Waiting for results to be called after Election Day in 2020 was different than what many Americans were used to, but falsely proclaiming American democracy as fraudulent simply because Donald Trump didn't win is ignorant at best and malicious at worst. Our country functions because we place immense value on the voice of the people, and by delegitimizing the very vehicle through which citizens express their opinions, one endangers not just a single election year, but the entire legacy of our country.

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What's A Restaurant To Do?

By: Jessica Lillis

Despite all efforts to keep "business as usual" over this past holiday season while maintaining COVID restrictions in New York City, restaurants are now being ordered to go back to no indoor dining. Even after continuously following the guidelines given that allows for it, such as 25% capacity seating indoors, restaurants may suffer even more now than they did after our last lockdown. "Some restaurants will shut entirely for the winter months. Others, confronting daunting rent payments and mounting bills, wonder how, if at all, they will survive" (*The New York Times*). Being forced to close for several months this past spring really hurt them financially, especially smaller local restaurants and businesses. Since they weren't making money, they also had to cut back on staff. "Across the country, 10,000 restaurants have closed over the past three months, according to the National Restaurant Association" (CNN). Reopening again this past summer was better than nothing and helped them to make money again. But with rising numbers of COVID cases, Governor Cuomo put an end to indoor dining once again for safety precautions.

Restaurants will have to adjust to these not so new limitations. Some chose to set up outdoor dining with socially

distanced tables, but now given the fact that it's winter and cold outside, nobody is going to want to eat this way. In addition, if it's snowy or rainy, business owners might not be able to offer any outdoor seating at all. In order to keep up with service, restaurant owners will therefore have to adjust and find ways to accommodate customers so they will be able to make money and stay open.

Although it may be hard for restaurants to survive and doesn't seem fair that even after they've been so careful they have to close again- this may be the safest option. Because there is a second surge of the coronavirus, "Mr. Cuomo said that the city was on a path to hit 90 percent of its hospital capacity, at which point he would order all nonessential businesses closed" (*The New York Times*). No matter how disappointing and annoying it may be, we must take into consideration what is truly best to keep everyone safe. If banning indoor dining is going to help and prevent an even bigger shut down, then we may need to keep an open mind. By taking these cautionary steps, hopefully it will help put an end to this pandemic more quickly and for good.



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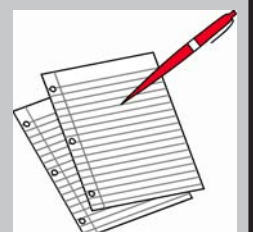
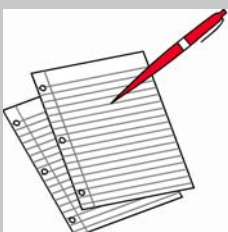
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“The Harsh Relationship Between Time And Death”: Adrian Brandon

By: Ella DeSane

Most of us don't worry about things like driving down the street, walking into a store, or reaching for the phone that's in our back pocket. It's never a thought in our head; we never think about such simple meaningless things that could lead to us losing our lives. Have you ever stopped to think about all the black people in this world who have to worry about those things? Many people would answer “no” to this question, because they don't have to worry about the color of their skin deciding their fate. So many people don't have to worry about losing someone they love because they were killed for having a darker skin complexion. So many of us don't feel our heart beat out of our chest when a police officer pulls us over, as we think that this could be it. That's the sick and harsh reality of the world we live in. However, it happens everyday.

Thankfully there are people like Adrian Brandon who are trying to fight for justice for the beautiful black people whose lives were taken from them. Adrian Brandon is an artist from Brooklyn who has a project called “Stolen.” The whole project is about someone's story never getting to finish, Brandon will draw someone who lost his/her life and how long they were alive will determine how long he colors the portrait in. “I use time as a medium to define how long each portrait is colored in. 1 year of life = 1 minute of color”(Brandon). He started this project so he could show the viewer that there is so much empty space left in the lives of people who have died. There is so much more to their story, and it will never get told. “This emptiness represents holes in their families and our community, who will be forever stuck with the question: “who were they becoming?”(Brandon) Tamir Rice was killed when he was 12 years old, Aiyana Stanley-Jones was 7, Michael Brown was 18, Jordan Edwards was 15. This isn't even a handful of the people who were killed by police officers. These young beautiful people had so much more to see and experience; they deserved to see the world and now they will never get to.

The purpose of all of Brandon's art is to show the perspective of the “Black experience”(Brandon). He explains that his work is to show the high and lows of the black community. His work represents the joy and the injustices, but most of his art is to raise awareness. “Unfortunately, much of America has become numb to the loss of Black lives. My goal is to create art that creates an understanding of Black culture, Black love and Black pain so that we can move forward together”(Brandon).

Brandon has many projects that he is currently working on. His art gives the viewer a window into somebody else's life. His projects, such

as Brooklyn Windows, Stolen, Durag, Thank you, and Chaos, all show such a powerful perspective into not only the lives that inspire his work, but into his as well. His work shines the light on the perspective of the black community as a whole. He wants the world to be aware of the fact that systemic racism, white supremacy, and police brutality is real, and as harsh as it may be, it's hurting people everyday. Many people don't want to deal with the problem because they are not directly affected by it. The fight against these injustices isn't a battle people should be fighting alone though; everyone should be ready to stand up and support each other.

The conversation of whether or not to stand up and fight for the rights we should all have has come up many times; for example, how many times have we heard: “Well, what about the police officers; how do you think they feel? They are scared for their lives everyday!” The difference between being a police officer and being black though, is that being black is something one is born as. Being a police officer is a career choice. That doesn't mean police officers can't be scared for their lives, but they made the choice to wake up and go to work. Many black people don't get a choice; they live in fear everyday. Everyone is scared at one point in his or her life, but it doesn't change what people of color face everyday.

Everyone deserves to be equal; it doesn't matter if you are female, have a disability, a different sexual orientation than the person sitting right next to you, or if the color of your skin is different. Artists, and people all around the world, are fighting for equality, and Brandon's work has only made it easier to see the struggles that the black community faces. All of his projects are about the struggles that he himself faces, along with the rest of the community. It's time to stop ignoring this issue, along with so many others and deal with them. Brandon gives a deeper insight into the root of the problem. We don't know how much time we have left, but we should make the most out of the time we have instead of spending so much time on hate. That's “The Harsh Relationship Between Time and Death”(Adrian Brandon).

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Mr. Bloom's Yearbook Update:



This school year has been anything, but normal. However, North Shore High School's Yearbook Committee is working diligently to keep one aspect of your school year as normal as possible: the yearbook. We promise to make this yearbook a memorable one. During these crazy times, we must stay focused on the things that matter. And so we are constantly changing topics and deadlines to try to accommodate as many students and their families as possible.

However, please stay on top of our requests for pictures and submissions. With our final deadline just a little over two months away, we still have a ways to go. Please read all of our emails that are addressed to both parents and students. It is our only way of staying in touch with everyone.

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If you, have any yearbook questions, please contact bloomh@northshoreschools.org.

Environmental Security?

By: Emma Arboleda

Over the past four years, the United States has suffered an unprecedented rollback on environmental policies under the Trump Administration; this is a huge setback for environmental justice. In a global effort to halt climate change and combat environmental issues, the United States has taken strides in the opposite direction. With President-elect Joe Biden taking office on January 20th, 2021, policies are expected to change and shift in the direction of conservationism and clean energy. However, it's impossible to tell whether this will be enough to save an already deteriorating world.

In mid-October, members of the United Nations warned that Earth is doomed to become an "uninhabitable hell" if the world fails to address the most looming threat to mankind: climate change. Mami Mizutori, the Assistant Secretary General For Disaster Risk and Debarati Guha-Sapir of Belgium's Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters concluded in a report for the UN that in fact, "the future of mankind looks very bleak indeed" because of the repeated failures to tackle both climate change and deteriorating biodiversity on a global scale. Due to its constant repeals of environmental policies, the United States is a prime example of these failures.

In June 2017, Trump announced that the U.S. was to withdraw from the Paris Agreement, a global pledge to limit temperature rises to less than 34.7 degrees Fahrenheit. However, this was just the beginning of the United States' failure to act in the interest of the planet. Under the Trump Administration, America saw the roll-back of more than 125 environmental policies, each with its own devastating consequences. However, Joe Biden claims to come to office with a strategy to combat these failures: "The Biden Plan"

"The Biden Plan" is a huge step forward for the U.S. in recognizing climate change and declining biodiversity as real (and solvable) threats. By investing money from the rollback of Trump's tax incentives into sustainable energy, the plan aims to create a clean energy economy by 2050. In addition, the plan makes use of "Day One Executive Actions" where Biden will immediately use his executive power to introduce legislation protecting the environment. This legislation will combat Trump's attacks on federal wildlife reserves for their resources and ensure the U.S. fights against climate change by rejoining the Paris Accord. Biden's first year in office is poised to pursue clean energy and conservation, steps towards achieving environmental security.

The actual effectiveness of "The Biden Plan" remains to be seen, but it is certainly a step in the right direction for environmental security. Hopefully, the new administration can lead the country towards a brighter and greener future.

Should I Stay Or Should I Go?

By: Matt Malone

What can you do in 45 years? A lot, right? That is more than half a lifetime for most humans. What about Patrick J. Leahy, the current senator of Vermont? What has he been doing for the past 45 years? He has been a part of the United States Senate and is not done yet. Leahy is not the only one that has been a member of Congress for a long time: Chuck Grassley, Mitch McConnell, and Dianne Feinstein combined have over 10 decades of experience. In 1951, the 22nd Amendment was ratified, preventing presidents from serving for more than two terms. However, nothing was put in place for the amount of terms Congressmen and women could serve; therefore, representatives can serve for as many years as they like, as long as they get reelected. Some people may argue that term limits should not be enforced because "it will remove the power from voters in favor of an arbitrary law" (Thoughtco). However, as citizens of a state, the choice of who will be the next representative still relies in the hands of the people. People in Congress should have term limits because many legislators view their work as a lifelong career rather than seeing it as a chance to help the state and country.

To Congresspeople, fundraising is nothing new. In fact, "Sometimes 6-8 hours a day, is spent not working on legislation" (Termlimits.com). Representatives of a state are paid by the people of said state via taxes. That means if six to eight hours of a day of work is spent collecting money for their campaigns, people are paying large amounts of money and receiving little benefit back. If term limits were enforced, this problem would be reduced drastically because Senators and People Of The House would not need to plan far ahead into their future and can spend more time doing their job. Equally important, restrictions should be introduced to make for smoother transitions when switching state representatives. If someone has represented a state for decades and decides to retire, this can create problems when someone comes in with different viewpoints, despite having the same political affiliation. Sound familiar? It should. About a little over 200 years ago, George Washington stepped down for this same reason. In his mind, "He recognized that the longer he — or anyone — retained power over the democracy, the less democratic it became" (Tribtalk.com). Therefore, listen to one of our nation's heroes for a better tomorrow. In life, people need to know when to let go. This can be a difficult lesson for some to learn. For others, letting go is as easy as counting to ten. However, no matter the difficulty, it can greatly benefit a cause or a country.



Does a 12-Year-Old Know More About Politics Than You? Probably.

By: Veronica Frank

One day in early November I came home to find my parents talking about the election, chatting over a loud NPR broadcast. I joined the conversation, mentioning the argument at lunch that I had witnessed. As we were talking, my 11-year-old brother chimed in, "Yeah, at my school all the kids were fighting." While I expected high school students to be involved in politics, I never considered middle school students to be politically savvy. I further questioned my brother to find out that this tension had been going on for weeks. Friends found themselves divided, and yelling happened almost daily during his lunch period.

After hearing this story, I began to wonder, did the 2020 election impact the younger generation? In order to find out, I created an online survey for 5th-9th graders. As I began to investigate this question, I concluded that, yes, the election has influenced Gen Z, possibly forever.

Compared to my parents' generation, Gen Z jumped headfirst into politics, and primarily at a young age. Teen icons such as 16-year-old Charlie D'Amelio told her 100 million followers to go out and vote. Kids as young as 13 know how to register to vote, even though they aren't eligible yet. Henry Spina, a freshman at North Shore, even noted that "[He] brought up politics more than [his] other family members". Being in the know regarding the government is very important, but with social media platforms like TikTok and YouTube, the way the younger generation deals with politics now can be detrimental to them later.

Gen Z is famous for being the screen generation, the 6 - 18-year-olds, "who spend more than four hours per day in front of a screen" (Pickerill). In a study done by the NPR radio station, "Just over half of children in the United States — 53 percent — now own a smartphone by the age of 11. And 84 percent of teenagers now have their phones" (Kamenetz). TikTok in particular is popular with kids and teens. The social media app has over 800 million users worldwide, and according to *The New York Times*, "TikTok classified more than a third of its 49 million daily users in the United States as being 14-years-old or younger" (Frenkel). Being a user of TikTok, it is apparent that many of those users use their account as a political voice. The account @tiktokforchange previously known as @tiktokforbiden has over 1 million followers and under the #trump2020 hashtag, there are 135.6 million videos. Whether you want to get into politics or not, when joining social media, it's par for the course.

Parents and children alike have long held political opinions, but in recent years these once private perspectives have become personality traits. I know many people who chose their friends based on their political position.

President Trump frequently labels Democrats as enemies, and now American citizens are starting to do the same, often at a young age. All over school during this election I witnessed tense conversations that led to the division of friend groups. With 80% of the 5th-9th graders surveyed saying that their friend group brings up politics frequently, it's clear that these uncomfortable conversations are now normal. Children as young as 10 have their preferred political party, and this early exposure could be disastrous for their development. Will this new divide between political parties affect Gen Z later? Will America be divided forever? Only time will tell.

What makes the exposure to the election through social media worse is that not everything is true. Large amounts of posted information are blatant lies, fabricated by political campaigns and radicals. Since teens are still developing their brains, how are they supposed to know what is right or wrong? Over 60% of surveyed 6th-9th graders said that they had heard a conspiracy theory through social media. Many of these theories have to do with the legitimacy of the election. This can lead to an unhealthy doubt in American democracy. Will these children always have doubt in our democracy? If so, what will become of it?

Is Gen Z going to be affected by this election forever? Yes. 10-year-olds are having to choose their playmates based on who their parents voted for. Teens watch as strangers yell falsehoods at their faces through a screen and become brainwashed by social media. I fear that the generation growing up now has chosen its political tribe at such a young age that it will cause isolation. Because of this election, Gen Z is going to struggle with how to deal with democracy for the rest of their lives.

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The Supreme Court Is Changing. Why Should I Care?

By: Sophia Marchioli

Over the course of the last few months, the U.S. has both lost and gained a Supreme Court Justice. As the nation mourns the loss of Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg (RBG), we welcome Supreme Court Justice Amy Coney Barrett. The decision made by President Trump in late September to appoint Barrett has become extremely controversial as some see Barrett as a great female leader, while others see her as a threat to women's rights. The decision has caused a tornado of passionate discussion between conservatives and liberals, but many high school students are wondering, why should they care?

First, the Supreme Court plays a major role, in both the government, and our day-to-day lives. It is exactly how it sounds—the highest, or most supreme, level of courts in the country that checks the power of the President and Congress (United States Courts). Essentially, it is a system of resolving disputes.

A major ruling decided by the Supreme Court includes the *Brown vs. The Board of Education* case of 1954. In this case, it was ruled that the segregation of children in public schools was unconstitutional. The ruling allowed many African-American children to go to their own neighborhood schools, for it was common that they had been bused out of town to attend all-black school. A historical case like this speaks to the power the Supreme Court holds in dictating the lives of students.

As we look to the new Justice,

Amy Coney Barrett, many believe that she has some big shoes to fill, and truthfully, she does. RBG, the Justice she is replacing, reached a lot of firsts for the judicial branch; for instance, she was the first Jewish woman to serve on the Supreme Court, and only the second woman appointed to the Supreme Court (History.com Editors). Many of her rulings were monumental, especially those relating to women, children, and the LGBTQ+ community, making her term a hard act to follow. It's natural for people to compare the new Justice's decisions and rulings to those of the infamous RBG's. However, Justice Barrett has proven to be drastically different from RBG, with much more conservative opinions. Justice Barrett is extremely qualified for this position though, for she has been practicing law since 1997 (Notre Dame Law School); however, some think she may be too well-equipped as she poses a threat to many modern beliefs.

Barrett's ideas are alarming to some citizens who disagree with the changes she may implement. The question is, what could she do with her new power? Well, Barrett has shown Americans that she means business, but business doesn't always mean social, or moral accuracy. It is noted that Barrett has used the term, "sexual preference" in the past, which has offended many and has not been taken as a good sign for the future of the LGBTQ community. During an interview with Sarah Kate Ellis, the CEO of GLAAD, she talked about the fact that the rights of the LGBTQ community, "sit at the doorstep of

the Supreme Court." Therefore, all LGBTQ rights, and truthfully all minorities' rights (that includes women, people of color, immigrants etc.) could be deeply affected by the Supreme Court at any moment. To these minorities, their future looks murky. This worries many, including Monica Hesse, a *Washington Post* columnist. She wrote, "[Ruth Bader Ginsburg] opened up doors for the women who came behind her...". She went on to say, "How dispiriting to fear that the next woman to walk through them might shut them behind her."

Despite the large group of people that is opposed to Barrett's appointment, there's an equally large group that is excited about her appointment. She supports many conservative led movements, such as the pro-life movement, and so, this is a major win for conservatives, making the updated ratio of conservative to liberal justices on the Supreme Court six to three. This new reality is frightening to many liberals, for the future of the country sits in the hands of those nine Justices. And with the majority of those Justices being conservative, it looks like some major rulings on the Supreme Court could likely sway away from liberal opinions.

Students should be aware of Barrett's views because they are tied to our futures, considering "it's a lifetime appointment" (Ellis), so the court's rulings will be part of the fabric of our country for many decades to come (Study.com).

Election Day Is Over...So Now What?

By: Lillian Molesky

Now that the dust of the election has settled, and President-Elect Biden has won, the transitional period has begun. But why does this transition take so long, and what exactly happens in between Election Day and Inauguration Day?

After Election Day and the projected winner are announced, it is a waiting game. Due to the Electoral College process, electors from each state meet in their states on December 14th to cast their votes for the new President-elect. These votes from all around the country are sent to Washington, D.C. and are counted on January 6th to certify the results in Congress. The determined winner of the electoral college is the determined winner of the election and is then sworn into office on January 21st, which is known as Inauguration Day.

In regards to the candidates of the 2020 election, President Trump was considered to be in a "lame-duck" period of his presidency during most of December and January; with his successor already determined, there is not much long-lasting change that can be implemented. Depending on the will of the lame-duck, this can be a period of time full of executive orders (that will surely be undone by their successor if they are of the opposing political party), unusual silence, or anywhere in between. In Trump's case, his priorities were set on dismissing the election results and challenging multiple states with lawsuits, rather than using the time to further his agenda in government. However, with states certifying their results and Biden having a solid lead, the focus of the two months between Election Day and Inauguration Day fell on the new President-Elect rather than the former, as a lieu of appointments and assembling awaited.

The most important first step for President-Elect Biden is the preparation and selection of his White House Staff. Chief of Staff is the most important position; this person is given the first appointment and is responsible for helping with the rest of the selection process (*New York Times*). Biden chose Ron Klain to be his. Next, the Cabinet members of the Biden Administration are appointed. The Cabinet, made up of 15 members and the Vice President, exists to advise the President on matters that are related to their specific fields. Examples of these positions include Secretary of State, Treasury, and Housing and Urban Development.

The expertise of these appointees both in the Cabinet and White House ensure that the President-Elect can do his/her job with credible advisors. However, there is little planning that can be done without the necessary materials. President-elect Biden's transition was actually delayed by weeks after a White House staffer refused to sign-off on the transfer of resources.

After describing the amount of work that must be done in only two months, it is important to note how crucial it is to stay on schedule. While this period of time may seem like a wind-down for many, it is actually a window of rapid and important work, with the intentions of a seamless transition.

January 2021

Advertising And Food. Two Peas In A Pod?

By: Trevor Janusas

Kids see food ads everywhere from social media, tv, magazines, product placement video games and much more, but are they affected by them? According to a study in 2016, children see up to 10 to 11 food ads a day which means they see up to approximately 4,000 ads in a year and this does not count ads seen on social media, video games, cell phone apps, in schools, and all other marketing directed at children. According to a report by the Federal Trade Commission, the food advertising industry spent 1.8 billion in 2009 just on kids' food advertising.

The APA (American Psychological Association) also stated that "Today's children, ages 8 to 18, consume multiple types of media (often simultaneously) and spend more time (44.5 hours per week) in front of a computer, television, and game screen than any other activity in their lives except sleeping." So if 1.8 billion dollars is put into advertising for kids and they see 44.5 hours of media, they almost have to be affected. The APA also says "Food industry advertising that targets children and youth has been linked to

the increase of childhood obesity." So when children view too much media, they are affected deeply and the constant food ads may be too much; so, try to limit the amount of media you or your child uses.

The APA suggests that "Active healthy lifestyles for children and adolescents include moderate television viewing, regular family mealtimes, and regular exercise. Therefore, whether you are a teenager, or the parent of a child:

- Limit excessive time spent watching TV, video, gaming, or surfing the web.
- Monitor the media that your children consume, particularly if they are under age eight.
- Encourage healthy eating habits (i.e., greater consumption of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low-fat or non-fat milk or dairy products, lean meats, poultry, fish, and beans) and promote physical activity.
- Eat with your kids and take pleasure in your mealtimes together.
- Lead by example by eating healthy foods and engaging in physical activity.

Remember that you can have the greatest influence on your children's health.

-Make sure to monitor your screen time and to keep practicing healthy lifestyles because food advertisements do affect children's health and could be affecting you or your child's health. Today's children under the age of eight do not understand the intent of commercials and do not know how to stay healthy and fit; therefore, make sure to keep helping them stay fit and energetic.

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Why Has Wearing A Mask Become Politicized?

By: Sophie Rosencrans

Amidst the chaos that ensued from the spread of COVID-19 in early March, my three brothers and I decided to take advantage of the unusual amount of time we had together and embark on a cross-country road trip. Departing from Long Island in mid-August, we were able to witness the stark differences that plagued the United States during a time of turmoil.

It was nearing the end of a heated summer that saw waves of protests following the death of George Floyd in May, intense campaigning for a presidential election that would determine the fate of the nation, and a global pandemic with no clear end in sight. Although I was not surprised by increasing political polarization, I was surprised by the strong opposition to mask wearing and what many believed it to represent.

While we had several unique encounters over the course of the trip, two in particular led me to realize what a mask—a simple piece of cloth—had the power to symbolize. This realization first occurred to me a few days into my trip as my brothers and I entered a barbeque joint in South Dakota. In that moment, all eyes turned towards us. In a building filled with over 40 people, in the midst of a global pandemic, we were the only ones wearing masks. Although we were complying with public-health guidelines, it was clear to everyone that we had come from afar.

I developed a deeper understanding of the masks' symbolic nature while shopping for groceries in Cody, Wyoming. In a mask-mandated supermarket, I witnessed a woman embrace a friend she had just bumped into. Upon noticing her friend's lack of a mask the woman sighed in relief, tore off her own and exclaimed that there were, "way too many liberals in this country!" It was at this moment that I recognized the magnitude of the division in our nation. Many people did not see a mask as a tool used to combat a deadly virus, but as a leftist tool used to coerce the people of the United States. By wearing a mask I was not only labeled as a foreigner in various locations, but to many, far worse... a liberal.

The politicization of the mask can be traced back to the beginning of the pandemic. Initially, health organizations were uncertain about the ways in which the COVID-19 virus was transmitted and therefore lacked a consensus about the right course of action. As a result, the public looked towards political leaders for guidance. Despite the concerns that arose early on, Donald Trump and his administration continually downplayed the danger of the virus and often refused to wear masks. Democratic politicians, on the other hand, quickly began to encourage

mask-wearing and warn their supporters about COVID-19. Austin Wright, a professor at the University of Chicago, said that "In the current U.S. political landscape, very similar messaging from Republicans and Democrats alike would have been required to have ensured widespread mask usage." Indeed, politicians have demonstrated the suggestibility of the American people by making masks a partisan issue.

Research conducted by the Pew Research Center reinforces this idea. In an online survey that analyzed members of the Pew Research Center's American Trends Panel (ATP), it was concluded that "Republicans and Democrats remain far apart in their views of the threat to public health posed by the coronavirus outbreak" (Tyson). Although over 299,000 have died from COVID-19 in the United States alone, people continue to question the danger it poses and view preventative measures as an issue of partisanship. According to the CDC, "Masks are a simple barrier to help prevent your respiratory droplets from reaching others. Studies show that masks reduce the spray of droplets when worn over the nose and mouth". While uncertainty existed early on in the pandemic, world health organizations have since proven that COVID-19 is not a political issue. Masks have the power to prevent the spread of this deadly virus and save lives. Unlike other countries, the polarization present within the United States has inhibited our ability to comply with regulations on a broad scale. Many fear that if our country remains so divided, we may not be able to work together to prevent another crisis in the future. If the nation is incapable of uniting, we might be headed towards further destruction.

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Tips And Tricks To Improve Those 'Online Learning' Days

By: Kate Gilliam

Before March 2020, Friday was the best day of the week for North Shore students. Elementary school students clocked in many hours on the playground after school. Middle school students marched their way down to Ralph's in large packs. And high school students looked forward to a night out with friends. Now, only nine months later, the last day of the school week has taken quite a turn. Friday is "Zoom Day" for North Shore High School Students, and it is safe to say that most kids do not look forward to it. There is no denying that sitting in front of a computer screen for six hours while trying to learn can be mentally taxing; so, here are some tips and tricks to make your Fridays more enjoyable!

Get Fresh Air

North Shore High School students now have ten minutes in between virtual classes. Use this time wisely! Take a step outside and take a few deep breaths of fresh air. Standing outdoors for several minutes can revolutionize how you feel. Sunlight synthesizes Vitamin D, which can boost your mood in a short amount of time.

Move Your Body

At the end of a long day of virtual school, you may feel tired and unmotivated; however, moving your body will increase your energy level and overall mood dramatically. Whether it is a walk around the block, a game of fetch with your dog, or a run with friends, exercise is beneficial for your physical and mental health. Research shows that exercise can improve blood circulation and reduce symptoms of anxiety and depression.

Avoid Screen Time

Now that students are responsible for attending virtual classes, daily screen time is exorbitantly high for North Shore teens. Rather than spending your ten-minute breaks scrolling through Instagram or searching the web, take a break from the screen. Ditching the screen will give your eyes a break from the blue light and leave you feeling refreshed for the start of your next class.

Talk to a Friend (In Real-Life)

An integral part of school that virtual learning lacks is the social component. Students are unable to speak to their friends throughout the day. Although

you may not realize it, you are probably missing the chats you have with the kid you sit next to in math class. A live conversation with a friend may fill this gap. Texting and Snapchatting do not count!! Calling or Facetiming a friend can improve your mood and make your day more enjoyable.

Meditate

Meditation at the start or end of your day can impact your overall mood and productivity. Meditation provides an escape from the stresses of school and a worldwide pandemic. There are many great apps, like Headspace and Calm, that are downloadable at no cost, and many apps are currently offering free trials and discounted subscriptions. The practices of meditation and mindfulness are said to improve sleep, reduce stress and pain, and even increase compassion.

Catch Some Zzzzs

A night of good sleep can make the difference between a good day and a great day. Sleep allows the body to maintain serotonin and dopamine levels, which are essential for limiting stress, anxiety, and depression. Sleep also improves the ability to focus and stay productive. To improve your sleep patterns, move your body often, and avoid using screens right before bedtime.

Between COVID-19, a hybrid learning system, and the fear of the unknown, life as we now know it can be stressful and exhausting. Although these tips and tricks do not require a lot of time or effort, including them in your Fridays (and every day) can dramatically improve your mental health and overall mood.

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Congratulations To Kate Weseley-Jones and Lucia Martin.
They Have Been Named As Semifinalists In Regeneron
Science Talent Search 2021



T'is The Season To Get Covid! Could This Be The End Of Covid?

By: Liliana Stella

This past holiday season was filled with an abundance of uncertainty. As people wondered how to properly celebrate during a pandemic, COVID-19 numbers rose, thus forcing families to limit the amount of people they could have in their homes. For many people, the holidays are the only time that they get to see their families from out of state. So many still tried to gather, ignoring suggestions from health professionals. This raised a lot of concern because two main aspects of COVID prevention involve avoiding large gatherings and travel. In fact, The CDC recommended against traveling for the holidays suggesting that, "Gatherings that are shorter, smaller, outdoors and properly spaced pose less of a risk for spreading the virus"(CNN). This year there was another group of people that made sacrifices to keep our loved ones safe.

My own family didn't invite its usual crowd for Thanksgiving; we wanted to do our part to 'stop the spread', and it was apparent that our take on Thanksgiving was not that much different from many others who cancelled gatherings in order to avoid the risk of infection. However, not everyone followed this path. News outlets reported that an abundance of people flew for Thanksgiving, despite the major risk. Astonishingly, "Airports saw over 1 million travelers Friday" (TSA). This is a startling statistic that suggests Thanksgiving and Christmas time are the most popular times to fly. Although it is understandable that people want to see those they love, this is a critical time and the country is trying to repair itself.

Based on what happened this past Thanksgiving, the coronavirus pandemic seems far from over. According to Dr. Cindy Friedman, the

Chief of the Travelers' Health branch at the CDC, "Even if only a small percentage of those who traveled had asymptomatic infections, that would lead to 'hundreds of thousands' of increased infections"(USA Today). Even though the holidays are now over, it is always a good idea not to travel during circumstances such as the ones we are currently facing. That's why for upcoming events we must avoid seeing an abundance of people and follow the protocols that the CDC advises. Things like wearing our mask and washing our hands seem more and more critical as we enter a period of time that is filled with festivities. Even things like birthday parties or weddings can become super spreader events if the right precautions like mask wearing and socially distanced small gatherings are not taken. Although we were all hoping that this pandemic would be over by this time, it's not. Therefore, it is our responsibility and civic duty as human beings to help prevent the spread of this virus.

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By: Calvin Spence

Since we learned of the coronavirus in January of 2020, the ultimate goal has been to produce a vaccine and disperse it. This reaching of this goal is finally on the horizon with several pharmaceutical companies coming out with their own vaccines that have been proven to be effective. Pfizer, which was just given an emergency authorization by the FDA as of December 11th, 2020, shipped its first doses, and Moderna, another pharmaceutical company, has shipped its own in mass quantities as well.

As the American people become more and more impatient in regards to the coronavirus, the vaccines are a light at the end of the tunnel for many. The vaccines seem promising, with Moderna and Pfizer's 95% efficiency rates of their vaccines after a second dose (CDC). While this is great, does it really mean that the vaccines will be an overnight fix? Will we be able to immediately return to normal life? The simple answer is no.

To end the spread of this virus, patience is required. The future looks bright and the virus should become less problematic, but it will likely be a slow process. Most people will have to wait months to get the vaccination, and after that an additional three to four weeks to get the second dose. "Until you get that second dose, you shouldn't consider yourself protected," said Dr. David, an associate professor at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. Therefore, the second dose is crucial to ensure protection.

The Covid-19 vaccines will protect people against the virus and also drive down new infection rates. If every American receives the vaccine, then life in the U.S. may start to look normal again. Dr. Anthony Fauci, a lead member of The White House Coronavirus Task Force, has explained that if "we get 75 percent, 80 percent of the population vaccinated. If we do that, by the time we get to the end of the summer, we may actually have enough herd immunity protecting our society that as we get to the end of 2021, we can approach very much some degree of normality

that is close to where we were before." This plan seems great in theory, but the sad reality is that not all Americans are willing to get vaccinated.

"I will get the vaccine because the more people that get vaccinated, the more the number infected will start to decrease and we can live in a normal world again," said Jack Zorn, a junior at North Shore. Although the vaccine should be an obvious solution, for many others, it remains up for debate. In a recent poll done by Gallop, even with a recent increase in willingness to get the vaccine, the percent of people willing to get it is currently only at 58% nationwide. This is a very scary truth in the United States. As a result of false information, many do not trust the vaccine. Rushed approval for the vaccines and the actions of pharmaceutical companies in the past might also be influencing how people feel about receiving these new vaccines.

A very popular question among those that will receive the vaccine is whether or not a mask and social distancing will remain necessary in day to day life. The answer to this question is yes. Although those vaccinated will be less likely to catch the virus, this does not always mean that they won't transmit it to others. "It's not going to be a light switch" says Dr. Fauci. With every vaccine it has a different effect depending on the recipient, so it is not a final answer.

What matters just as much as the vaccine is its distribution. Distribution of the vaccines will be just as or more important than its effectiveness. The plan for rolling out the massive amount of doses in America only works if the deployment runs smoothly. "Infrastructure is going to contribute at least as much, if not more, than the vaccine itself to the success of the program," said Dr. Patiel, a professor at the Yale School of Public Health. The U.S. can only hope that it is prepared to handle such a large number of vaccines, and distribute them efficiently.

Americans should not be overly confident with these vaccines, but must also know that they can be big step towards ending this terrible pandemic. We must all stay disciplined when it comes to dealing with the virus and remain patient.

Digital Mind

By: Summer Rice

The last thing the world was expecting was a global pandemic lasting for over a year. Since March 2020, schools and educational facilities have been closed or on a hybrid schedule resulting in millions of students staying home and participating in online schooling. The lack of social interaction, face to face lessons from teachers, and the constant need to be near technology is affecting many students' mental health.

What started as excitement quickly turned into unhealthy sleep schedules, a lack of social interaction, mental health issues, uncertainty, fear, and more. "It all happened so quickly. At first we were all excited to have some time off from school, but once we realized that we were not going back, all that excitement went down the drain." says Olivia Morra, a sophomore at North Shore High School.

The change from a year packed full of

daily socializing with friends and teachers, to barely seeing people and rarely entering the school building was not easy for many students to grasp. Social interaction and communication is very important and necessary for all people. Although it is still possible, socializing with people in person has become more difficult to do and unsafe. Many schools are following a hybrid schedule; this is when only 50% of students attend school in person on a given day. This results in students not seeing their teachers and friends in person most days. Although this is the safe way to go about socializing and learning, it can play a big role in students' mental health. Lack of socialization can cause depression, anxiety, and other mental health issues; "Not being able to see my friends is really hard for me and it usually makes me really upset, especially when I look at old pictures and videos of us." says Shannon Stalzer, a sophomore at North

Shore High School.

Plus, learning new things in school is easier for some more than others, but learning online takes things to a whole new level. Not being able to see teachers in person everyday and having to watch hours of pre-recorded videos and teach oneself the lessons can be complicated for some, as well as mentally draining. "On the days we don't go into school it's really hard to get up and get started on school work in the morning, mainly because I know that it's going to be stressful, time consuming, and complicated to learn all by myself." says Morra. A study conducted in June found, "Between 75% and 85% of college students are experiencing ongoing stress and anxiety during the coronavirus outbreak and campus closures."(University Business). A lack of motivation and high level of stress is also common when students struggle to complete their school work. Even when students

have online classes where they can actually interact with the teacher, it is still not all that good for students. "I start school at 8 am and when it ends at 3 pm, I am still sitting in the same spot staring at my laptop screen." says Stalzer. That's about six hours of staring at a screen, and on top of that, most students do homework on their devices after school, as well as going on social media or watching videos, etc. All in all, online schooling results in a complicated and stressful way of learning and grasping new material as well as unhealthy amounts of screen time.

"I know it's not forever, but everything is just so exhausting right now," added Morra. Although it seems as though it is never ending, things will go back to some sort of normal eventually. Until then, make sure to check up on the mental health status of the people around you, including your own.

A Feather In The Cap Of Sea Cliff's Music Scene

By: Ethan Kilada

Sea Cliff is a town known for its Victorian feel, beautiful sunsets, and “popping” music scene. With the COVID-19 pandemic running rampant across all of New York, the local music scene has struggled. Still Partners, a well-known bar in Sea Cliff, which used to hold countless fun concerts, cannot run them at the present time, thus, leaving a lot of musicians to feel as if they have nothing to do. However, there is a glimmer of light in this dark, music-less abyss. **The Moonshot Emporium**, a record store/vintage clothing co-op, recently opened up at 316 Sea Cliff Avenue, bringing back Sea Cliff's once vibrant music scene. A co-op is when multiple stores operate from within the same property. Moonshot consists of three shops: Wormhole Records, owned and operated by Andrew Schipper; Crazy Lazy Vintage, a vintage clothing store run by Lisa Leonardi and lastly, Superior Records, owned and operated by fifteen-year-old Luca Williams.

Moonshot is a pretty little store right in the heart of Sea Cliff, which matches the Seacliffian energy perfectly. Customers walk in and are immediately greeted by friendly faces, that are eager to help them find the perfect music. Schipper says he “fell in love with the town” after visiting Williams' little pop-up shop where Moonshot now stands. Williams was actually one of Schipper's best customers at his place of business and came up with the idea for Moonshot. He eventually pitched it to Schipper who, at the time, had this to say: “He's fifteen so I was like no, I'm not interested”. After seeing Williams was for real about opening the shop, Schipper caved, seeing the opportunity for success and they opened Moonshot Emporium co-op. Schipper also brought along his friend Lisa Leonardi, who is the operator of Crazy Lady Vintage, and thus made it a three person co-op. Williams was running a little shop out of Moonshot at the time, but nothing seriously profitable. “This place (Moonshot) used to be an old schoolhouse or something, but I saw the potential. Luca only had a couple of Costco tables set up; it was really a mess. When I walked around this neighborhood I was like it's cool. I can work with this. It's progressive, it's artsy, all the main ingredients we need to have a successful music business”, says Schipper. As of today,

Moonshot is anything but a mess. Posters and records cover most of the walls and as you move closer to the back of the store you get a nice view of the trinkets and vintage items that are all for sale! “I wanted to create an atmospheric record store. I didn't want a boring box store. I wanted to make it so people would want to come, stay, and hang out, but not for too long though!”, says Schipper.

One of the most interesting things about Moonshot is that it was straight out of the head of fifteen-year-old Luca Williams, a sophomore at Portledge and owner of Superior Records. William's impressive record collection helped inspire him to open Moonshot, as well as a rooted entrepreneurial nature. “I used to run a little pop-up here before Moonshot opened. And I was an online seller too using eBay and Etsy mostly. And the flea markets, we have done a number of flea markets.” No stranger to the hard work required to operate a business, William's Superior Records has done well, despite the pandemic.

As I spent more time at Moonshot, I got a feel for the amount of teamwork that goes into running this co-op. “It's hard to balance with 6-8 hours of online school,” says Williams, “but we have Andrew (Schipper) who has really been great. If we didn't have Andrew, we wouldn't be able to do it.” Despite both owners being in record sales, there seems to be a level of kinship between them that runs deeper than the store. How has it been working as a co-op? Williams stated: “We are very opposite, couldn't be more opposite, but it's been a lot of fun so far.”

Moonshot carries all of the old classics from David Bowie to Fleetwood Mac; they are trying to introduce the younger generation of Sea Cliff to some great music. There is an advantage to buying records or CDs over streaming music. Williams is firm on his statement that “It's really about the experience, the original artwork; this is what the artists intended for the music, not the remixes or the remastered's”.

If you are looking for some good, safe, vintage fun during these times of turmoil, head down to Moonshot Records; where “Just like a wormhole, this place goes on and on”-Andrew Schipper.



Photo Courtesy Of Ethan Kilada

This One Is For The Foodies...

By: Faith Cook

It has been a hard year for restaurants, but COVID has not stopped restaurants on Long Island from doing what they do best: serving up the best food and drink around. Whether you are looking for outdoor dining, takeout/curbside pick-up or delivery, there are a plethora of spots to choose from. As Long Island continues to try to contain the spread of COVID-19, the following wonderful eateries are here to make your time in quarantine a bit more enjoyable:

First we have **La Pizzetta**, a restaurant located at 1008 Oyster Bay Rd, East Norwich. The menu offers homemade pasta, veal, chicken and seafood as well as fabulous homemade desserts. An amazing dish to try there is the chicken francese; this dish includes a breaded warm chicken with a lemon to top it off. La Pizzetta is available for reservations, takeout and dining. Most days, this restaurant is open from 11am to 10pm. As of now, on Fridays it is open until 11:30pm. To view the menu and find out more information, you can visit:

<http://www.lapizzettaeastnorwich.com>.

Next up, conveniently located in the Roosevelt Field Mall in Garden City is **Doughnuttery**. This shop can be found on the first floor next to the escalator. What makes this place special is that the donuts here are not only served hot and fresh, but they are uniquely sugared mini donuts. Yes, they are bite-sized donuts. Doughnuttery is known for its signature mini doughnut bags and pizza-style doughnut boxes. If you don't feel like going out, they even have two options for DIY donuts. One includes twenty five mini donuts, two glaze bottles and two toppings. To see photos and find out more information about Doughnuttery's delicious donuts, visit: <https://www.doughnuttery.com>.

Another delicious local eatery is

Blackstone. This restaurant is located at 10 Pinelawn Road in Melville. As soon as you walk in the door you are greeted by the waiters and then seated at a very comfortable, oversized booth. However, on the way to your table, you walk past walls of stone and rich wood that are warmed by the glow of chandeliers and fireplaces. The waiters at this restaurant are very polite and kind and will provide you with anything you need. This restaurant is a Long Island premiere steakhouse- known for its delicious steak. For more about BlackStone Steak House, you can visit their website at:

<https://blackstonesteakhouse.com>.

Last, but not least, is the **Crescent Beach Club** restaurant, located in Bayville at 333 Bayville Avenue. This restaurant is well-known for having a beautiful view of the beach. While enjoying the many options of food including sushi, steak, seafood and pasta, diners can look out the huge windows and watch the beautiful sunsets. In addition, the restaurant's sushi bar contains all kinds of delicious surprises. To take a virtual tour of the restaurant and peruse the menu, visit: <https://thecrescentbeachclub.com>.

As many of Long Island's restaurants remain open during the battle against COVID, it is important that we support them and get to experience all of the wonderful treats they have to offer. So whether you prefer amazing homemade Italian food, bite-sized donuts, one of a kind steaks or a restaurant with the view of the beach, you can't go wrong. The next time you are thinking about going out for food or bringing in food, any of these restaurants would be an extremely worthwhile choice.

Leading The Free World

By: Matthew Grinberg

Barack Obama's superb writing skills are on full display throughout *A Promised Land*, his 768 page memoir that covers the beginning of his life all the way through 2011, during his decision to kill Osama Bin Laden. Throughout his journey, Obama provides breathtaking insights into his own life. Everything from his thought process when making tough decisions, to his personal relationships with his wife and kids, are displayed in striking clarity in this memoir. Through this, Obama conveys his inspirational views of America that despite its flaws, its founding principles have paved the way for immense progress, which is currently being pushed for.

To quote Obama himself, he “still believe[s] in America.” Despite being a country still plagued by the remnants of slavery, America has the potential to achieve borderline impossible things. Through seemingly unreasonable pragmatism in the face of prejudice, Obama's long shot senate victory proved that humility can prevail in politics. By reaching out to white, rural areas of Illinois, he aimed to make inroads where normally an African American politician would fall short. His simple, yet bold plan worked, as he was elected as the only African American in the senate shortly after. This spirit of non-traditional outreach and messaging proved successful in propelling him to the presidency.

His time as a politician was not always

as glamorous as it appeared from the outside though. In his book, Obama also discusses the sobering, harsh consequences of what many call the most stressful job in the world. From this, Obama is able to convey his messages about his views on life through personal anecdotes. Obama mentions how him and his wife, Michelle, often disagreed with each other about his future as a politician and decisions that affected his entire family. Here, Obama makes it clear that it is necessary to take time and reach out to those who disagree with you, because they may be looking out for you. They want what's best, and even though it might be sour in the short term, it always proves valuable to hear other perspectives. This also was clear in his time as President. There was never a time when a law could be passed without compromise and debate. Here it was crucial to listen, understand, and talk with people who did not agree with him. Although not everybody was as interested in compromising as he was, Obama was able to make steady progress by applying these principles to his life.

With part two of the memoir still on the way, *A Promised Land* is a highly educational read. With takeaways that can be applied to almost every aspect of one's life, this book offers insights into the inner workings of the American government which prove not only fascinating, but also valuable in forming a nuanced opinion in regards to how change happens in this country.

The Militant Mandalorian

By: Oliver Palone

As new movies and tv shows are being released, some great ones have been popping up, including *The Mandalorian*. The critically acclaimed *Star Wars* series returned for its second season to Disney Plus on October 30th, 2020. Starring Pedro Pascal, each of the eight episodes released run between 30 and 60 minutes long. Intense action combined with startling surprises make for an unforgettable viewing experience.

The Mandalorian is a *Star Wars* bounty hunter. Others pay him to kill or capture certain people across the galaxy. When tasked with capturing a creature that is hundreds of years old back in season one, he was surprised to find out that his target looked and sounded like an infant. Upon dropping off the creature, tokened "Baby Yoda" by the viewers, the Mandalorian becomes filled with guilt for leaving this creature with bad people, and decides to steal back this so-called Baby Yoda. The Mandalorian travels the galaxy, continuing his missions, but now with a tiny, green creature that can't even speak a word. However, this seemingly helpless alien is in fact a highly skilled Force user, and his former capturers wish to use his abilities for their own gain. All of this leads to an epic season finale between the man who wants Baby Yoda, Moff Gideon, and the Mandalorian.

In season two, a Jedi informs the Mandalorian that Baby Yoda's real name is Grogu. Moff Gideon makes a return, and attempts to once again steal Grogu from the Mandalorian. While traveling the galaxy, the Mandalorian learns of Moff Gideon's plans to steal back the child. Therefore, he gets both new and old friends to help him 'take down' Gideon once and for all, in another crazy season finale.

All in all, every single episode of the second season of *The Mandalorian* is like another piece to an amazing story. The season received a 94% on Rotten Tomatoes as well as a rating of 4.2 stars out of five. Not only are the critics loving it, but so are the fans. Therefore, if you love **Star Wars**, unique monsters and people, action and the theme of friendship, then *The Mandalorian* is perfect for you.



...And Basketball Is Back

(Continued From The Back Page)

the playoffs, they were picked by many to make it all the way to the finals. However, they disappointed and fell to the Miami Heat in five games in the Eastern Conference Semifinals. Heading into the off-season, they needed to help build a core around their superstar, Giannis Antetokounmpo, as he only had one year left on the four year \$100 million contract he signed back in 2016. If they fail to make a deep playoff push for the third consecutive season, Antetokounmpo may leave and sign with a different team in unrestricted free agency. So they made a blockbuster four team trade acquiring Jrue Holiday to strengthen their backcourt, and added solid bench pieces in Bryn Forbes, D.J. Augustin, and Bobby Portis. Holiday is one of the best two way players in the league, as he plays elite defense paired with his phenomenal offensive production. Last season, he averaged 19.1 PPG while shooting 45.5% and 35.3% from beyond the arc. He's made the NBA All Defensive Team twice and averaged 1.6 SPG last year. Holiday joins a Bucks team that already includes All Stars like Giannis Antetokounmpo and Khris Middleton. Middleton is an elite shooter from mid range and beyond the arc. Last season, Middleton averaged 20.9 PPG and shot 49.7% from the field and 41.5% from three. Antetokounmpo is arguably the best player in the league right now. He's won two MVPs and made four All NBA Teams, and three NBA All Defensive teams. The reigning MVP and Defensive Player of the Year averaged 29.5 PPG, 13.6 RPG, as well as a steal and block per game, while shooting 55.3% from the field. Antetokounmpo has dominated the league for the past three seasons, and like LeBron James, he has the versatility to play every position on the court; he's one of the most complete players in the league putting up top tier offensive numbers along with being an elite off ball defender. His level of play earned him a five year \$228 million extension back in December, making him the highest paid player in the league who has the richest contract in NBA history. This Bucks team has improved from last season and will hope to overcome its lack of playoff success. The team's window is wide open, and 2021 seems like its best shot yet.

Meanwhile, it has been almost two years since the Brooklyn Nets made their two biggest signings in franchise history. In late June of 2019, the Nets signed both Kevin Durant and Kyrie Irving to massive four year deals worth \$164 million and \$136 million, respectively. However, both players dealt with injuries last season and missed significant playing time. Durant was recovering from a torn achilles he suffered in the 2019 NBA Finals playing for the Golden State Warriors, while Irving was dealing with multiple injuries that only allowed him to play 20 games.

Both players are expected to be back and healthy for the 20-21 season, making the Nets a serious contender. Irving is the best ball handler and one of the best shooters in the league. Last season, he averaged 27.4 PPG, 1.4 SPG, and shot 47.8% from the field and 39.4% from three. The former number one overall pick is a six time All Star and two time All NBA player. Durant is a ten time All Star, nine time All NBA Player, and an MVP. In his career, he is averaging 27 PPG while shooting 49.3% on the field, and 38.1% from three. Both Durant and Irving are yearly MVP candidates and top ten players in the league. They have solid players around them such as Spencer Dinwiddie, Caris Levert, Joe Harris, and Jarrett Allen as well. Dinwiddie is arguably the best backup point guard in the league and provides scoring off the bench. Last season, he averaged 20.6 PPG and shot 41.5%. Although he isn't a good defender by any means, he helped the Nets reach the playoffs last season filling in for Irving when he was hurt. But a big X Factor for the Nets this season will be Joe Harris. A few months ago, Brooklyn inked Harris

to a four year \$75 million extension. Harris is arguably the best three point shooter in the league. He can contribute a lot as a sharpshooter playing on the wing. Last season, Harris averaged 14.5 PPG and shot 42.4% from three. Scoring won't be an issue for the Nets as they have the stars and playmakers to do so. The status and performances of their key players will determine how far they go. If guys like Durant and Irving can play like their normal selves, the Nets are a lethal team and a legitimate contender this year.

As schedules and formats have all been changed to cope with the pandemic, this NBA season will be like no other. The Lakers, Bucks, and Nets are the three teams to look out for throughout the season. Obviously, there are many other great teams around the league such as the Los Angeles Clippers, Miami Heat, and Boston Celtics who all have superstars of their own. Although the Lakers may look like the obvious favorites to win it all this year, one upset in the playoffs will change everything. 2021, here we come.

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The Social Injustice Issue In Pro Sports

By: William McConville

Outside of the Coronavirus pandemic, the main topic in national news this year has been racial injustice in America. The Black Lives Matter movement has picked up more traction nationwide, as well as the idea of reforming and/or defunding the police. These movements have found their way into the sports world this year as leagues return from each of their Coronavirus lockdowns. This isn't the first time that social issues of this manner have been addressed in sports; in fact, issues of this nature are addressed in sports more often than people realize. Players and owners know the extent of the public following they have; they also know they can send messages to their fans in hopes of creating change via the platforms they use, such as social media, due to their fame. Sports leagues in the United States have emerged as a major platform for demonstrations against racial injustice, with movements being seen in the NBA, NFL, and MLB.

Throughout its history and as of late, the NBA has greatly been involved in trying to send messages against racial injustice. This is due to the league's history of overcoming racial barriers since the league was founded in 1946. Racist rules were followed by team owners in the league that began in the 1950's and lasted through the 1960's, such as there only being a maximum of three black players allowed on any one team. Owners worried that if there were too many players of color on a team, fans wouldn't buy tickets and it would hurt business. Since then, the NBA has overcome these racist rules and become one of the major sports leagues at the forefront of speaking out against racial injustice in America. For example, in August, the Milwaukee Bucks were supposed to play the Orlando Magic in the first round of the NBA playoffs. While the Magic were out on the court shooting and getting warmed up, the Bucks never showed up. The game was postponed and it was revealed that the team's absence was in response to the police shooting of Jacob Blake that had taken place

in the days before that game. All other NBA playoff teams followed suit for the next few days, and this expanded to other teams outside of the NBA refusing to play in protest; this all led to a shutdown of major sports. Clearly, the NBA has influence when it comes to addressing issues of this manner.

The NFL is another league with history behind it when it comes to issues of race and injustice. Kneeling as a way to protest racial injustice, which has recently been copied by players in different sports to represent equality, as well as a method of protest amid police killings, began in the NFL in 2016. Colin Kaepernick, a former NFL quarterback, was the first to do this, coming up with the idea after meeting with former green beret Nate Boyer, who suggested it to Kaepernick as an alternative to sitting during "The National Anthem", which Kaepernick had done in previous games in response to police killings that had occurred that year. Boyer told him it would show respect to fallen U.S. military servicemen, as kneeling was what military servicemen do in front of fallen soldiers' graves as a way to show respect, but it would also be an effective form of protest. Kaepernick received significant backlash for his actions and to this day remains out of a job in the NFL. But four years later, his protest would yield results, setting a precedent for protests done in sports, as his form of protest would be seen in the NFL, NBA, and MLB.

Since it was one of the first major sports leagues to allow integration of non-white players with the Brooklyn Dodgers' signing of Jackie Robinson in 1947, MLB is a league that can be considered a pioneer for equality in sports. Robinson experienced extreme adversity due to his race the entire time he was a professional player, but he would go on to become one of the league's best players; he was even inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame in 1962. Even though Major League Baseball was one of the first major sports leagues to address segregation in sports, it is known

to be less outspoken when it comes to issues of social injustice. This made the events of Opening Day of the 2020 season last summer stand out even more, when players on the New York Yankees and the Washington Nationals took a knee in solidarity for 60 seconds before their game. A video also was shown before the game which included 150 current and former black professional baseball players who were stressing the fact that black lives matter.

Issues of social injustice have sadly been commonplace in professional sports throughout each league's history, and it will undoubtedly continue to be as long as racism exists. In a recent soccer game in the Champions League tournament in Europe between PSG and Basaksehir, a coach claimed he was racially abused by a sideline referee after arguing against a call. He complained so profusely about this that he was given a red card. However, once players heard that the sideline referee had said something racist to the coach, they refused to continue playing and walked off the field, postponing the game indefinitely, until they agreed to replay the match at a later date. Before the replaying of the match, all players wore a shirt that said "no to racism", and all took a knee in solidarity when the whistle was blown to begin the game. This is an example of sports teams and players using the platforms that they have been given to show that there should be no room for racism not only in sports, but in our everyday lives.

Social injustice clearly remains a prominent issue in the United States and the world as a whole. These issues are reflected in every corner of our society and will undoubtedly continue to be as long as there are still oppressive people. The progress made by professional sports leagues in the United States and abroad though, breeds hope that these issues will not be tolerated now or in the future.

Two Months Later...

By: Michael Ye

The 2020-21 NBA season officially started, with each team set to play a 72 game season. The regular season normally consists of 82 games; however, due to the pandemic causing the league to postpone the 2019-20 playoffs, the players had far less rest than they would normally get during the off-season. Last season, the Los Angeles Lakers defeated the Miami Heat in six games to win the championship in the shortened 19-20 season. Despite it being shortened, the off-season has shaken up the league, as there are new faces on different teams. There are many great teams around the league that are capable of making deep playoff pushes. Who are the favorites that have the best rosters? Out of all thirty teams, only one will remain and earn the trophy they all desire.

After winning their 17th championship back in October, the Lakers managed to further improve their roster and get even better as a team. They signed reigning Sixth Man of the Year Montrezl Harrell to a team friendly two year \$19 million contract. This deal is a bargain for the Lakers as Harrell will strengthen their bench and provide scoring in the paint. Although he may be a liability defensively, he has the offensive numbers to suffice. Last season, he averaged 18.6 PPG, 7.1 RPG, and shot 58% from the field. Additionally, the Lakers were able to upgrade their backcourt by trading for Sixth Man of the Year nominee Dennis Schroder in exchange for Danny Green and a late first round pick. Schroder is a dynamic two way guard who is a consistent scorer that plays solid defense. Last season, Schroder averaged 18.9 PPG, shot 46.9% from the field, and 38.5% from three. He can also be the primary ball handler on the Lakers when needed. Both Schroder and Harrell are all-star caliber players, and join a Lakers' squad that already includes superstars such as LeBron James, Anthony Davis, and Kyle Kuzma. James is the best player in the NBA, and arguably the greatest player of all time. The four time MVP and sixteen time All NBA player averaged 25.3 PPG, 7.8 RPG, and 10.2 APG last season, while shooting 49.3% from the field. He's also a superb defender, averaging 1.2 SPG and being named to the NBA All Defensive Team six times throughout his career. An underrated part about James' game is his versatility, as he has the athleticism to play virtually every position on the court. Furthermore, Anthony Davis is also a top five player, as him and James form the best duo in the league. Davis is a seven time All Star and has been named to the All NBA Team four times. Last season, he averaged 26.1 PPG, 9.3 RPG, and shot over 50% from the field. He's also a better defender than James as he averaged 1.5 SPG and 2.3 BPG. Davis' 7'6" wingspan is what helped him make the NBA All Defensive Team four times, along with becoming an elite rim protector. The Lakers are, by far, the best team in the league, and have the best roster on paper. This group of veterans will put up an abundance of offensive firepower and serviceable defense. The Lakers are the clear favorites to repeat as champions, and they have the best odds to do so.

Last season, the Milwaukee Bucks had the best record in the league, winning 56 games and only losing 17. Coming into

(Continued On Page 11)

What's Happening With Sports?

By: Jack Levin

With seven seconds left in the game, Arizona Cardinal Quarterback Kyler Murray escaped the pressure of the Buffalo Bills defense and threw the ball 50 yards down the field to a quadruple covered wide receiver named Deandre Hopkins who somehow managed to catch the ball to win the game. After he made the catch, the team and thousands of fans celebrated at home. But there was one thing off, the stadium was dead quiet. For a play that big, you'd think the stadium would roar. But unfortunately, during the pandemic, the stadiums are quieter than ever before. We've had sports back now for five months, but teams are missing their most essential player, their fans. So how did major professional sports leagues adjust to the pandemic?

The NBA "bubble" kicked off our love for sports again. Obviously we knew that since it was during the pandemic, we wouldn't get the experience that we once knew. As fans watched games, they noticed different things the game brought that previously had been covered up by the crowd. These things include the plays being called, the sneakers squeaking on the

hardwood floor, and even the ball being dribbled. Even though it may have given us a different look at basketball, it's still hard for the players not having fans behind them. North Shore Senior Aidan Leporin says "I believe that without the fans, it takes away the energy of the game. It's hard for NBA players to play without feeling off of the crowd. They can't get the momentum going."

Following the NBA, the NFL came in September and "if you ask any NFL fan, all games are affected by the noise of the crowd," says TJ Burfeind, a senior at North Shore. NFL teams are majorly affected by the noise of the crowd. Teams like the Seattle Seahawks, New Orleans Saints, and the Philadelphia Eagles have some of the loudest fan bases. They are so loud that NFL quarterbacks have to cover their ears through their helmets in order to listen to the plays being given to them by the coach. "It affects the home games and the home teams. They're accustomed to their fans being there for their ups and downs. Teams without fans can't adjust to the swing of games", says senior

Dean Caldwell. Sportshow.net says that football is the most popular sport in America so of course this country wouldn't be the same without fans even for one season.

Internationally, athletics seemed to have taken a step back just like American sports leagues such as the NFL and NBA. The soccer premier league has not allowed any fans into games since they reopened. However, if a city hits a certain low rate of COVID positives, around 2000 people can come watch the games while wearing masks and social distancing. "It's great to see the fans coming back to the stadiums. It helps boost a team's morale and increases overall support for the teams" says senior Matt Symbouras. It's interesting to see different approaches when it comes to international sports. It makes you wonder if America is doing something wrong.

It's great watching all of the professional sports again, even with COVID-19 protocols; however, fans miss the tailgates, the roar of the crowd, and so much more that they have to offer. Here's hoping for a better year.