

## School teams with club to

# BUILD ON



From left to right, Build On member and eleventh-grader Jade Goyette, math teacher and project sponsor Summer Grantham, and tenth-grader and Build On president Madeline Smith pose for a photo. PHOTO BY CATE ALVARO, GRAPHIC BY SUZANNE BROWN

## Club collaborates with Pine View to fund a new school in Haiti

by **Haleigh Brown**

Match Editor-in-Chief

Build On, an international organization that has established a chapter on Pine View's campus, has a distinct goal of building a better future for America's youth while constructing schools in the world's poorest countries. Sponsored by middle-school math teacher Summer Grantham, this is the first year that Pine View has its own Build On club.

Build On, a four-star charity, creates a platform for schools around the world, where both males and females are given the right to an education. A four-star ranking is the highest ranking a charity may receive for exceeding industry standards and outperforming most other charities related to a similar cause. Being approved as the school-wide service project for this school year, the club hopes to earn up to \$15,000 to fund its trip to Haiti. In Haiti, 15 of the club's members will have the opportunity to build a school for a local community over spring break.

Although it takes a total of \$30,000 to build these schools, the Give Something Back International Foundation (GSBI) — an educational organization that funds K-12 education for those that are disadvantaged as well as builds and renovates schools in rural areas — has offered to match the price of donations Pine View raises for Build On.

Grantham first got involved in Build On five years ago through her friend, Sarah Soboleski. Soboleski introduced the idea to Grantham and her friends, and encouraged each of them to raise and donate \$200 to building a school in Haiti. Since then, Grantham brought the club to Pine View and invited tenth-grader Madeline Smith to be the president.

Smith's parents had gone to Haiti be-

fore Smith was born to do medical mission work in an orphanage. When her parents shared their stories with Smith, "It truly inspired me," Smith said. She proceeded to visit Haiti when she was in the seventh grade and has had a passion for helping efforts there ever since.

"I hope to enlighten people about life outside of Sarasota County and to show everyone how our normality of life can highly contrast those in other countries. With our stability and assurance in our lives, we should help our global neighbors in achieving these attributes to life," Smith said.

"[Smith] is deeply insightful and wise beyond her years," Grantham said. "She is so kind and responsible, and I truly believe that she has the potential to change the world."

Meeting for the first time Aug. 29, Build On intends to continue meeting every other Tuesday and invites all who would like to help in these efforts. Its first meeting consisted of 20 members from grades 9 through 12, and two seventh-graders.

The club is currently focused on spreading its message as well as making sure all the members understand the depth of their efforts by splitting the club into interest groups. These groups were focused on topics like access to clean water or education around the world. Build On intends to extend its services to other countries in need, such as Venezuela and Nicaragua, depending on the success of raising funds this year.

In order to also benefit the local community, the club is also organizing medical and school supply drives. Smith also established to schedule events and be involved in volunteering throughout the community.

"All you need to do is ask. When each person from a classroom can bring in \$20, it can make the biggest difference on someone's entire life and education," Grantham said.

**"I hope to enlighten people about life outside of Sarasota County."**  
**Madeline Smith, grade 10**

## Student raises awareness and funds for Venezuela

by **Melissa Santoyo**

Opinion Editor

Venezuela: a country of bountiful biodiversity, beaches and rich Latin culture. To the outsider, it may appear to be a paradise. In today's modern regime, however, the nation is heavy with political upheaval. Residents are at war with their government, and have been since the inauguration of president Nicolas Máduro in 2013. In order to both raise awareness about the hostile situation and also assist destitute Venezuelans, eleventh-grader Jade Goyette will be hosting a school-wide donation drive this November.

Máduro was inducted into office while Venezuela was still considered a democracy, but since then the government has taken a turn for the worse. The president incited a state of crisis with his political reforms, and during his most recent run for re-election, he hosted a political coup thereby banishing the only other presidential candidate

from the country. Revolutionary protests and violence seem to have reached fever pitch as the nation appears to tear itself apart.

"The people of Venezuela need donations," Goyette said. "They don't have access to soap, water, food, clothing ... Anything that you would need to have a sustainable life, the people of Venezuela do not have."

The drive will involve all grade levels, and donation boxes will be placed in English classrooms for students and teachers to place supplies in. Elementary, middle and high school grade levels will be rewarded for their efforts with different

variations of prizes depending on which class amasses the most supplies. "The elementary school students will get a donut party for the best decorated box, and the middle- and high-schoolers will get a donut party for the largest amount of supplies per English classroom," Goyette said. These donations can range from anything from toiletries to first-aid essentials.

**"Anything that you would need to have a sustainable life, the people of Venezuela do not have."**

**Jade Goyette, grade 11**

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## Student aspires to advocate and support a nation in need



Eleventh-grader Jade Goyette researches information regarding Venezuela on her computer. Goyette is currently working with Spanish teacher Patricia Gerlek-Rzepka to start a fundraiser for Venezuela.  
PHOTO BY MELISSA SANTOYO

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by Melissa Santoyo  
Opinion Editor

While attending her first Peace Jam conference last March, Goyette became aware of the situation Venezuela was in. She was inspired after hearing a graduate student from Florida State University speak out about her experiences in both the U.S. and Venezuela. Goyette soon decided to take action and sought the help

of world language teacher Patricia Gerlek-Rzepka.

"I'm happy to work with her," Gerlek-Rzepka said. "She is compassionate about working with the people of Venezuela."

To spread word of the drive, Gerlek-Rzepka allowed Goyette to visit her students and give a short presentation concerning the situation surrounding the Venezuelan people and why it is important

to help. The crisis in Venezuela is also a facet of education Gerlek-Rzepka is eager to add in her curriculum, so that students are

**"This is a great opportunity to put yourself in action, contribute to an important cause and boost awareness about it."**  
Izabella Smith, grade 11

encouraged to see what is happening in South American countries and potentially take action themselves.

Goyette is also planning a rally at the start of the drive to further educate students on the crisis Venezuela faces today. "We will try to have a few speakers speak about the topic, some musicians... [something to] get the school motivated to help Venezuela," she said.

Goyette's drive serves not only as a way of assisting a nation in need, but also inspiring fellow classmates to contribute to the cause. Eleventh-grader Izabella Smith said, "I think it is really awesome to see people around me, especially people I know, helping those in need. This is a great opportunity to put yourself in action, contribute to an important cause and boost awareness about it."

## IN BRIEF

### Speech and Debate students advance at Yale tournament

by Sana Rahman  
Editor-in-Chief

Pine View Speech and Debate team competed at the annual Yale Invitational Tournament Sept. 15 to Sept. 17 in New Haven, Connecticut, for the sixth year in a row. This year the team took 18 students and left with four students having advanced past preliminary rounds.

Within debate events, eleventh-graders Gopi and Shivni Patel advanced to triple-octofinals in Public Forum Debate, while twelfth-grader Rachel Kalmovich finished off the tournament by making it to semifinals in Congressional Debate.

Among those who competed

in speech events, twelfth-grader Harris Lichtenstein made it to finals, coming in sixth place out of a total of 114 competitors in Original Oratory.

"Whether in speech events or debate events, anyone can see that the students really put in effort to go the extra degree, which is why our Speech and Debate team remains not only a signature club at Pine View, but also a team recognized across the nation for its skill, leadership and prestige," Speech and Debate president twelfth-grader Ali Ahmed said. "The Yale tournament is only the beginning to a year of success and honor for Speech and Debate."

### National Spanish Honor Society aims to help ESOL students

by Sarah Mihm  
Managing Editor

The National Spanish Honor Society has restarted its English as a Second Language (ESOL) outreach in which club members tutor Spanish-speaking elementary students at Wilkinson Elementary School. Many of these children are from families that speak little to no English; the goal of the program is to help increase these students' English proficiency in order to allow them to reach the same learning objectives as native English speakers.

Alumnus Jose Perez started this program last year at Fruitville Elementary, where his mother is a teacher. Current President and twelfth-grader Hadleigh Schwartz moved the tutoring to Wilkinson Elementary for greater participation by Pine View Students due to its closer proximity to Osprey.

The tutors help with read-

ing English and Spanish books, as well as assisting with the students' homework. Often the teachers of these students know little to no Spanish, greatly hurting the learning potential of ESOL students. This program benefits not only the Wilkinson Elementary Students, but also the Pine View students as they practice speaking Spanish.

"We have been talking with the ESOL liaison at Wilkinson and we think that the program will become increasingly effective. We will reach even more kids and form more meaningful relationships," Schwartz said.

The outreach had its first day Oct. 9 with Pine View students being paired and tutoring their individual Wilkinson elementary students for an hour. This will continue every other Monday, with hopes of the program growing to a weekly basis.

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# Pine View welcomes new teachers to campus

While some of last year's long-standing staff members retired, a new wave of seventh- through twelfth-grade teachers are looking to call Pine View home. As some new teachers return as Pine View alumni, and others see Florida for the first time, each of these seven featured teachers has a story to tell.



## Lauren Leighton

by Brianna Nelson  
Asst. Opinion Editor

Math teacher Lauren Leighton is ready to introduce a new perspective to her Algebra II students as she joins the Pine View staff. Bringing enthusiasm to mathematics, she continues to prove her dedication to both her students and career.



PHOTO BY BRIANNA NELSON

Born in upstate New York, Leighton graduated with a bachelor's degree in business management at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and a master's degree in education at Northeastern University. She worked as a math teacher at Nausat Regional High School in Cape Cod, Mass. as well as Manatee School for the Arts in Palmetto, Fla. prior to coming to Pine View.

for a few years writing contracts for Lockheed Martin — an aerospace company — but felt that it did not suit her. Instead, she decided to work as a substitute teacher in Saratoga Springs, N.Y., falling in love with teaching and returned to college to study education.

With her father and older sister both being teachers in Massachusetts and Saratoga Springs, Leighton wanted to follow a similar career path. Now that she is a teacher, she loves working with high school students. "I think that they're at a really pivotal point in their life where they are starting to find out what they want to do," Leighton said. "I like to keep any enthusiasm that students might have for mathematically inclined career paths."

Leighton decided to apply to Pine View after researching a U.S. News article regarding school rankings, discovering that it was the best high school in the state. Now, she is adjusting to Pine View's culture and environment and says that the staff and students have been very welcoming. "I love teaching at Pine View," she said. "I think this school is any teacher's dream. It's such a pleasure to walk into a classroom full of really bright, eager and cooperative students."

**"I really feel strongly that Pine View is the absolute best fit for me."**  
**Lauren Leighton, math teacher**

Leighton's student, ninth-grader Moriya White, said, "My favorite thing about Ms. Leighton's teaching style is that it's thorough and gives you an in-depth understanding of any topic you are in."

"I really feel strongly that Pine View is the absolute best fit for me," Leighton said. "I just feel so fortunate to be here."

## Dr. Schahrazede Longou

by Suzanne Brown  
Asst. Editor-in-Chief

For Algerian native and new French teacher Dr. Schahrazede Longou, her motto "c'est mon monde," or, "it is my world," rings true for the classroom — a space she has called home for most of her life.

After a brief visit to Pine View in March, Longou was immediately interested in the school. Despite formerly being a college professor, Longou was eager to return to teaching younger ages, as she previously taught middle and high school students in Algeria for 14 years. She now teaches both French II and French IV.

**"I feel like I really got what I was looking for."**  
**Dr. Schahrazede Longou, French teacher**

"She is very well liked by her students," French teacher Diana Siwicka said. "She has a lot to offer as far as cultural perspective."

Born and raised in Algeria, Longou is a native speaker of both Arabic and French. In her early childhood, Longou initially steered toward the medical field, yet, due to her love for the French language and culture, she later realized her skill set better served her in teaching.

Following the Algerian teaching system, Longou completed two years of study at a local college to earn her Teaching Certificate, qualifying her to teach in lower-level classrooms. Right away she began teaching French at a middle school for nine years. "The first time I taught a class, it clicked," she said.

Longou was quickly promoted to teaching high school

for four years, even before receiving her bachelor's. "You have it or you don't. It's different from other jobs," she said. She later decided to go back to school, earning her bachelor's in Teaching French as a Second Language at the University of Soumaâ. She returned for a final year of teaching high school in Algeria before leaving to France to prepare for her master's degree with an internship.

However, due to political reasons and the state of the Algerian civil war, Longou decided not to return to her home country after staying in France. "I saw myself as a woman who was threatened," Longou said, speaking of the political

turmoil her country faced. "I was teaching French, the language of the colonizer... I was not wearing the Islamic clothing. I was not following what the conservatives and fundamentalists were telling us to do." As a result, she moved to the United States in 1997.

As an immigrant, Longou gained her fluency in English purely by observing the culture and learning from experience. After the completion of her master's degree, Longou became a visiting instructor at Illinois College be-

fore returning as a graduate teaching assistant at the University of Iowa.

Longou decided to pursue her PhD in French at the University of Iowa, with a specialization in contemporary Algerian women writers. She was later appointed as an Assistant Professor of French and Francophone Studies at Knox College, a liberal arts college in Iowa, where she taught for nine years.

As Longou furthered her career, she found herself at a crossroad. "When you have two different tasks, the classroom and the research, you cannot focus on both of them," she said. Ultimately, she pursued a focus on students, discovering her place at Pine View.

In the classroom, Longou brings years of college-level and cultural experience, speaking in fluent French to her students and introducing them to a cultural curriculum that would normally be overlooked.

Eleventh-grader and French student Genevieve Dilan said, "She's a really good teacher. I think of the [French teachers] she's coming after, and she definitely fills the spot very well."

As for the future, Longou hopes to make Pine View a long-lasting home. "I feel like I really got what I was looking for, this environment, being with the students. I feel like I'm in a family," she said. "I see the rest of my career here."



PHOTO BY SUZANNE BROWN

## Elizabeth Loyer

by Manny Rea  
Sci-Tech Editor

Bringing her passion for education back to her alma mater, sixth- and seventh-grade English teacher Elizabeth Loyer is beginning her first year as a Pine View teacher.

A Pine View alumna, Loyer graduated in 2011 after attending Pine View for six years. She previously lived in Medina, Ohio, before moving with her family to Sarasota to come to Pine View starting in seventh grade.

Loyer moved on to attend the University of South Florida (USF), where she earned her bachelor's degree in English and Mathematics, and her master's degree in English composition and rhetoric. She first found interest in teaching after developing an appreciation for the work her school teachers put out, as well as a love for the learning environment. "I really enjoyed the [school] atmosphere and I wanted to continue to have it, except now from the opposite side of the classroom," Loyer said.

Loyer began her education career at USF as a professor of English Composition I and II as well as of Visual Rhetoric — rhetoric that is concentrated on visual design practices in media. Now as a middle-school teacher, Loyer has noticed similarities and differences between the highly-contrasted levels of academics. "College is adults, so the attitude towards school is different and the responsibilities in their lives are greater because they have so much more going on," Loyer said. "...You would also only see [students] a couple of times [a week]. I am looking forward throughout the course of this school year to see my students grow



PHOTO BY MANNY REA

a lot more."

Having prior exposure to the school, Loyer has noticed considerable changes since her time here. "When I was here six years ago it was still under [former principal] Mr. Largo, so now the entire administration has changed and a lot of the older teachers have also left," Loyer said. She also cited the many new portables, renovations and room changes as a difference from the school she remembers. "I think what is weirdest for me is that some of the subjects have changed buildings," she said. "Science is now in two buildings, and math has been moved around which is different from before."

Loyer is excited to revisit some of Pine View's classic events. She was most looking forward to the Pine View Fair in October. She said that it was not only a fond experience for her in the past, but that the fair will offer more amusement for her now as other former alumni are coming to enjoy it with her this year.

According to Loyer, one new and interesting situation for Loyer is working alongside some of her former teachers. "It is really interesting to be on the same side with Dr. Dean, Ms. Shannon, Mr. Wiley and a lot of the Spanish teachers here," she said. Initially, Loyer felt she was viewed as a former student, but now has said that teachers have become supportive and happy to have her on staff.

**"It's very familiar and nostalgic to be back. Everyone has been very welcoming; it's wonderful."**  
**Elizabeth Loyer, English teacher**

While the school may have shifted around physically, its inimitable atmosphere remains prevalent for Loyer. "It's very familiar and nostalgic to be back," Loyer said. "Everyone has been very welcoming; it's wonderful."

## Charles Carney

by Tricia Saputera  
Asst. Match Editor

New teacher Charles Carney has no shortness of excitement for his teaching career at Pine View, his students and the staff and parents he has yet to work with. Teaching AP Macroeconomics, AP Comparative Government and seventh-grade civics, Carney brings fresh enthusiasm and ideas to his classroom.

A sixth-generation Floridian, Carney attended Venice High School, the same school his parents attended. Interestingly, he had Pine View teacher Dr. Rice as his eighth-grade history teacher at Venice Middle School. "I saw her during teacher work week, while getting ready for the school year, and I thought she looked familiar," Carney said.

Carney graduated from Florida Atlantic University and was offered a teaching position at Boca Prep International School in Boca Raton. Five years later, he moved to teach social studies at North Port High School and helped start the University of Cambridge Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE) program; the AICE program is an internationally-recognized program that, with required classes and exams, earns a student a separate AICE diploma and, potentially, college credits.

Carney's fourth-grade daughter Lucianna and eighth-grade son Jaxon currently attend Pine View. "It's nice, in the way

that if there was an emergency, at least I would have a parent," Jaxon said. This made it easier for Carney to transition into Pine View, already knowing Pine View's academic standards and rigor as a parent.

Inside his classroom, Carney hopes to incorporate visible learning, a learning method that helps students understand the purpose of the given lesson, when teaching his students. "He's a good teacher that really cares about his students and tries to tie in current events like senior Friday themes into the topic we're learning," twelfth-grader Maya Harris, a student in Carney's AP Macroeconomics class, said.

Outside of teaching, Carney enjoys listening to music, playing the bass guitar, and working in his yard. He also likes going to concerts and music festivals, such as Levitate Music and Arts Festival in Marshfield, Mass., and the Sunshine Music Festival in St. Petersburg, Fla. Regarding his move to the school, "I just want to make a smooth transition [into Pine View], fit in and be a part of it," Carney said.

Overall, according to Carney, his job as a teacher and is the perfect profession for him. "I didn't go into another profession and then fall back on education, and I'm not looking to go anywhere else. I always liked to be around academics. I like the learning and love to read, so it's a perfect fit," he said.



PHOTO BY BRIANNA NELSON

## John Shea

by Annie Hassan  
Copy Editor

Once a student at Pine View and now a teacher, John Shea has returned to a campus rife with memories. Shea attended Pine View from grades four through nine before transferring to Sarasota High School, where he graduated as a member of the class of 2013. Now teaching seventh- and eighth-grade English at Pine View, Shea hopes to make a meaningful impact on his students.



PHOTO BY KASUMI WADE

Shea's love for reading and writing began in eighth grade when he started to read literature on his own. "I read James Joyce's 'Dubliners', and then I talked to [English teacher Dr. Paul] Dean about it," he said. "I remember thinking how it was the most amazing thing that a writer, 60 years dead then, could affect a 13 or 14-year-old student, wanting to make him read and write more."

He credits his decision to pursue a career in English to his AP Art History teacher at Sarasota High School, Rona Glasser. "Mrs. Glasser was great. I remember taking her very seriously when she said that I could make a career out of English in a form of writing or teaching," he said. And, that is exactly what he did.

After graduating high school, Shea attended the University of Florida (UF), majoring in English and receiving a bachelor's degree in the subject. He also minored in French, a language he became interested in from former Pine View

teacher Connie Swikle's class.

After graduating from UF, Shea applied to Pine View because he knew that students here are always eager to seek more knowledge. He learned that he had received the position of an English teacher Aug. 10, the Thursday prior to school opening.

Since the beginning of the school year, Shea has already encountered several of his former teachers. "So far, I think all of my former teachers have remembered me, for better or for worse. I have not had to say to anyone yet, 'you had me in your class, don't you remember?' That hasn't happened," he said.

Despite being familiar with Pine View, Shea finds it odd to be back. "It's simultaneously very familiar and very weird. Also, it is very weird to call anybody by their first name," he said. "It's easier with teachers who were hired since I have left, but it's very strange for teachers like Dr. Dean, and I have not called him Paul yet. I'm working up the courage. I might not. I might never."

When asked about Shea returning to Pine View as an English teacher, Dean said, "Besides making me feel old, it makes me feel great. I always thought John was a great

student, and it's nice to have him teaching students. He talks about literature a lot, and he's just out of college so he's all enthused about it."

While Shea recalls Pine View's academic environment, he also remembers the fun times he had as a student. "I remember some the hobbies of the kids from my grade. There was a lot of origami, a lot of chess ... I remember carrying the egg around in Mrs. Torres' class and how students kept throwing the eggs at the Media Center." He also remembers some of Pine View's many traditions, such as History club's annual school-wide simulations like that of the Berlin Wall in 2010 and celebrating Pine View's 40th birthday.

Lori Wiley, the Department Chair of English, said, "Keeping with that whole tradition of excellence and paying it forward, what [Shea] demonstrated to all of the Pine View students here is that he learned so much, and he is so excited to give that back to his students."

As an English teacher, Shea simply wants his students to pick up a book and read it as well as to enjoy writing. "Seventh and eighth grade were really important years for me ... in terms of cementing sort of an understanding of how to write and writing skills that served me really well. I would really like to instill that same sort of love of decent literature [to my students]," he said. "I am a committed Luddite even though I am not that old. I wish people would read and write more."

**"I always thought John was a great student, and it's nice to have him teaching students."**  
**Dr. Paul Dean,**  
English teacher

## Malele Nzeza

by Olivia Hansen  
Asst. Humor Editor

As Jennifer Nzeza says goodbye, her husband and new Pine View science teacher Malele Nzeza says hello. Teaching physics and astronomy, Nzeza aims to bring fresh and innovative ideas to his new students, as well as enthusiasm towards the field of science.

Nzeza graduated from Texas Tech University in Lubbock, Texas, where he got his bachelor's degree in engineering physics. He decided to begin teaching because of his love for physics. "I want my students to feel accomplished when they leave my classroom and I want them not only to take an interest in physics, but to love it too," he said.

Before joining the Pine View staff, Nzeza taught physics and earth space science at Sarasota High School for six years, yet never had the opportunity to teach AP; thus, he came to Pine View. "I wanted to teach the AP program because of its inquiry-based approach to teaching physics," he said. "I also knew a lot of the staff members because my wife worked at Pine View for 6 years. I have a few friends that are Pine View graduates and all of

them are exceptional individuals. So I wanted to know what's in the water at Pine View."

Nzeza's wife, Jennifer, was Pine View's former Assistant Principle for grades 10-12. She helped familiarize the campus for Nzeza before he began teaching at Pine View. "Jennifer told me I would love it here; she was right," Nzeza said.

Between the interactive labs and educational field trips he has planned, Nzeza is planning a year full of interest and excitement. He is even thinking of taking his students to Busch Gardens to observe and analyze the roller coasters.

"They will have to analyze three different rides. The first one will be a qualitative study and quantitative analysis of a game at Busch Gardens. The second one will be a circular motion ride analysis which includes determining the centripetal acceleration and force, and the third

one will be an analysis of the energy transfers during a roller coaster ride," Nzeza said.

According to his students, Nzeza's classroom provides a relaxed environment to minimize stress and maximize focus. His teaching style also presents the opportunity to communicate with peers and work with groups through collaborative learning. "Nzeza's class is great because it is not just pure lecture. He lets you try things out and talk through problems with the rest of the class," twelfth-grader Emma Sanchez said.

"Nzeza's physics classes bring a hands-on approach to activities and excitement about physics to his students," high school science teacher and head of the science department Stacy Chaillou said.

One of Nzeza's most important approaches to being a teacher is providing a safe and comfortable environment for his students to learn. "I want my students to ask any questions whenever they need to," he said. "There are no stupid questions."

Nzeza is excited to showcase physics and astronomy in a new way and inspire his students to continue to study the science after they graduate. "Pine View kids care very much about their grades and are devoted. I am beyond excited to teach them," he said.

## Dr. Gail Davis

by Ella Hechlik  
Asst. Web Editor

New pre-calculus and trigonometry teacher Dr. Gail Davis is well known within the Pine View Community for her kindness, enthusiasm, unique teaching skills and unmatched admiration for physics and mathematics.

Davis grew up on Longboat Key and has lived in Florida her entire life. She attended Manatee High School and studied at the University of South Florida. Davis earned her Ph.D. at the University of Central Florida.

Davis realized that astronomy and math were very much related so she decided to begin studying them both. Davis is certified to teach all levels of math, physics and astronomy. "Since I was a pilot working out of a company in St. Louis while also enrolled in an astronomy class, I fell in love with it and decided I wanted to be an astronaut. I realized I had to have a Ph.D. in science so I started studying math and astronomy," she said.

Interestingly, Davis began her teaching career in 1976 as a flight instructor and aviation inspector. Then, in 1986, she began teaching all across Florida, including Florida Southwestern State College for four years, Warner University for 13 years, the University of Central Florida for one year and the State College of Florida for three years. She now teaches Pre-calculus Honors and Dual Enrollment Pre-calculus and Trigonometry.

"Ever since I was a little

girl I have always seen myself as a teacher because it is in my blood," Davis said. "I come from a family of teachers; my cousins and great aunts are all teachers. I have been around teachers my entire life," Davis said.

"She is a very intelligent lady and I assume she is doing amazing things in the classroom," fellow mathematics teacher Emese Percy said. "She brings in a lot of different knowledge to the students and makes the class very unique."



PHOTO BY ELLA HECHLIK

Davis happened to be teaching at State College of Florida when she heard about the opening at Pine View. She was forwarded an email and immediately replied with her credentials. "I love Pine View so far and am really looking forward to sharing my knowledge and love of math with the students here," Davis said.

However, teaching is not all that Davis has accomplished. In her free time, she practices composing and playing music on the piano, which she has done since she was 7 years old. Davis also enjoys designing and making quilts.

"There are many differences between teaching here and at other schools across the state. The kids here are all motivated, polite, cooperative, smart, kind and just wonderful kids," Davis said.

"She definitely cares a lot about her students and it shows," ninth-grader and student of Davis, Alana Sheribman, said. "She is always looking to improve both our learning and everyday lives."

## Meet the new Assistant Principals



PHOTOS BY ANNIE HASSAN AND SANA RAHMAN

Scan the QR codes to get to know new high school Assistant Principals Tricia Allen and Tara Spielman by reading their stories online.



**Dr. Schahrazede Longou**  
From: Algeria  
Hobbies: Cooking, reading, writing

**Elizabeth Loyer**  
From: Medina, Ohio  
Hobbies: Reading and playing video games

**Charles Carney**  
From: Sarasota, Florida  
Hobbies: Playing bass guitar and working in his yard

**Dr. Gail Davis**  
From: Longboat Key, Florida  
Hobbies: Quilting, composing piano music

**Malele Nzeza**  
From: Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo  
Hobbies: Playing and recording music

**John Shea**  
From: Sarasota, Florida  
Hobbies: Reading and spending time with family and friends

**Lauren Leighton**  
From: Upstate New York  
Hobbies: Going to the beach and spending time with family

GRAPHIC BY SUZANNE BROWN

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## Ninth-grade student codes 'for the love of the game'



Ninth-grader Kiran Kadiyala sits with her programming team, "To Be Determined." She attended the Girls Make Games camp at Mountain View, Calif. over the summer.

PHOTO PROVIDED BY KIRAN KADIYALA

by **Kasumi Wade**  
Asst. News Editor

Ninth-grader Kiran Kadiyala spent her summer venturing into a new experience — the world of programming. For three weeks, Kadiyala attended the Girls Make Games camp in Mountain View, Calif., where she learned about programming and how to make a functional game from scratch. Kadiyala also had the opportunity to visit the Google and PlayStation headquarters and be immersed in their day-to-day bustle.

Kadiyala discovered this fourth-annual camp after being informed that her cousin was already registered; Kadiyala was thus inspired to sign up as well. This was Kadiyala's first time getting involved in programming, so she was not sure what to expect. "I was automatically excited and also nervous, but it did calm me down that my cousin would be with me," Kadiyala said.

The main goal of Girls Make Games is to expose girls to the gaming world and open interests toward the field, considering 47 percent of gamers are women and only 12 percent of positions in the gaming industry are held by women. Girls Make Games serves the purpose of inspiring future engineers, design-

ers and creators from all around the world to pursue the industry.

While at camp, Kadiyala learned about programs and programming mediums, the method or way a game is created, as well as how to use different functions, create characters, and add music and art into a program. She learned much from the camp, leading her to seek even broader opportunities.

Kadiyala was able to meet Laila Shabir, the CEO and founder of Girls Make Games. "She was so inspiring. I have never met someone like her before," Kadiyala said.

She also met different managers from small technology companies that work with PlayStation and was even interviewed and selected to be in a video for the brand's company. The video, which was a survey of different experiences from the Girls

Make Games campers. The video was then sent to the PlayStation CEO. With her camp group, Kadiyala visited the Sony PlayStation headquarters in San Mateo, Calif. There, the campers were exposed to the business and developing aspect of gaming. "Being able to go to the PlayStation headquarters was a truly great learning experience. I learned a lot [about] how you not only have to work hard to achieve your dreams, but also have to work smart," Kadiyala said.

Traditionally, games are produced by large companies and hundreds of people. However, Kadiyala worked in a team of only four to create her game. Her team, named "To Be Determined" (TBD), consisted of her cousin and two of her cousin's friends. The team created a fully operational game called Elemental, which is similar to a mobile application, yet less developed and refined.

Elemental is a role-playing game, much like Pokémon. In the game, players take control of the main character, Akila, who tries to solve a variety of different puzzles, mysteries and mazes. There are four worlds to enter: earth, air, water and fire. After beating one world, players move on to the next. After winning the game, the player achieves a red

ruby. "My favorite part was definitely when I finished and was able to look back and say 'I did that myself,'" Kadiyala said.

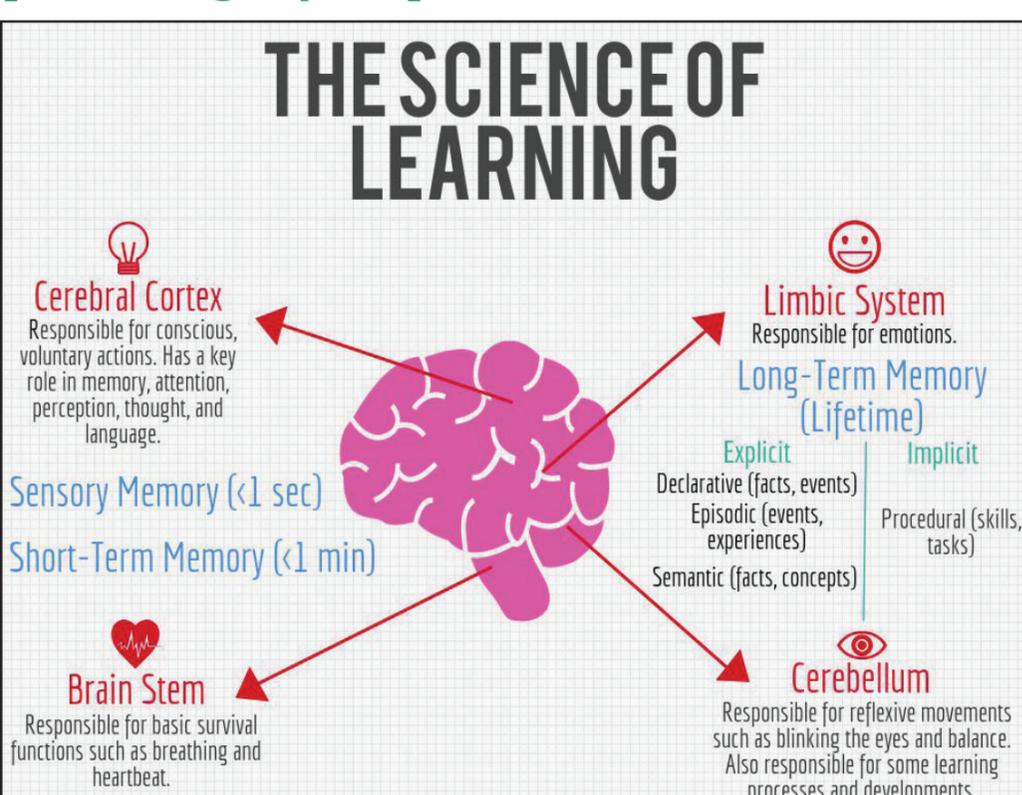
For three weeks, Kadiyala spent nine hours every day creating Elemental, which was a long and tiresome process for all members of her team and required their cooperation throughout. "Kiran and I worked really well together," her cousin, Sruthi Kadiyala, said. "I could tell she really enjoyed the camp."

"Being able to have the opportunity to go to the camp was amazing, but all that we accomplished there was even more amazing," Kadiyala said.

"I learned a lot [about] how you not only have to work hard to achieve your dreams, but also have to work smart."

**Kiran Kadiyala, grade 9**

## [an infographic]



GRAPHIC BY BEN NICHOLSON

by **Nathalie Bencie**  
News Editor

The way a student's brain learns depends on a variety of factors such as genetics, education and the environment in which the brain develops. Studies show that the setting and influence an infant receives during childhood affects the way his or her brain absorbs information and how information is processed.

According to the Urban Child Institute, from the time of conception to age 3, a child's brain undergoes the majority of its development and change. At birth, an infant's brain already has all the neurons it will use during a baby's lifetime. A baby's brain doubles in size the first year after birth, and by age 3, a baby's brain has developed

80 percent of its adult volume.

Studies by the National Center for Biotechnology show that a child's brain has a similar behavior to that of his or her parents. Because of genetics, a child's brain can inherit many possible learning disabilities or "giftedness," which means Pine View students owe a large part of their intellect to their parents.

Aside from genetics, a baby's mind especially develops through an external input. A child learns from his or her environment by observing actions from their surroundings through their senses. For example, if a child sees a sibling saying "thank you" every time he or she receives a treat, over time the child will learn to say "thank you" every time he or

she is given a treat. This is a form of explicit memory, explained in the graphic above.

Infants have the ability to distinguish between different objects, shapes, colors and sizes from a very young age. They also have the ability to differentiate the voices of their parents and siblings. A majority of this learning and development occurs in the cerebral cortex — the largest section of the brain — and the cerebellum.

This development of the brain occurs throughout the toddler years until the age of 25. Between grade school and graduate school, the brain continues to absorb information, although the amount of semantic and episodic memory stored vastly increases due to growth.

## [app reviews]

### The best services for music streaming

The Torch assesses music-streaming options for all music lovers

## Spotify

by **Nathalie Bencie**  
News Editor

Among Pine View students, Spotify is arguably the king of streaming music for a monthly fee of only \$9.99. Along with a catalog of 30 million songs and several social features and innovative new tools that cater to the different ways students listen to music, there is no wonder as to why the application has been going on for nine years strong. With apps that support the three major platforms — Android, iOS and Web player — Spotify allows you to stream its service over Wi-Fi to a growing number of audio and multimedia products through what the app calls Spotify Connect devices. Devices include wireless speakers and streaming media players like Google Chromecast.

In recent months, Spotify has branched out and added video, podcasts and a feature that matches music to your running pace. It also has a strong community that has built thousands of unique playlists that anyone can stream. Social media features let you connect your Facebook account to the app, follow your friends on Spotify and share playlists directly with them.

A special offer is also given to students enrolled in any school within the country. In collaboration with the on-demand video service, Hulu, students can receive Spotify Premium and full access to Hulu for a mere \$4.99 each month.

However, unless students are willing to pay the monthly fee for the Premium version, Spotify's free



PHOTO PROVIDED BY SPOTIFY. PROWL.COM

plan uses advertisements between every few songs to cover its costs. There are fewer features and more restrictions on the music that students can play, as well as where they can play it. With a free subscription, you can only shuffle songs from an album, playlist or radio station when using the mobile app, so it is not possible to individually pick a song and play it on the spot. There is also no offline listening, meaning you cannot play music without using Wi-Fi or cellular data.

Yet aside from its limits with the free version, Spotify continues to prove itself as a highly-rated product through innovative, up-to-date features. Its nearly unlimited music catalog and user-friendly quality makes it the obvious choice for any student looking to take the plunge into streaming.

**Rating (Free):** 4/5 Torches

**Rating (Premium):** 4.5/5 Torches

## Apple Music

by **Manny Rea**  
Sci-Tech Editor

Two years after its launch, Apple Music, successor to the Beats Music streaming service, has become a formidable foe to the ever-popular Spotify service. However, it is still burdened by a few shortcomings.

Following the acquisition of Beats Electronics in May 2014, Apple Inc. worked to integrate the curative radio aspects from the previous service into their new application, Apple Music. This app would also include the 43 million songs already available on iTunes and the subscriber's personal music library.

The service is available for Android and iOS devices as well as for computers as a part of the iTunes media player. Apple offers a three-month trial for all new subscribers, followed by \$9.99 monthly subscription for individuals, \$14.99 for a family plan and \$4.99 for active students.

Just like other premium music-streaming services, users can stream any song and can also download any tracks for offline listening as long as they are subscribed. Universal features, including genre or artist-related radios and a recent profile creation to share with friends, are readily provided for easy use.

What distinguishes Apple Music from other services is its abundance of quality, original content ranging from a 24/7 online radio station to their original television and movie programs.

The Beats 1 Radio station plays non-stop music from a diverse array of radio DJs and artists who showcase their own mixes at scheduled times each week. One notable show is Abstract Radio, hosted by rapper and producer Q-Tip, who plays a healthy cut of old- and

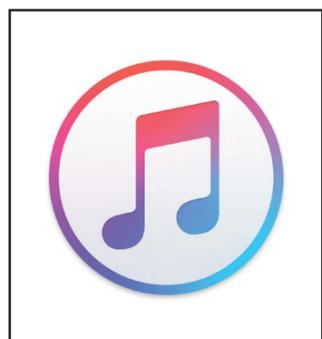


PHOTO PROVIDED BY APPLEBAZAR.NET

new-school music genres. Another is Rocket Hour, from singer Elton John that presents the best of popular music in all decades. All radio broadcasts are available on-demand for premium users to enjoy later on.

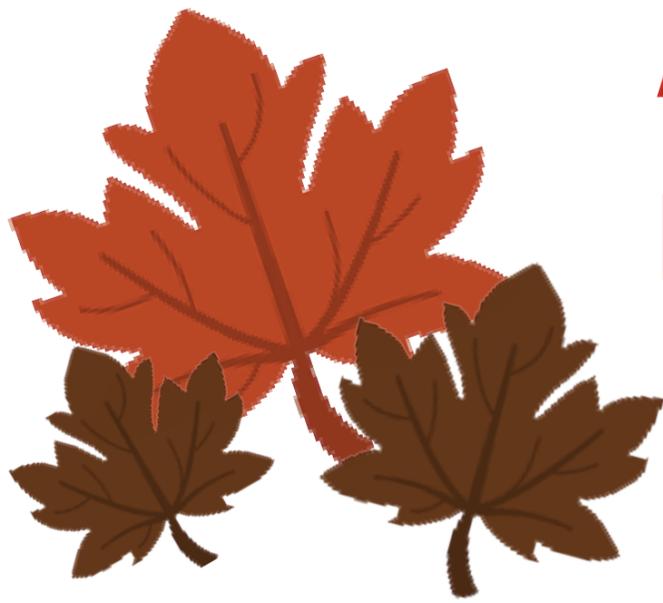
In the past year, Apple Music has delved into original programs including concert movies and television shows. Carpool Karaoke, originally a segment on The Late Late Show with James Corden, is an example of one of their endeavors.

Without a subscription, Apple Music becomes very bare. The Beats 1 Radio station can only be listened to live, and genre- and artist-related radios are accompanied by advertisements. Besides previously-purchased music from a personal library, nothing else is available to stream.

When willing to purchase a subscription, subscribers are treated to a service filled with unique and satisfying features. But when left with the free version, music lovers are sure to look for other services that deliver more versatility for all of its customers.

**Rating (Free):** 3/5 Torches

**Rating (Premium):** 4/5 Torches



## 'Fall' into Autumn Festivities

The season of pumpkin spice and sweater weather is around the corner, which may leave you itching for things to do in the crisp autumn air. Although there are no snow-angel or apple picking opportunities within our reach, Sarasota offers its own twist on traditional fall activities. The writers of the Torch have put together a list of local festivals which capture the fall spirit and will 'leaf' you smiling all season long.

### Hunsader Farms Pumpkin Festival



The Hunsader Farms Pumpkin Festival presents their 26th annual event this year. The festival offers activities for all ages and interests, including a costume contest, live performances and a petting zoo.

PHOTO PROVIDED BY HUNSADER FARMS

by Ben Nicholson  
Web Section Editor

While experiencing the endless rows of festival games and food vendors at the Hunsader Farms Pumpkin Festival, it is incredible to think the event originated as a small, family-owned farm. This year, Hunsader Farms will celebrate their 26th Annual Pumpkin Festival, a worthwhile experience for families of all ages.

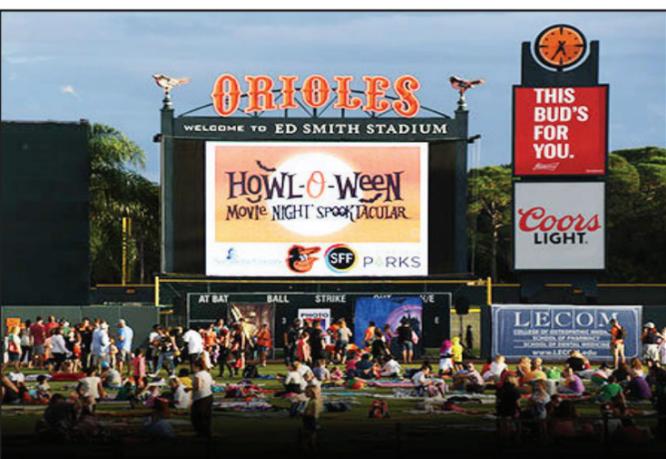
Hunsader Farms offers many activities that are suitable for children and adults. Most notable is the pumpkin patch, offering ripe pumpkins that are ready to be dug in to. The festival is also studded with food vendors of every kind, from southern barbecue to homemade ice cream. For the adventurous, a corn maze wanders down the center of the farm, perfect for kids.

As for live entertainment, the festival will feature a number of live bands such as the Southern Express Bluegrass Band, the Big Z Band and Richy and Franky. Hunsader Farms also has performances by professional jugglers and a multitude of animal shows featuring everything from grizzly bears to bald eagles.

For younger visitors, a playground and petting zoo are available. The petting zoo features a wide variety of animals, such as bunnies, goats, sheep, donkeys, horses, peacocks, a camel, lemurs, alpacas and even a handful of exotic birds.

The Hunsader Farms Pumpkin Festival is the perfect way to get into the spirit of fall, with attractions for people of all ages and interests. It is located at 5500 C.R. 675 Bradenton, FL, 34211 and open Oct. 14-15, 21-22 and 28-29.

### Howl-O-Ween Movie Night Spooktacular



The Baltimore Orioles are offering a free evening of Halloween-themed fun and games, followed by the screening of the popular movie, "Monsters, Inc." The event will be held Saturday Oct. 14 at Ed Smith Stadium.

PHOTO PROVIDED BY MLB.COM

by Cate Alvaro  
Sports Editor

Looking for something to do with your close friends this year for Halloween? The Baltimore Orioles are hosting their annual Howl-O-Ween event on Saturday, Oct. 14, at Ed Smith Stadium.

To start off this family-friendly festival, there will be Halloween-themed games and fun activities for all ages. Carnival games, inflatable sports games, giant versions of classic board games and a scavenger hunt will also be available. After these killer events, the Oriole Bird mascot will lead a costume parade around the bases on the field. Participants attending this festival are encouraged to dress up and join the parade. Once the costume parade comes to a close, a screening of the popular movie "Monsters, Inc." will take place under the stars at 7 p.m. on the video board. For this portion of the festival, guests should bring blankets to hang out and relax on; though, folding chairs are not permitted.

The admissions fee for this event is the donation of one or more nonperishable food items for the All Faith's Food Bank. Their goal is to collect donations and nonperishable food items for those in need in the community. No outside food, beverages or coolers are permitted inside the ballpark, with the exception of sealed water bottles. Concessions such as hot dogs, hamburgers, french fries and an assortment of Halloween candy may be purchased at the event. Free parking is available in the East Lot of the baseball stadium. The Hall-O-Ween festival is the perfect way to raise Halloween spirits.

Join the Baltimore Orioles in their second annual Howl-O-Ween event Saturday, Oct. 14 at the Ed Smith Stadium 2700 12th St. Sarasota, FL, 34237, from 5-7 p.m.

## What is your perfect fall drink?

by Alexa Mollod  
Copy Editor

### 1. How would you describe your personality?

- A. Unique and proud of it.
- B. Pure and simple.
- C. Spicy and spontaneous!

### 2. What would your ideal fall date involve?

- A. Anything exciting and different, to be honest.
- B. The usual — a nice dinner followed by a romantic walk on the beach.
- C. I don't know ... let's wing it!

### 3. What is your favorite part about fall?

- A. The excitement of Halloween.
- B. Fuzzy socks, duh.
- C. The arts and crafts for sure.

### 4. During your free time, you...

- A. Browse Pinterest for fun DIYs.
- B. Relax with Netflix and your favorite snacks.
- C. Go anywhere else but home. Fun awaits!

### 5. Describe your study habits.

- A. You have to study for art?
- B. I study for tests three weeks in advance.
- C. I work only as hard as I need to. I would rather be traveling.

### If you scored mostly A's: Pumpkin Spice Eggnog



- 4 egg yolks
- ½ cup white sugar
- ½ cup pumpkin puree
- 2 cups milk
- 1 cup heavy cream
- ½ teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg
- ½ teaspoon pumpkin pie spice

Pour the egg yolks into the bowl of a mixer and mix on medium speed. Add in the white sugar slowly and continue mixing until just combined. Adjust the mixer speed to low and add in the pumpkin puree, milk, heavy cream, vanilla extract, ground nutmeg, and pumpkin pie spice. Pour into a pitcher and chill before serving into individual mugs.

PHOTO FROM LILVIENNA.COM

### If you scored mostly B's: Hot Apple Cider



- 6 cups organic apple juice
- ¼ cup real maple syrup
- 2 cinnamon sticks
- 6 whole cloves
- 6 whole allspice berries
- 1 orange peel
- 1 lemon peel
- Cheese cloth

Pour the apple juice and maple syrup into a large saucepan. Place the cinnamon sticks, cloves, allspice berries, orange peel and lemon peel in the cheesecloth, tie with string and put the bundle in the saucepan. Heat the saucepan over moderate heat for five to 10 minutes, then remove bundle. Ladle the cider into big cups or mugs adding a fresh cinnamon stick to each serving.

PHOTO FROM THEKINDLIFE.COM

### If you scored mostly C's: Iced Chai Tea Latte



- 14 green cardamom pods
- 12 whole black peppercorns
- 12 whole cloves
- 3 tablespoons chopped fresh ginger
- 6 cups water
- 4 cinnamon sticks
- ½ teaspoon freshly ground nutmeg
- ¼ cup honey
- 2 vanilla beans
- 8 black tea bags
- 6 cups milk

Place all ingredients except the tea bags in a large saucepan. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat and simmer for 15 minutes. Add the tea bags, remove the pot from the heat and let steep for five minutes. Pour the mixture through a strainer, reserving the liquid for use as concentrate. Cool the mixture to room temperature, cover and refrigerate. For serving, pour equal parts concentrate and milk of your choice.

PHOTO FROM BIGGIRLSSMALLKITCHEN.COM

[a review]

# Jim's Small Batch Bakery is on the 'rise'



TOP: Inside the bakery, intriguing portraits and surfboards hang on the yellow walls opposite the counter. Jim's Small Batch Bakery expanded several years ago in order to provide more seating and room for growing business. LEFT: Miniature cupcakes with decorations are displayed alongside other tempting pastries and baked goods. RIGHT: Crisp on the outside, with tart jam inside, the "Love Letter" is a favorite at the bakery. PHOTOS BY ANNA LABINER

by Anna Labiner

Asst. Entertainment Editor  
While standing at the counter and staring at rows of neatly-arranged pastries, a mouth-watering scent of fresh-baked cookies consumes the store. Ranging from tasty pastries to delectable soups,

sandwiches and salads, Jim's Small Batch Bakery crafts everything from scratch, guaranteeing freshness with every bite.

When picturing a bakery that specializes in handmade artisanal treats like Jim's Small Batch Bakery, a dainty little restaurant may

come to mind. However, this is not the case. This bakery has a warm and friendly atmosphere, like a local coffee shop. The walls are decorated with vibrant surfboards and intriguing portraits. Behind the cash register there is a small window looking into the kitchen — the

perfect spot for the cashiers to give the orders straight to the bakers. Through this window, the customers get a glimpse of the hardworking cooks and bakers doing everything from dusting fine sugar onto the pastries to pulling fresh bread out of the oven.

Jim Plocharsky opened the bakery about seven years ago on Jan. 1, 2011. His motivation for the creation of his restaurant is simple. "This is the only career I've ever known. I went straight from high school to culinary school, and did that for four years, which was very rewarding," Plocharsky said. He attended John & Wales University in Rhode Island where he tinkered with other forms of cooking, but ultimately embraced the art of baking. After completing culinary school, Plocharsky went on to work as an employee for other bakeries, but never felt he was getting enough compensation for his skill set. "I decided I would like to do my own thing, and not work for anybody else but myself." Plocharsky said, thus creating Jim's Small Batch Bakery.

As a well-known Sarasota chef, Plocharsky has been recognized in local magazines and newspapers, including "Reader's Choice" and "Best of Sarasota Magazine." He was named the International Catering Association's Pastry Chef of the Year in 2007 after competing against 1,000 different caterers from various countries, including the United States, Canada and South Africa.

Plocharsky runs the bakery himself, making sure his customers are satisfied with the freshest

quality goods he has to offer. "I would rather run out of something and disappoint a customer because we ran out, than just fill my case with sweet street desserts," Plocharsky said. Baking everything from scratch is not an easy task and can create supply limitations, but the final product is worth it. At Jim's Small Batch Bakery, it is evident that no minor detail goes unnoticed.

For such high quality products, it is surprising that most items on the menu stay under \$10. Enticing sandwiches like the "Candied Bacon" BLT cost about \$8, while delectable cookies range from 75 cents to \$3. Breads like challah and fresh, handmade bagels range from about \$1.25 to \$9, and always have guaranteed freshness.

From the crispy and flakey chocolate croissant to the golden-topped array of muffins, everything in the bakery looks perfected and uniquely crafted. The blueberry-topped pastry named "Love Letter" has a crunchy outside

"I would rather run out of something and disappoint a customer because we ran out, than just fill my case with sweet street desserts."

Jim Plocharsky  
Bakery owner

and sweet jam on the inside along with hints of lemon and blueberry. Plocharsky's favorites include the Derby Pie and the five-layer "magic bar." "When nobody is looking I stuff my pockets with as many as I can and, you know, run home," Plocharsky joked.

Jim's Small Batch Bakery is located at 2236 Gulf Gate Dr., and is open from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Friday, and 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday.

## Moving from the football field to the dance floor



Sophia Jones poses in a ballet costume for her end of year recital. Jones and her team were undefeated in the 2017 competition season. PHOTO PROVIDED BY SOPHIA JONES

by Josh Gulyansky  
Web Section Editor

Finding her true calling in the art of dance, eleventh-grader Sophia Jones has been practicing at Starz Choice Dance Academy for the past four years. She invests 10 hours per week in the studio, and additional time on the weekends, since the start of sixth grade. Jones takes part in many styles of dance, including jazz, tap, ballet, pointe, hip-hop, lyrical, contemporary and acrobatics.

Before the dance studio, Jones could be found on the football field. However, at age 12, she was told it was too dangerous for her to

keep playing football due to the risk of her sustaining a concussion, so she decided to turn to the art of dance.

Jones recently participated in her third Universal Dance Association (UDA) National Team Dancing Competition, and brought home the first place trophy. She has also taken part in three different regional competitions around the state, traveling to Orlando, Ft. Lauderdale, Lakeland, Tampa and Daytona Beach. Jones considers her first place win at nationals her biggest accomplishment, although she has also ranked in the top ten multiple times with her team. "Making friends is the best part. They are like a family to me, and I can rely on them all the time," Jones said.

According to Jones, Misty Copeland, a professional ballet dancer for the American Ballet Theater is her inspiration. Jones and Copeland have a shared attribute — they both started dancing at age 12. Jones looks up to Copeland as a role model; she plans on continuing to dance and following in Copeland's footsteps past college and through a professional career.

"Making friends is the best part. They are like a family to me, and I can rely on them all the time."

Sophia Jones,  
grade 11

dancing. "I don't know what I would do without it," Jones said.

## FALL HOROSCOPES

### AQUARIUS

January 20 - February 18

Your keen sense is flowing this fall. Use that innovative mind of yours to create a killer Halloween costume for your friend's spooky get-together.

### PISCES

February 19 - March 20

You have been working hard and hitting the books since the start of school and need to let your creative juices flow. Cultivate your creative side by having a pumpkin-decorating hang-out session with your friends.

### ARIES

March 21 - April 19

Aries, you are a fire sign with fierce optimism and energy. Channel your boundless energy into finishing those last minute projects due at the end of the quarter. Your optimism yields major progress!

### TAURUS

April 20 - May 20

Exercise your adoration for all things food by trying a ginger snap or pecan pie recipe. Pair your sweet treat with warm chai tea to spice up your fall.

### GEMINI

May 21 - June 20

As the twin sign, you are often split in two directions, unsure about decisions or feelings. Unwind this month by hosting a movie night with friends and family. Relax your mind by sharing your favorite autumn recipes and cuddling up on the couch.

### CANCER

June 21 - July 22

As a deeply emotional sign, some residual emotions may still be haunting you. Smooth away those thoughts and cozy up with a book and tea to warmly welcome autumn vibes.

### LEO

July 23 - August 22

Channel your sunny demeanor and love for acting into the theater this fall. Head to a local play or the movies and immerse yourself in show business.

### VIRGO

August 23 - September 22

You are the House of Work. Settling back into a fall routine may leave your feet itching for adventure. Gather your closest friends and visit a fall festival or pumpkin patch.

### LIBRA

September 23 - October 22

Libra, the sun is in your sign this month and will have a strong influence on your emotions. You thrive in the presence of company. Grab your friends and loved ones and plan an autumn get-together with all your favorite fall goodies.

### SCORPIO

October 23 - November 21

Mercury finally orbited out of retrograde this fall, leaving room for progress and clarity. As an emotionally-perceptive sign, help out those struggling friends through the beginning of the school year.

### SAGITTARIUS

November 22 - December 21

You are a highly inquisitive sign, meaning your mind may bounce from one thought to another. Relax your mind and treat yourself with a sweet treat this season — you deserve it!

### CAPRICORN

December 22 - January 19

Capricorn, you are a career-oriented sign, flourishing on order and organization. Channel that built-up motivation to a different purpose, like taking a trip to see the fall leaves or reconnecting with old friends.

# The Hidden of the

## Honduras



Marguerite Andrich

by **Alexa Mollod**

Copy Editor

Over the summer, tenth-grader Marguerite Andrich immersed herself in the beautifully untouched scenery of Cayo Cochino, a small island in Honduras. Rather than visiting the island with her family, Andrich embarked on this three-week journey with a group of college students for a marine biology course at New College.

Upon arrival to this small, diverse island, Andrich immediately began her studies. Each day for the first week, she received marine biology lectures from her professor and enjoyed the natural scenery and culture of the island through hikes and interactions with the locals. "The local people are really nice," she said. According to Andrich, one of the best parts of her trip was speaking with them and being immersed into their culture.

Andrich conducted a research project of her choice during her time on the island. She decided to study the eating habits of parrot fish. Each afternoon (or, when it was not raining), Andrich took an underwater notebook into the

ocean and analyzed what foods the parrot fish would eat in multiple three-minute intervals. She ended her trip with about 50 different observations, which she compiled into one final project that was presented to her New College group. "I was very impressed and inspired by all of the other unique and interesting projects that I saw," she said.

Because of the extreme heat, humidity and lack of air conditioning, Andrich would not exactly recommend staying in Cayo Cochino for as long as she did. However, according to Andrich, the trip still had an amazing impact on her life. Before visiting the island, she wanted

to be a marine biologist. However, now, Andrich wants to go into environmental law. "After seeing how perfect [Cayo Cochino's] ecosystem is, I want to work to preserve places like that, and help other places reach that point," she said.

"I had an amazing time in Honduras and learned so much about myself and the culture," Andrich said. "I can't wait to learn more about the environment and the ocean and hopefully make a career out of it."



PHOTO PROVIDED BY MARGUERITE ANDRICH

by **William Khabbaz**

Features Editor

When traveling overseas, covered the hidden wonders. The vibrant culture and landscapes plays the reasons behind the land. From swimming with stingrays to holding a koala in Australia, memories all over the world can see the reasons behind why a region is a hidden wonder.

## Australia

Zoe Gavette

by **Nathalie Bencie**

News Editor

For eleventh-grader Zoe Gavette, there is no better place to be than surrounded by furry friends and wagging tails. This is why, from July 11 to July 27, she embarked on Australia through a travel volunteer program at the Australian Zoo. Through this international volunteer program, Rustic Pathways, Gavette was able to pursue her lifelong dream of not only traveling across the world, but experiencing a variety of aspects of the animal-care profession.

Gavette was able to experience first-hand what it is like to care for animals that are not domesticated pets, along with 10 other students from across the globe, with the Rustic Pathway program. "I have always loved animals," she said. "I've always wanted to go to Australia, so this program tied together that with what I love to do."

During her 16 days of volunteering, Gavette stayed in Brisbane, Queensland, with her fellow program-goers. In the first week of volunteering, she shadowed different zookeepers at the Australia Zoo to learn what their positions were like and help them with various tasks, including cleaning enclosures

and caring for animals such as koalas, kangaroos, rhinos and reptiles. During the weekend, Gavette was able to visit the tourist attractions in Australia and visit the zoo as a regular tourist would.

Gavette and the rest of the group went to Tangalooma Island for about two days. Located off the coast of Queensland, Tangalooma Island is known throughout Australia for its dolphin conservation projects. "[On the island] we got to sand-dune surf, snorkel in shipwrecks and feed wild dolphins," Gavette said. "It was absolutely amazing."

After returning back from Tangalooma Island, the entire program headed for the Glass House Mountains to assist a wildlife rescue center known as the Steve Irwin Wildlife Reserve. There, Gavette mainly focused on helping build new enclosures for animals. Her favorite experience happened at the rescue center, where she was able to bottle-feed joeys. "It had to have been my absolute favorite," she said. "They were so cute."

After helping in the Glass House Mountains, Gavette returned for her final days in Brisbane where she toured the city, stayed in a hostel and flew out the next day. "I wish I could have stayed longer," she said.



PHOTO PROVIDED BY ZOE GAVETTE

## Africa

Lauren and Sage

by **Gwyn Petersen**

Focus Editor

The world is full of amazing places, but to twelfth- and ninth-graders Lauren and Sage Yenari, respectively, none are as awe-inspiring as southern Africa, where they spent their summer. The Yenari's spent eight days on safari in Zimbabwe, and then also spent time in Victoria Falls, Hwange National Park, Mana Pools National Park and Cape Town, South Africa.

Throughout the trip, Lauren and Sage took game drives to see different animals, went on a canoe trip down the Zambezi River and hiked to Victoria Falls. In South Africa, the sisters went to the District Six Museum — a memorial to the victims of Apartheid — filled with signs, documents, maps and exhibits featuring the days before the forcible removal took place.

They also visited the Old Biscuit Mill, a village in the heart of Woodstock that is home to many small shops, restaurants, workshops and festivals. One such festival is the neighborhood market, which is made up of a collection of farmers

and artists; it takes place every Saturday.

Lauren and Sage thought this to be a hidden wonder of the world; what they discovered during their time on safari in Africa is so untouched and beautiful, which was incredible. "I've never seen everything these days with social media and influencers," Sage said.

In Zimbabwe, Lauren really learned how to appreciate nature as she got to be around many amazing animals for an extended period of time. In South Africa, however, Lauren said she saw the end of Apartheid





## Clark Dean places first in World Rowing Junior Championships

by Sarah Mihm  
Managing Editor

Competing at a world championship is the goal of most athletes; twelfth-grader and Sarasota Crew rower Clark Dean has met and exceeded this goal, twice. Over the summer, Dean competed in the Junior Men's Single Sculls, a one person boat race, and the Junior Men's Coxed Four, a four person boat race with a coxswain who steers and motivates, at the World Rowing Junior Championships in Trakai, Lithuania. Dean made history at the championships, being the only American to win the single event in the past 50 years.

Only two days after he won a bronze medal at the US Rowing Youth National Championships, Dean flew to Chula Vista, Calif., June 13 to begin training for the World Rowing Junior Championships. Dean started his training in California by filling in the quad, a four-man boat, because the Junior National Team did not have all of its members yet; however, his goal was to row the single. At the Junior Worlds Trials in West Windsor, N.J. halfway through the summer, Dean competed in and won the single, earning the spot in the single to compete for the US Junior National Team at the World Rowing Junior Championships.

Not only was Dean aiming to make history and win the single, but he also wanted to row two races at the championship. Originally, Dean wanted to race in the eight, but the only two races that did not overlap in timing were the single and the four. According to Dean, it was a hard decision to choose between the two races. This is not to say double racing was easy — two of the races were only two hours and 20 minutes apart.

Upon returning to California, Dean began practicing in both of his boats. Dean practiced twice a day, alternating between the four and the single. Each boat had a different coach, and Dean's coach in the single was also



his head coach at Sarasota Crew. "The training was not that overwhelming because my two coaches communicated really well," Dean said.

Casey Galvanek, Dean's Coach from Sarasota Crew, said, "Clark has showed a great interest in the sport and his improvement since he started with us in middle school. All of that focused energy resulted in a victory at the Junior World Rowing Championships in Trakai, Lithuania this past summer. Clark epitomizes what spending proper time on task can help you achieve."

The World Rowing Junior Championships took place from Aug. 2 to Aug. 6. Over the course of the week, Dean raced four times in the single and twice in the four. Sunday was the only day Dean had two races. However, according to Dean, he was not worried about racing twice in one day. "By rowing with Sarasota Crew, I knew two races would not be that big of a deal," Dean said. At Sarasota Crew, Dean has rowed multiple races in the same day.

Competing in world championships, however, is not brand new to Dean. He competed at the World Rowing Junior Championships last year in Rotterdam, Amsterdam, where

he won third place in the quadruple sculls event. The quadruple sculls is a four man boat with two oars for each rower. Dean was aiming for a medal again this year. "I had been training for [World Rowing Junior Championships] the whole summer," Dean said. "The most difficult part was the back-to-back race. I put everything I had into both races," Dean said. He was able to do just that. Dean won the single and got sixth place in the four. This added to his collection of world championship medals.

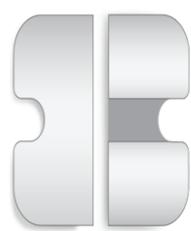
Compared to last year's venue in Amsterdam, Lithuania was a completely different experience. "It was awesome being in Lithuania," Dean said. The regatta was held on Galve Lake, which has a castle near the water. According to Dean, the only downfall of the course was the wind change that would occur throughout the race, but Dean was able to deal with it easily.

Dean is still eligible to compete in the same U19, under the age of 19, category as this past summer, at the next Junior World Championships, but is considering rowing in the U23, under 23, instead. He plans on rowing in college and in future world events, no matter the category.



LEFT: Twelfth-grader Clark Dean crosses the finish line in the single sculls race at the World Rowing Junior Championships. TOP RIGHT: A competitor from Germany congratulates Dean after his victory. BOTTOM RIGHT: Dean poses with his mother and father after receiving his gold medal. PHOTOS PROVIDED BY AWORTHYPHOTO

## Beautiful Smiles for a Lifetime



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# Kickin' it with martial arts

Martial arts has a broad definition that includes all sports and techniques pertaining to self-defense and attack. Taekwondo, Jeet Kune Do and Karate are three forms of martial arts that teach discipline, endurance and rigorous body workouts. However, each has its own distinct style and origin that separates it from the rest. The Torch has dived into each of these forms of martial arts and the facilities that teach them.



## Taekwondo

by Madi Holmes  
Web Section Editor

Coming to life in Yong Chun, Seoul, Korea, after Korea's liberation from Japan in 1945, Taekwondo is now a popular, world-wide form of martial arts. It is primarily branched off of Karate and Chinese martial arts, yet it still holds a Korean flare. The goal of Taekwondo is to spread the art of self-defense, while also incorporating other important skills such as focus, leadership, discipline and respect.

Taekwondo is made up of two major parts: forms and sparring. A form is a difficult pattern of moves that the student must memorize before being allowed to move up a belt color. A form can last anywhere from one minute to five minutes, and may consist of many different Taekwondo moves, such as punches and kicks performed in all directions.

Sparring is also an important part of the sport in which one student will fight another while wearing special padding. The fighting mainly consists of light kicking and punching due to the well-enforced



**Trautwein's ATA instructor demonstrates how to perform a flying side kick. The facility has been open for 48 years.**  
PHOTO BY MADI HOLMES

concept of respect. Trautwein's ATA Martial Arts in Sarasota is part of one of the largest Taekwondo associations in the country. ATA, the American Taekwondo Association, started operations in 1969, and now has almost 1,000 privately-owned locations throughout the country.

"I love the bond and the culture that we've formed here. It's very positive," Brooke Bairos, one of the school's main instructors, said. Trautwein's ATA focuses on allowing students to increase their self-confidence and the respect they show toward others, while also offering very rigorous and physically challenging courses.

The Torch visited Trautwein's and observed a children's after-school class, featuring an en-

ergetic group of 7- to 12-year-olds. The class started with a rigorous warm-up of jumping jacks, high kicks and powerful punches to prepare the kids to work out. This was followed by many different types of drills, including kicks on a special hand-held pad, with each leap followed by a powerful "high-ya!"

The class radiated with positive energy from both the students and the instructors. Every instruction given to the students was followed by a booming "yes, ma'am!" or "no, sir!" which added to the character building aspect of the facility. Trautwein's ATA offers after-school classes Monday through Friday for all ages and skill levels for anyone who is interested in Taekwondo. One can get started today for just \$40, which includes a uniform and four classes. They are located 7754 State Road 72 Sarasota, FL 34241.

## Karate

by Tricia Saputera and Elizabeth Hopkins  
Asst. Match Editors

Passed down from generation to generation, legends claim that Bodhidharma, an Indian Buddhist monk, introduced the martial art of Karate over a thousand years ago. However, the sport was actually first developed in Okinawa, Japan in 1722. Though its origin is unclear, its purpose is clear: to strengthen the mind and the body.

Similar to Taekwondo, Karate is also broken down into two components: form and sparring. However, in Karate, form is titled "kata" and sparring is referred to as "kumite." Kata is the complex combination of different defensive moves, such as kicks and punches. Each kata has a certain order of movements that the participants must complete. This includes requiring participants to bow before and after completing the sequence of motions, and members must start and end their movements at the same spot on the floor.

Unlike Taekwondo's sparring, Karate focuses on hand strikes more than kicking techniques. There are a variety of hand techniques for members to practice, from the middle-knuckle fist to the spear hand.

For Moon Shotokan, North Port's longest running martial arts school, karate is a family affair. Moon Shokotan has been active



**A Moon Shotokan instructor demonstrates kata stances.**

PHOTO COURTESY OF SOO MOON

since 1995, run by husband and wife duo, Chief Instructor Sensei Paul Moon and Sensei Soo Moon.

From children to adults, the dojo, or training facility, is fit for Karate pursuers of all ages and skill levels, with Moon Shotokan utilizing smaller groups for specialized instruction.

All sessions, however, begin with stretching, then practicing kata, or the basic stances, locks and punches.

"It's not about passing belt levels," Soo said. "It's all about learning control and defense."

For just \$40-\$60, all sessions are covered for a month. Moon Shotokan trains at Gene Matthews Boys and Girls Club at 6851 S Biscayne Dr, North Port, Fla. 34287 on Wednesdays from 6:30 to 8 p.m.

## Jeet Kune Do

by Noelle Bencie  
Asst. Sports Editor

Heavily influenced by Chinese Kung Fu, Jeet Kune Do was invented in 1969 by Bruce Lee when he weaved together different patterns of martial arts. Lee believed martial arts should have no limitations or strict formations, which led to the creation of the earliest version of Mixed Martial Arts (MMA) fighting. He intended to develop a form of combat geared towards self defense rather than perfection of moves.

The sport of Jeet Kune Do consists of two components: the five ways of attack and the four consecutive motions. Single Direct attack consists of a single fluid motion whereas Attack by Combination is a series of thrusts and natural maneuvers. Immobilization attack is used to trap the movement of the opponent, compared

to Progressive Indirect attack that consists of distance and time, and finally Attack by Drawing is an attack that is used to bait the compete into a hit. The students learn how to fight using everyday objects such as belts, scarves, ties and pens. The four consecutive motions seen in Jeet Kune Do are kicking, punching, trapping and grappling.

Martin Academy of Martial Arts in Sarasota is a privately-owned business that welcomes children, teens and adults looking for training in martial arts. This facility was first established in 2006 by LaVonne Martin, who is still the current owner of the Academy. This school teaches several forms of martial arts: Jeet Kune Do, Jiu Jitsu, women's self-defense, Thai Boxing, Kung Fu, Combat Submission Wrestling and Kali.

The Torch stepped into a Jeet Kune Do class at Martin Academy to experience a class consisting of both adults and teens. The class began with a light warm-up of laps around the mat and multiple power kicks to prepare the students for more strenuous exercises.

Following the warm-up, the class split into partners and practiced various defensive kicking and punching drills.

"Everyone at Martin Academy is really nice, and they will always tell you that you can do it and to always keep trying," eighth-grader and member of Martin Academy, Wyatt Paolercio said.

The Academy provides a welcoming and accepting atmosphere



**Instructor Adam Steele (right) partakes in a punching drill with a student. Martin Academy teaches several forms of martial arts.** PHOTO BY NOELLE BENCIE

that allows students to show their full potential in every form of martial arts. The Martin Academy offers children's after-school classes

and adult classes Monday through Thursday, and Saturday. They are located 6341 Porter Rd #5, Sarasota, FL., 34240.

# Tenth-grader la'crosses' into national college sports



**Tenth-grader Lily Dougherty (center) competes against the Cardinal Mooney High School lacrosse team. Dougherty has been playing lacrosse since she was 12 years old.**

PHOTO PROVIDED BY PICSBYPEG

by Naina Chauhan  
Match Layout Artist

To most, lacrosse is just a game; but to tenth-grader Lily Dougherty, it is a way of life. Dougherty competed against thousands of other lacrosse players for a spot on the elite team for the US National Lacrosse Competition at Yale University, and was successful. She then proceeded to both compete in and succeed at the competition May 27 to 30.

Dougherty started playing lacrosse at the age of 12 and has been playing ever since. Her father initially inspired her to play this sport when he discovered a new lacrosse team in the area, the Sarasota Seahawks. Throughout her lacrosse career, Dougherty has moved from the Sarasota Seahawks to varsity lacrosse at Riverview High School. However, she recently joined the Girls' Ripcurl lacrosse program, a new team sponsored by the Casey

Powell World Lacrosse Foundation, to have the opportunity to play more seriously. Dougherty's coach on the Riverview lacrosse team, Ashley McLeod said, "Lily is extremely dedicated, not just to the sport, but to her team. She works very hard at practice and on her own and it shows as she excels on the field."

Dougherty had to endure a grueling six hours of tryouts at St. Stephens Episcopal School

to qualify for the elite team that would compete at Yale. After intense practice, Dougherty was chosen out of 1,000 other players across the west coast of Florida to fly to Connecticut for the US National Lacrosse Competition. "I love the sport itself, it doesn't matter where I'm playing or who I'm playing with," Dougherty said.

Tenth-grader and member of the Ripcurl Girls' lacrosse program, Betsy Williams said, "Lily is amazing. She is super hardworking and really fast on the field. She also is always looking for things she can improve to make herself a better player."

After making the elite team, Dougherty flew to Connecticut for the competition. The team she played with was called Gulf Coast Lacrosse. The team consisted of the best lacrosse players across the gulf coast of Florida. According to Dougherty, she had never played with these girls before and only recognized a few players from competitions. Dougherty said, "I really had to learn to play with them and not against them." However, according to Dougherty, after three days on the field together, the girls were able to work together.

The practices at Yale University required Dougherty to begin her day at 4:30 a.m. in preparation

for the two-hour warm-ups she had to attend at 6 a.m. Along with morning training, she had to compete in three to four competitions each day of the tournament. "It was hard, but I've spent that amount of time on the field before," Dougherty said.

What served as a real obstacle for Dougherty was the skill and the talent the other teams possessed. Many of the other contestants were from division one (D1) schools, the highest level of education possible for intercollegiate athletics. Despite the fact Dougherty and her team did not win the tournament, she still amassed a copious amount of experience. According to Dougherty, playing against the other players pushed her further than she had ever gone before; and now, back on her local team, she can practice her new skills.

"I feel I've become a much better player from this experience. I was able to learn what it's like to play with people at that level and what it takes it get there," Dougherty said.

Dougherty plans on continuing her lacrosse career throughout high school. She is also looking at specific colleges with lacrosse teams or clubs.

**"I feel I've become a better player from this experience."**  
Lily Dougherty, grade 10

## Student stuns Spanish class by sparking intellectual debate

by Suzanne Brown  
Asst. Editor-in-Chief

After answering a non-yes or no question with “sí,” tenth-grade Spanish-class student Stephanie Williams has opened up a new, groundbreaking philosophical debate in her Spanish III class. Entering the realm of philosophers like Plato and Aristotle, Williams has truly pushed the boundaries of thinking by challenging the orthodox.

“Stephanie isn’t usually one of my stronger students,” Spanish teacher Patricia Gerlek-Rzepka said. “After five years of Spanish class, she still pronounces the ‘h’ in ‘hola.’ But after today, I really see that she’s just an incredibly out-of-the-box thinker. We need more people like her.”

According to sources, Gerlek-Rzepka asked the class, “Qué es

la identidad?” or “What is identity?” before calling on Williams for an answer.

Reportedly, Williams looked up from her phone and emptily nodded for a few seconds before she slowly said, “sí,” thus changing modern thought forever.

A classmate of Williams, tenth-grader Carl Marks said, “I mean, I thought Stephanie just wasn’t paying attention at first, but then I started thinking about it. How do you answer a question like that, even just in English? Maybe she’s right. Like, does identity really exist? Are we complicit in the universe, and is there such a thing as free will?”

Since the philosophical breakthrough in the classroom, Spanish performance has sky-rocketed across campus. One student, eighth-grader Sara Mann, claims to have used deep

“My teacher said I really changed her perspective. I got a 100, so I guess that means I’m fluent now.”

Sara Mann  
grade 8



Tenth-grader Stephanie Williams reflects upon the importance of South America on the global stage. Williams has gained campus-wide fame from her philosophical work in Spanish class. PHOTO BY ALLIE ODISHELIDZE

thinking to her advantage. “On the last vocab test I forgot half the words but just wrote ‘estar’ for everything. I remembered some rhyme about how you feel and where you are, always use the verb ‘estar.’ So I used it,” she said. “My teacher said I really changed her

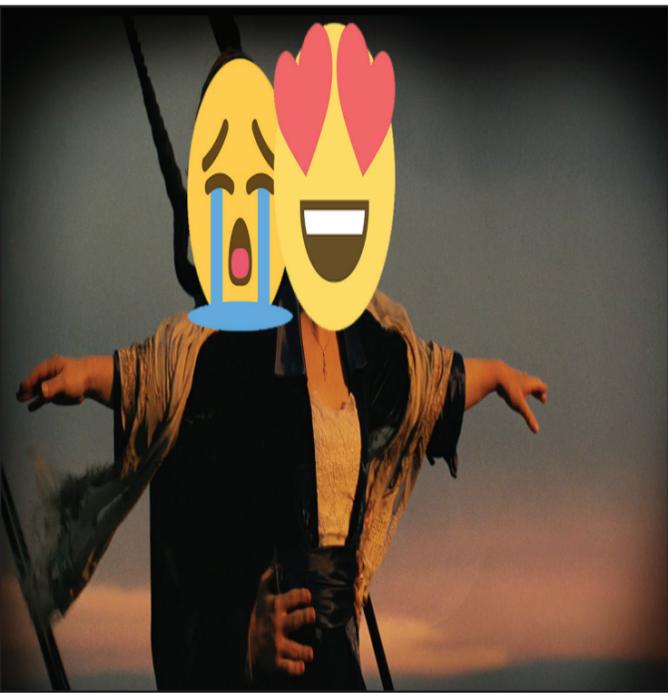
perspective. I got a 100, so I guess that means I’m fluent now.”

Williams is rumored to be in recruitment talks with Harvard and Columbia for her accomplishments as an incoming Spanish and Philosophy double major. “The subjects just

come naturally to me,” she said.

Later at the time of writing, Williams was seen fluently speaking in a rare Spanish dialect at the Taco Bell drive-through, adding an “a” sound to the end of each English word.

## “The Emoji Movie” makes waves in the movie industry



The impact of “The Emoji Movie” has far-reaching influence in the social sphere. Considered to be one of the best movies of this generation, critics are loving this feature film. GRAPHIC BY ALLIE ODISHELIDZE

by Leo Gordon  
Match Layout Artist

In the recent Hollywood film, “The Emoji Movie”, an emoji named Gene is incapable of upholding his future position of a “meh” face. With the help of two other emojis, High Five and Jailbreak, Gene ventures on a quest through a smartphone to prevent himself from being deleted after a serious malfunction caused by his inability to make a “meh” face.

After being upgraded from a record-breaking Rotten Tomatoes rating of 0 percent to a staggering 8 percent, “The Emoji Movie” has taken Pine View students by storm. “I absolutely loved the movie,” ninth-grader Smy Lee Face said. “While watching the film, it became evident to me that the movie was a true piece of art and will forever be considered one of the cornerstones of animation history.”

The movie is filled with plot twists, such as the claim by Smiler that Gene is a malfunction and therefore must be deleted, and grief-stricken scenes, like the conversation between Gene and his parents regarding his ill-fated future in the digital city of Textopolis. “With layers of inflection within the emoji’s voices, you can truly feel the passion they have for their existence,” psychologist Lah Fing

Phace, who specializes in emotional studies, said. “The writers had an incredible grasp on showing character emotion in a subtle and impactful way, which is shown in the line, ‘Gene, I should have believed you all along.’ In this line you can see the emphasis on emotion included in the story by the writers.”

In a world of almost 240 emojis, it can be tough to choose a favorite. “High Five is a cinematically important character, deciding not to be just the fat comical emoji, but rather the fat hand-shaped comical emoji,” tenth-grader Teer E. Eyed said. She claims to have seen the movie a total of eight times with her family.

In a thrilling sequence of events at the end of the movie, Alex, the owner of the smartphone inhabited by all of the emojis, decides to delete everything from his phone. However unexpectedly, Gene, the once-failed emoji, proves to be a hero for generations of emojis and humans to come by saving his fellow emojis.

“I was just so overwhelmed with emotion,” ninth-grader Hadi Molmes said. “At first I was losing hope. I assumed that the entire city of Textopolis would be destroyed, and I was absolutely devastated. Suddenly, Gene, an absolute hero, saved the entire emoji community.”

## Student makes desperate attempt to feign productivity in local coffee shop



Twelfth-grade student Abby Gayel tries her best to be productive at the cesspool of feigned productivity that is Starbucks. A recent report shows that 7 percent of Starbucks’ annual sales come from Pine View students alone. PHOTO BY ALLIE ODISHELIDZE

ARE YOU CONSISTENTLY  
CONFUSED WITH POP  
CULTURE REFERENCES?



DO YOU FEEL LEFT OUT OF  
BASIC CONVERSATIONS  
AND DISCUSSIONS?

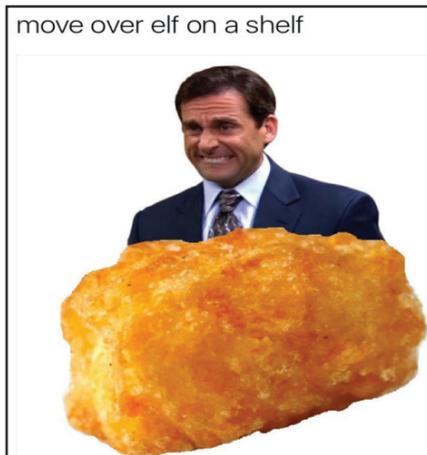


Pop Culture  
Coaching



## [meme of the month]

You've all heard of Elf on the Shelf, now get ready for



PHOTOS PROVIDED BY TWITTER

The new and fresh "You've Heard of Elf on a Shelf" meme has made its impact on social media, originating from an antique 2015 Tumblr meme.

First posted on the popular social media site Tumblr, a post saying exclusively, "You've Heard of Big-foot, Now Get Ready for Small-hand," set the precedent for later posts and memes in a similar format.

While these memes never gained traction across multiple social media platforms, the "Elf on a Shelf" meme, as it is known today, was first posted in December 2016. It features a photo of an action figure—Ash, the main character of the popular Pokemon

TV show—in a garbage can with the caption, "You've heard of Elf on the Shelf, now get ready for." The photo follows the meme format of today's memes, with the photo carrying the implication of "Ash in the trash."

The meme deluge seen today began in early September 2017. The excessive variants of the meme started on Reddit but quickly spread to Twitter, Instagram and Facebook.

In its current form, the meme repeats the same iconic caption, but the photo associated with the meme varies. The humor of the meme comes from the rhyming nature of the photos.

## [a column]

# A personal journey into (English) football

In life, few things are as simple as the game of soccer. Granted, I have been to one soccer game (and to preface this column, I would like to make it clear that I support a single soccer team, which is from the United Kingdom, so from here on out I will be referencing them as football teams because the word soccer makes me uncomfortable) and have only a basic knowledge of the sport. However, the lessons I compiled from this game seem applicable to the Daily Life of an American Teenager.

**If things seem to be going in the wrong direction, chances are Lyle Taylor will make them go in the right direction.**

In the world of English football, I support one team — AFC Wimbledon. One of Wimbledon's most iconic players is the Messi from Montserrat, Lyle Taylor. Taylor is a striker and, from my limited observance, angry yelling via Wimbledon decreases when Taylor has the ball.

Although in life Lyle Taylor typically will not be there to fix your situation, having a go-to friend can make life a little better and easier.

**Most everything can be solved by yelling a lot.**

As someone who has been to literally zero other sporting events, I was pleasantly surprised at the amount of obscene screaming that was occurring. At the game I went to, there was a lot of 'not-success,' for Wimbledon lost. However, during these periods of 'not-success,' screaming alleviated much of the apparent anguish. The same can be said of real life.



Allie Odishelidze, Humor Editor

**Solidarity is integral.**

As the visiting team in Blackpool, Wimbledon fans occupied a geographically smaller area of the stadium. Despite this fact, Wimbledon fans were by far the louder demographic. Realistically it does not matter if you lose, as long as you

have support.

**All types of "bois" are necessary for success.**

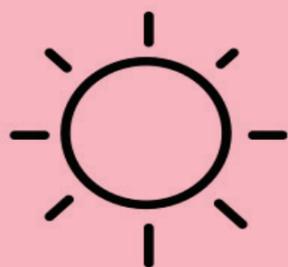
Presumably as with other types of sports, football has positions. A player allegedly does one thing during the game. To justify this, that person is very good at the thing they do. In life, surrounding yourself with a diverse group of people gives you new perspectives on the world and spices up your life.

**Find your people.**

As I have said multiple times at this point, I have never gone to any type of athletic event in my life. After attending this game, mainly populated by very English, very middle-aged men, I realized that it does not matter who you feel comfortable with, as long as you feel comfortable screaming about football with them.

I realized that it does not matter who you feel comfortable with, as long as you feel comfortable screaming about football with them.

## [an infographic]

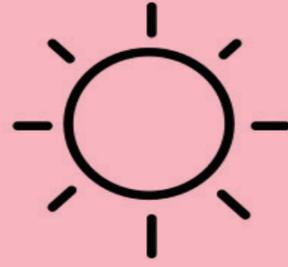


### THE FLOOR IS



Technically starting during the previous school year, the "floor is..." meme began in April 2017. Like many memes before it, it became popular in the following months. The first rendition featured the familiar guy jumping with the caption, "Me: I'm gonna go to sleep early this week. Me Tuesday @ 3 a.m. : \_\_\_\_\_." The meme in the form it is now known as began in early June 2017.

# I KNOW WHAT YOU MEME'D LAST SUMMER



### NOTHING BUT RESPECT FOR MY PRESIDENT



A mockery of a Donald Trump fan, this meme uses the caption "nothing but respect for MY president" as a caption for a seemingly unrelated photo. This meme got its start on Twitter. User @makenna\_mg posted a photo of herself cleaning Donald Trump's star with the caption, "Stopped to clean @realDonaldTrump Hollywood Star. Nothing but respect for MY President. #RaisedRight." This was posted June 28, 2017 and parodies quickly spread.

### HE PROTECC, HE ATACC, BUT MOST IMPORTANTLY HE



A bit of an antique, this meme first appeared in Nov. 2016. The original photo featured a man in two different stances with a lightsaber with the caption "he protecc but also he atacc". It took until July 2017 for this meme to really gain popularity, reaching its highest percentage of Google searches in July. As this meme grew, it began to include a third line.

### SNAPCHAT HOT DOG



Quickly taking over every social media platform, the Snapchat hot dog was first seen June 23, 2017. Snapchat released the iconic dancing hot dog as one of its live filters. Memes first placed the hot dog in odd places, however it quickly evolved. The dancing snapchat hot dog became a true icon of social media.

### I LOVE THIS WOMAN AND HER CURVY BODY



This meme began as another ironic mockery of a social media user. Author Robert Tripp posted a photo of his wife with an extended caption "appreciating" his "curvy" wife. Buzzfeed picked up the story which quickly grew into a debate regarding the pat on the back the author felt he deserved. Photos soon populated Twitter of "I love this woman and her curvy body" accompanied with photos of various round memes.

## A step toward privatized schools is a step back for education

by Elizabeth Hopkins  
Asst. Match Editor

While school was out for the summer, the Florida House of Representatives was working overtime, and the debate over public education reached a boiling point. Governor Rick Scott signed a sprawling 278-page bill, HB 7069, featuring provisions directing more public money to independently-run charter schools than ever before. The bill's passing sent shock waves across the teaching community, with the Florida Education Association (the state's largest teachers union) going as far as to say the law will "starve our public schools and shortchange the teachers and school employees struggling to make our schools work."

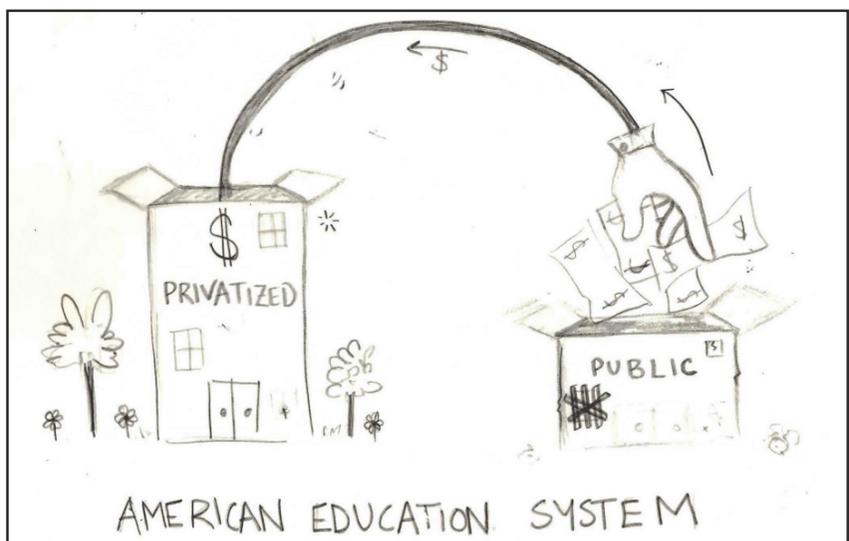
HB 7069 was highly contentious, garnering widespread opposition from Florida teachers unions and educators. The "Schools of Hope" program, made by House Republicans to combat the issue of underperforming public schools, was particularly lambasted. Under new rules, charter schools can open their doors within 5 miles of traditional schools with persistent D or F grades, directly competing with the public system. The "hope" schools will be operated by charter school companies, taking advantage of a newly established pot of money weighing in at \$140 million. Newly failing public schools can also apply for funding through this program, although only 25 out of the 93 schools received extra money for the 2017-2018 school year. "We have tried everything else. It is our moral responsibility to make this move and provide this option for our kids," said Representative Manny Diaz.

Many legislators, on the other hand, consider this an act of unabashed corporate welfare disguised as a step in the right direction, hijack-

ing millions of dollars. While public schools are managed by a district and an elected school board, charter schools often lack a strong mechanism for oversight. Charters, although technically controlled by non-profit organizations, all operate in different ways, sometimes entering contracts with for-profit companies. In one instance, owners of Academica Corp., our state's largest charter school management company based in South Miami, collected almost \$19 million a year in lease payments on school properties. This industrialization seems evocative of the prison industrial-complex, where social systems become money pits for the wealthy with the approval, if not, outright support, of government entities.

Furthermore, privatization has implications for already marginalized students, with the charter system bearing a history of serious issues. According to the Center for Civil Rights Remedies at the University of California, Los Angeles, African-American students are four times more likely to be suspended from charter schools than white students. The same report found that disabled students are suspended two to three times the rate of nondisabled students.

Studies also show that students who attend charter schools do not necessarily surpass public school students academically. Data First, part of the Center for Public Education, even confirmed that students in 37 percent of charter schools performed significantly worse than if they had attended their neighborhood public school. In Florida, less than 1 percent of public schools received F's last year, while about 3.4 percent of charter schools did. At the same time, a report by The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) showed math and read-



GRAPHIC BY SUZANNE BROWN

ing skills have improved for all levels of public school students since the 1970s, with the greatest yields for minority and disadvantaged groups. Moving forward, we can absolutely make public schools work for Florida, and it is a total fallacy that corporations can just walk in and clean up.

The law as currently drafted will compel students at struggling schools to enter a parallel private structure, weakening the public system even further. Students who do not meet certain standards, often due to problems out of their control, such as homelessness or severe poverty, typically are not even allowed to attend charter school.

"We're bringing in external forces in these school districts and asking them to turn it around," Representative Larry Lee said.

"You need people in those communities to buy in." Clearly, charter schools are not inherently "better" than their public counterparts, and there is no reason to believe that these com-

panies have a higher capacity to teach typically African-American or Hispanic, disenfranchised youth. Siphoning investment away from the public sector is not only unwise, but ultimately impractical. For, what happens if these companies eventually leave, or even fail? Building within the community is key to sustainable change, which is a strategy so many legislators refuse to acknowledge.

Simply put, privatization is not a better deal. Without access to crucial resources, vulnerable students may become marginalized in their own communities and left behind at underfunded public schools. The state of public education in Florida is not a "hopeless" cause, yet we still see investment into all our schools looked upon with cynicism, especially by our elected lawmakers. Florida House Representative Barbara Watson put it best when she said, "This is not a school of hope. This is a Band-Aid that has a sore festering underneath it."

[student voices]

## Patriotism Under Trump: students discuss the shift in perspective



Tiffany Dingley, Grade 12

"I feel like there is a really big divide in our country, so [I] either feel that it [patriotism] has strengthened a bit or that it has been completely lost... A lot of values have been kind of twisted or at least have evolved, something that many would argue are not as solid as they were before... In general, a lot of political discourse has turned hostile, so that just highlights a lot of room for growth. In current times, I would consider myself less [patriotic], at least regarding this current administration, just because I do not feel it represents what the United States could be or should be. The current administration... does not really align with my personal beliefs."



Sarah Maloney, Grade 11

"I'd say I would be more patriotic. I think that right now, or at least in the past few decades, is one of the best times to be an American and one of the times to be proudest. It is hard to say, but it seems like ever since the start of Trump running for president he has been trying to bring something out in all of us and really get us all proud to be us again."

"I would like to be patriotic, but it is very hard when the national government is doing things I do not agree with. Therefore I don't want to support the national government. I am definitely less [patriotic] because I don't like [Trump]."

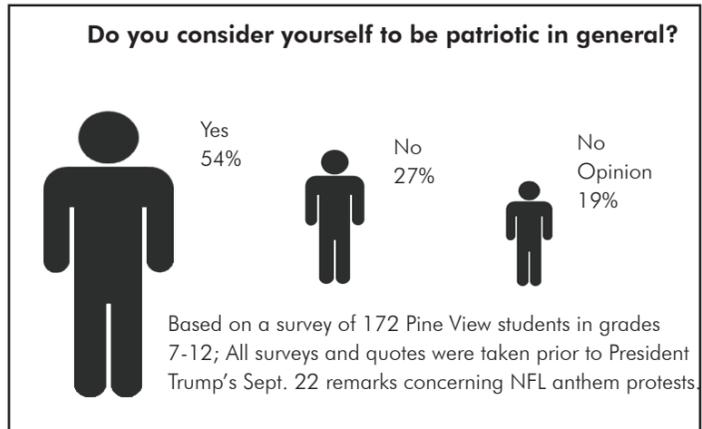
"I believe that this country has become more patriotic without the limitation that [we] were put under from the Obama administration. I have always been as patriotic as I could. I love this country. I would die for this country. I feel like generations nowadays see patriotism as an overwhelmingly negative thing that oppresses them which is truly the dumbest thing I have ever heard."



Michael Waite, Grade 11



Nathan Radovich, Grade 9



# The Torch

PVTorch.com

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# Trump's stance on Pakistan

## Changes in policy risk violent fallout

by Sana Rahman  
Editor-in-Chief

Addressing the nation, President Donald Trump made his first public statement Aug. 21 in regard to the war in Afghanistan. The plan he outlined was twofold: increase troops in Afghanistan and take a harsher stance against Pakistan in order to curb the influence of terrorism. Although the steps he has decided to take in Afghanistan are an unfortunate necessity, by isolating Pakistan, he may in fact be creating more problems.

The United States has a history of intervening in the name of democracy, overthrowing existing governments and leaving a far more unstable country behind. This pattern can be seen through the situation in Afghanistan. According to an article by The Atlantic, the United States Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) helped build up the Taliban back in the 1980s in hopes of countering the Soviet Union's influence in Afghanistan. In response to the 9/11 attacks, the United States helped overthrow the Afghan government as a result of increased Taliban power, implementing a supposed democratic government that now serves more as a figurehead than a strong political power.

Although intervening in nations where the United States is not welcomed tends to have negative effects, the United States made its mistake back in the 1980s, meaning we as a nation still have work to do in Afghanistan. Thus, Trump's decision to stay involved will, in the long run, be more beneficial than leaving a country that has no political structure nor belief in their government to fend for themselves.

However, Trump's inflammatory rhetoric and staunch stance against Pakistan is what may backfire. The United States and Pakistan have a long history together, one that originated in the Soviet-Afghan War. Back when the United States became involved with Afghanistan in efforts to expel the Soviet Union, the United States utilized Pakistan to help support and fund the Taliban. Brookings Institute's research explains that when Taliban members



U.S. Marines are deployed in Afghanistan by the Trump administration's decision.

PHOTO PROVIDED BY THEHILLTALK.COM

and Afghanis began to flee, Pakistan, alongside Iran, were the countries that were geographically able to take in the largest number — five million people.

Due to the influx of people, terrorists cells in Pakistan began to grow rapidly, creating an even larger security issue within the region. According to one Reuters article, the

United States has given roughly \$1 billion of aid to Pakistan every year since 2007 in hopes of showing its support for the Pakistani democratic government. Trump's plan threatens this relationship.

Trump made it clear that he expects the Pakistani government to crack down on internal terrorism and to stop harboring radicals. If the nation fails to meet his requirements, Pakistan could lose one of its most important allies — the United States.

Although terrorism and violence in any country is unacceptable and should be condemned, providing such an ultimatum runs the risk of increasing anti-American sentiment. While Pakistan has a democratic government, this does not mean that the government has complete control over the acts of terrorism that occur in the northern part of the country. Taliban members, individuals whose violent ideology is based on the western world "corrupting and stealing" what they believe to be theirs, may

very well distort Trump's statements to show their audience that the West is inherently against them, and thus garner more followers.

Furthermore, in his speech, Trump propped up India, speculating that India will help in the fight against Afghanistan. This statement is hard to believe, for, if India becomes heavily involved in the war in Afghanistan, they too may begin to see the Taliban unleash violence in their nation. Considering that Pakistan-India relations have been unstable for decades, Trump again runs the risk of hurting the crucial relationship that the United States holds with Pakistan.

Lastly, Trump's stance against Pakistan could prove to be economically detrimental toward the United States' presence in Asia. According to The Washington Post, in light of shrinking United States support, Pakistan has turned to another global superpower — China. If the United States wishes to maintain its worldwide stature, it needs to carefully pick its partners in various regions, and by taking a harsh stance against Pakistan, Trump may have just lost one the United States' most important partners in the Muslim world.

If the Trump administration truly wants to counter the influence that terrorists have in the region, they must focus on the economic empowerment of the impoverished. Increasing trust between the people and government is a process that ensures the possibility of job opportunities, making this the only way to decrease the Taliban's influence and ensure long-lasting stability within the region.

Trump's stance against Pakistan could prove to be economically detrimental.

## [staff editorial]

# Advanced classes increase pressure for younger students

"The true measure of success is not to outdo others, but rather to outdo ourselves," is a timeless adage first coined by former principal Steve Largo. Although these lines are espoused time and time again in forums and over announcements, students at Pine View find themselves lost in their interpretation, often taking more challenging courses simply because everyone around them does the same.

In order to ascertain the student body's opinions on this issue, The Torch interviewed several high school students who have chosen to remain anonymous.

In recent years, courses meant for students of higher grade levels have been offered at lower levels, paired with an already advanced curriculum, making it increasingly problematic. Although this is of benefit to students who want the academic challenge and are capable of handling it, or who are seeking a specific course of study, too often their peers see this as a norm they must follow.

"I got into advanced math and I just tanked. I'm not a math person ... but because I'm good at it, [guidance] put me in [Course III prealgebra]... I wasn't ready for that," a tenth-grader said.

For instance, if an eighth-grade student enrolls in Biology I Honors — intended for ninth-grade instruction — he or she is immediately propelled into Chemistry I Honors as a ninth-grader.

This leads many to take Algebra II with Florida Virtual School, as the course is a co-requisite to Chemistry I Honors, requiring them to spend even more time on courses intended for later years of study.

"I'm very grateful to be able to be on par with my peers instead of being ahead of them. In a normal class, I wouldn't be challenged," one ninth-grader said. However, while select students excel within the

Pine View should be wary of offering accelerated courses to students because those around them are doing the same.

demanding rigor of this track, too often many fall short.

In short, students become confused with the high difficulty and end up blaming teachers for being unfair, parents for urging them to take these courses, administration for encouraging their enrollment and themselves for their shortcomings.

"Pine View was supposed to be a great environment ... catering to gifted kids because they had different needs than everybody else. Somewhere along the line, Pine View lost that," one tenth-grader said. "It's not an environment for learning, it's an environment where

you get squashed under pressure ... You feel like you're about to explode."

While academic challenges are not an absolute evil and certainly help students grow, there is a limit. Too much coursework forces students to attempt to accelerate when they should avoid overachieving at the cost of their mental and physical health.

"I feel like a lot of students don't know their boundaries when it comes to their own capabilities," one eleventh-grader said. "I was going to take AP Chemistry because I love chemistry, but I also recognized that given my current academic rigor I can't excel in it even given my penchant in it. I see other students forcing themselves to fit into other classes despite a lack of interest because it looks better on their application for college."

"I think that being surrounded by talented people who seem to be able to do anything, to be invincible, makes me feel as if I need to do the same things as well," another twelfth-grader said.

Pine View should be wary of offering accelerated courses to students who feel pressured because those around them are doing the same. Whether it is a prerequisite exam designed by teachers of the specific courses or bringing back teacher recommendations, there should be effective limits to prevent students from going in over their heads.

## [a column]

# The outreach of intersectional oppression

The plight of people of color (POC) in America is a pressing issue under our current political climate, that takes root in inter-sectional oppression. The two main perpetrators—racism and prejudice—target minorities, especially individuals of mixed heritage. When your parents are of divergent racial identities, oppression takes on a whole new meaning.

The various sources of stigma must first be analyzed in order to effectively explain that oppression, starting with racism. Racism, as defined by Merriam Webster, is "a belief that race is the primary determinant of human traits and capacities and that racial differences produce an inherent superiority of a particular race." It stems from the linkage of physical characteristics (i.e. race), political strife and societal conflicts of interest between varying groups.

Advocates for equal opportunity will argue that the key to combatting racism lies within communities of color, where uniform distribution of racial stigma unites POC. Nothing in the social organization of man, however, can be considered equal.

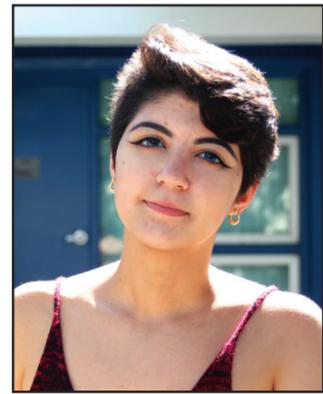
Therefore, what does it mean when, as a POC, your own allies stand against you? Race, a concept often too elaborate to comprehend wholeheartedly, now meets prejudice.

As defined by the Merriam Webster, prejudice is a "an adverse opinion or leaning formed without just grounds or before sufficient knowledge." It is derived from stereotypes but it does not necessarily take root in race, and unlike racism, it can be positive as well as negative. It is unique to an individual and often bases itself in absurd notions of who a person is, grounded solely on trivial matters such as gender or practiced religion.

White individuals can be both racist and prejudiced, but POC, most prominently black people within these communities, are not subject to the same statement. The 2014 film, "Dear White People," explains the subtle lines of difference between terminology as such: "Black people can't be racist. Prejudice, yes, but not racist. Racism describes a system of disadvantage based on race. Black people can't be racist since we don't stand to benefit from such a system."

The implications of this statement organize themselves under gray areas. Biracial individuals, especially those with European ancestral roots, are recipients of both racism and prejudice since their physical features are often times a blend demonstrative of that mixed heritage.

Being "white-passing" is a privilege in our society. White-passing is



Melissa Santoyo, Opinion Editor

a phrase reserved for individuals of mixed ethnic heritage who appear to be Caucasian, whether it be due to skin color or hair type. Depending on which side of their mixed ethnic heritage biracial individuals tend to relate more to in comparison to the other, stigma leaves a generation of mixed people bereft of a concrete identity. Affinity Magazine writer, Kaelan Doolan, speaks out about her own personal experience dealing with this sort of issue. "This is where the problem comes in; mixed people are constantly split into halves. Those of lighter complexion than may be labeled as Caucasian, but still be far more in touch with their Af-

White individuals can be both racist and prejudiced, but POC aren't subject to the same statement.

rican-American heritage. When people view those of mixed race by only one side of their genes, they are only seen as one half of a single whole."

As the white-passing child of Cuban

parents, this divide directly impacts my personal identity. White-passing is seen as a detriment in tight-knit circles of Latinx communities, wherein individuals that lack the atypical attributes of their heritage feel targeted for not conforming. At times, lack of fluency in a parents' native language is also an aspect that merits criticism from POC with heavy prejudice. However, due to the prevalent racism currently coursing in the sociopolitical circles of America, being white-passing and fluent in Germanic-based languages is an advantage.

Trapped between categories and grappling between identities, both biracial individuals and those who simply don't possess the features typically belonging to their corresponding "race" find themselves in a struggle. They end up checking a race box that they might not physically attest to on a job application. Implications of unfair pay grade derived from the systemic inequality so heavily ingrained in American society hang heavy over their heads, as fellow community members of color fall lax in their role as allies.

# The Verdict



**Build On:** We're happy to see students getting involved in global issues and helping the people of Haiti.

**Turmoil in Venezuela:** We're sad to see the citizens suffer through current political upheaval.



**New Teachers and Administrators:** We're happy to see all the new friendly faces on campus.

## (Ful)Bright Future

### Pine View alumna given scholarship to teach at Polish University

by Riley Board

Asst. Editor-in-Chief

Pine View Alumna Molly Benkaim, class of 2013, did not know that a position as a teaching assistant three and a half years ago would take her across the world to Poland as a Fulbright Teaching Assistant. However, the graduate of Arizona State University recently arrived in the Polish city of Łódź to work with biotechnology students.

The Fulbright Scholarship program funds three types of winners: there are Fulbright Scholars, professors who are given money to teach at a foreign university; there are Fulbright Researchers, people who pick a project and get to work on that project in another country; and there is the Fulbright English Teaching Assistant program, in

which Benkaim is participating.

Benkaim became involved in the program through Arizona State University (ASU), where she was studying for her master's degree. "ASU is one of the top producers of Fulbright Scholars so they do a lot of advertising for the program on campus," Benkaim said. "It's some-

thing that I saw all around and researched on my own. I've been teaching in some form or another for three and a half years so I knew that any program where I could continue to

do that was something that I would be interested in."

At ASU, Benkaim received an undergraduate degree in biochemistry and a master's degree in medicinal biochemistry. "I taught throughout my undergraduate and my master's," she said. "I was a teaching assistant for a freshman



Class of 2013 alumna Molly Benkaim poses for a graduation photo. Benkaim, a Fulbright Teaching Assistant, will be working with biotechnology students at the University of Łódź in Poland for nine months. PHOTO PROVIDED BY MOLLY BENKAIM

**"It's been a lot of information thrown at you at once, but every Fulbrighter here is amazing."**  
**Molly Benkaim, class of 2013**

literature course for a semester, and then for seven semesters I was a supplemental instructor at ASU working in biology classes," Benkaim said.

She arrived in Poland Sept. 19 and spent a few days in Warsaw before traveling to the Medical University of Łódź, where she will be teaching a variety of classes. Upon arriving, Benkaim spent several days in orientation, where she learned about the Polish education system. "It's been a lot of information thrown at you at once, but every Fulbrighter here is amazing,

well-educated, well-spoken and incredibly interesting, so it's been a lot of getting used to the location, and getting to learn as much as I can about these other Fulbright scholars," Benkaim said.

Benkaim will have a variety of responsibilities at the university. "I'm teaching an English class to master's students of biotechnology and teaching a class in presentation skills," she said. "I'm also doing a variety of cultural workshops and working in a translation center where I help with the writing of various things from the translation

of student reports to grant applications to researchers trying to get their papers published in some sort of English journal."

Benkaim will be in Poland for nine months. In regard to her journey to the Fulbright Scholarship and Poland, she said, "I knew I enjoyed being able to help other people, but I wasn't sure that teaching was exactly how I wanted to do that. But I ended up being offered this job as a supplemental instructor, figured I'd try it out, and three and a half years later I guess you could say that I enjoy it."

## Pine View student gets involved in Florida politics

### Twelfth-grader interns with congressman Vern Buchanan

by Zach Bright

Web Editor-in-Chief

Following her passion for politics, twelfth-grader Megan Creedy interns for Representative Vern Buchanan's DC Congressional Office. From contributing to the district's hurricane preparation or courting calls from constituents, she is up to the task.

According to Creedy, she has always had an interest in government. "I was looking for a way to get more involved in our local government, and I had heard about internship opportunities at congressional offices across the nation," she said. After calling up Congressman Buchanan's office in April of last year, she was invited in for an interview and soon after was accepted for the position.

As an intern, Creedy has many responsibilities. She interacts with the Congressman's constituency, opens cases with federal agencies and attends events on behalf of his office. One project that she has recently worked on is Florida's 15th Congressional District's "Hurricane Book," a compilation of emergency contacts, shelter locations and natural disaster precautions for the Sarasota-Bradenton area. "Florida is having a rather intense hurricane season right now, so I hope this project will prove useful for the district," Creedy said.

Creedy's internship experience has provided her with great exposure to the world of government. "I love rolling my chair into my boss's office and just having a discussion with him about topics that affect our district, homelessness, upcoming special elections and the amount of students in our county that have free or reduced lunches, to name a few important issues," Creedy said. For her work in the 2016 year, she was recently promoted to Deputy Internship Coordinator, which means she now leads the internship program and schedules each intern while still assuming her previous responsibilities.

According to Creedy, she has gained more than just experience



TOP: Twelfth-grader Megan Creedy shakes hands with her boss, Danny Bilyeu, the Congressman's Field Representative. Creedy has been an intern for the Congressman's office since April 2016. BOTTOM: Creedy poses with alumni Margo Schnapf, Eliza Quillen, Kathryn Kochevar and Florida Congressman Vern Buchanan. PHOTOS PROVIDED BY MEGAN CREEDY

during her time in government. "The Congressman and his office are also great mentors; whenever I have dilemmas about career paths or college decisions, they're always there to guide me," she said.

Creedy said she wants to

continue to follow her aspirations in government into the future, wherever they may take her. "I'm not sure exactly where I would like to go yet, but I do know that this field is one that interests me immensely, and I want to run with my passion," she said.

## [a column]

### Learning today from yesterday's mistakes

Hey everyone,

With the year just getting started, I think I should take some time to introduce myself. If there is one defining characteristic that my readers should know about me, it's my obsession with coffee. You can almost always find me with an iced coffee in hand every morning, and at Starbucks studying after school.

With that said, as a Pine View student, there is no doubt that the epicenter of all after school activity is none other than the beloved Starbucks on Tamiami. On any given day, you can step foot into that coffee-lover sanctuary and see a handful of students hurriedly completing homework and teachers sitting on couches grading papers. As I was talking to some of my fellow Pine View Starbucks regulars, we began thinking about a time before Starbucks on Tamiami ... We did work at home? With no coffee?

By this point, you all probably think I have an unhealthy and unnecessary attachment to Starbucks, and you would be right, but I do have a point. Over the last year, I have realized that as time goes on and we progress, whether that be through gaining driving privileges, finding new hangout spots or finally getting a good grade in an impossible course, we often cannot remember the time before these "standards" were in our life. We become unable to deal with a shift backwards, forgetting how we dealt with the problem in the first place.

As a senior, after completing my strenuous and stressful junior year, I came into this year with the mindset that I refused to be put under the same pressure and workload as last year. Why would I want to digress and go back to a harder time in my life? Yet, the moment senior year began, I saw myself back in my



Sana Rahman, Editor-in-Chief

old patterns. I saw college application deadlines fast approaching, I sat back and compared my scores to my peers, and my stress level was back on an incline. It seemed like I had blocked out that difficult period of my life, freezing and forgetting

**"It's never fun to go back to difficult, inconvenient times, but in the end when we face problems head-on, without a negative outlook, we are more likely to walk away with a feeling of success and pride."**

how I dealt with the issue. So on enough, I realized that if I wanted to actually enjoy my senior year with the people who I have spent the last seven years with, I had stop whining about how

this year was supposed to be "easier" and come to the realization that I would, in fact, have to work just as hard as I have in previous years.

It's never fun to go back to difficult, inconvenient times, but in the end when we face problems head-on, without a negative outlook, we are more likely to walk away with a feeling of success and pride.

So the next time I complain about my inability to drive to Starbucks on Tamiami, I'll make sure to think back to my pre-driving and pre-Starbucks-on-Tamiami days and think, "Hey, I can get through this."