



THE COLUMN

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Editor-In-Chief: Mahalia Saint-Eloi

Ikon 5 Presents to WHSAD Makerspace

Written by: Kevin Garcia



On Monday, May 3rd WHSAD's Makerspace students and interns learned about the award winning design firm IKON 5 architects. IKON 5 was formed back in 2003 and over 80% of their projects are for higher education clients all around the United States. During this presentation Arvind Tikku, managing Principal of IKON 5 architects, Joseph Tattoni, Design Principal of IKON5 , and Harjit Jaiwal, marketing director, gave us an overview of understanding of IKON 5, the process to be hired for designs services, and the design process. Mr. Tikku said "there's a very important" aspect to architecture: winning the job.

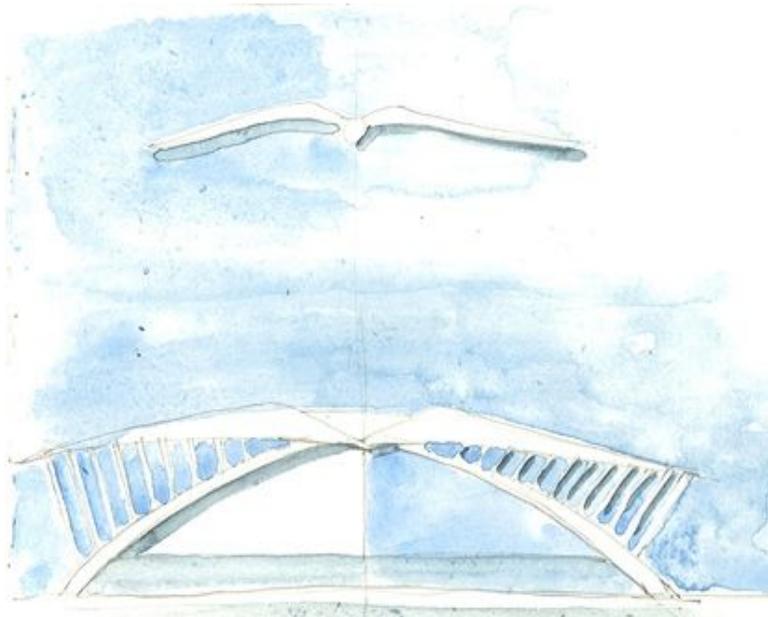


Rendering of Student Union at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University in Daytona Beach, Florida

IKON 5 architects is located in Princeton, New Jersey and New York, New York. Each one of their projects has a designated staff from the beginning to the end of their projects which are also led by different types of architectural principles. The firm has professional architectural services such as master planning, feasibility studies, programming, and interior design for each of their projects. IKON is a small architectural firm with approximately 30 staff members and consists of talented project managers, designers, and interns. Each one of its staff works collaboratively; they verify each other's work to make sure it satisfies the client and their vision. IKON 5 has collaborated with 70 major public and private organizations all over the United States from New York public buildings, different universities, retail sellers, and more. One of the major things they believe is that every organization is different so each of their designs is unique to demonstrate the history, culture, and mission. IKON 5 is an award winning firm that has won awards from Cooper Hewitt, Chicago athenaeum, and more.

IKON 5 is a firm that hustles for projects. They have many methods on how to find work for their daily bread, such as tracking websites, researching and reading, and networking with consultants. The staff at IKON 5 tracks websites from public city and state buildings, universities, and the federal government to see if they post some sort of advertisement for a job they cut out for. They rely on different consultants they have worked with in the past to collaborate in a project together and also they have been recommended by these consultants to do other projects. For research and reading they keep up with news, politics, and the economy. When reading they find out if the federal or state governments pass a budget for new building. In business pages they look for advertisement for new commercial work, and lastly if someone is trying to have a new project that doesn't have anyone involved in.

After the research stage, they submit their qualifications and proposals, engage in interviews, and, if all goes according to plan, have a project kickoff to start the magic of the design process. I learned that the design the collaboration is one of the most important things between the teams. Here the group is collaborating to design what the client is asking them to design for each design the client's vision IKON 5 makes a visual from them. Something that called my attention to IKON 5's designs is their use of material. They use watercolor due to its quickness, which means it's easy to work with, and it helps the user understand something that could be abstract on a more visceral level, allowing the client to get a nice visualization of the vision for the project.



**Watercolor for Student Union at Embry-Riddle
Aeronautical University in Daytona Beach, Florida**

Dimitri Brown-WHSAD Senior

On May 4, 2021, architecture firm, "Ikon 5," shared with us projects and spaces the firm has worked on over the past decade. These projects include public libraries, professional schools, academic residential halls, corporate interiors, and cultural buildings. When comparing each project, you would notice that each institution is designed differently. Arvind Tikku, managing principal of Ikon 5, explained this by stating how each project is unique. In addition, Mr. Tikku also mentioned that the architecture must reflect the institution's mission, culture, and history.

Another topic, covered by Director of Marketing and Business Development, Harjit Jaiswall, was how you can simply learn and win a project which is also a part of Ikon 5. Mr. Jaiswell informed us of several tactics the firm uses to learn about a potential project. One tactic that they utilize is tracking websites, specifically city and state websites and about which projects organizations are in need of assistance. Ikon 5 also network with a team of engineering consultants with whom they've worked in the past in order to receive an opportunity to work on a new project. Research and reading plays a very important factor in the firm's search for work as well. When following both architectural news and politics, it allows you to figure out if the government passed a budget of money for new buildings. Aside from the learning aspect, the general steps of finding work involve the firm first requesting qualifications, section committee reviews, and proposals. After these three steps are complete, firms are then given a chance to connect with the potential client by means of an interview. Following the interview, if you are chosen based on the firm's ideas, that leads to negotiations and contract signings and then the project kick-off.

As a student studying architecture, being able to see how Ikon 5 manages to help its clients with their design process is quite interesting given that fact that they approach projects completely different from other design firms. While using the landscape of a space to convey the identity of a client or institution, you have a completely unique space. I would like to use this design process for a current project that I'm working on called the Information Kiosk at Snug Harbor so that it can have a distinctive look that represents Snug Harbor.



**New Jersey Institute of Technology Makerspace,
Newark, New Jersey**

Raymundo Gomez-WHSAD Junior

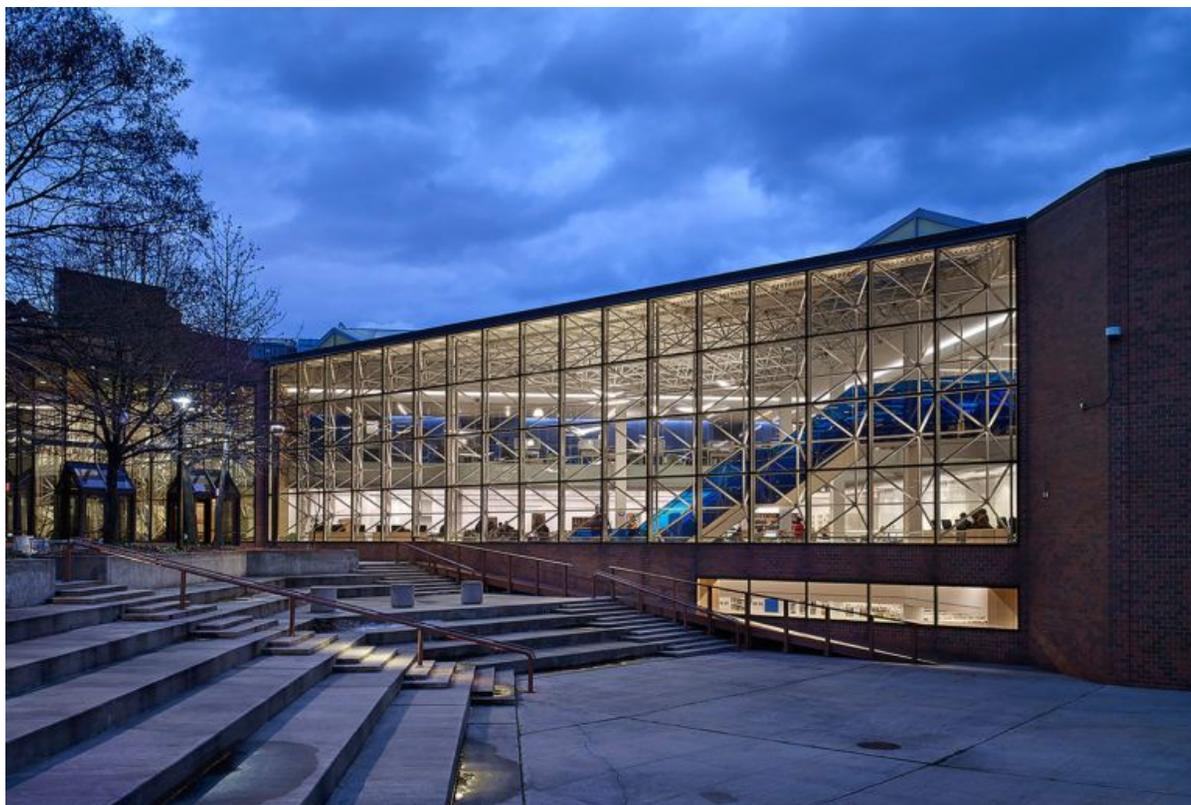
The takeaways that I learned from today's meeting is that a building can have a lot of meaning to it. A building can represent the mission and identity of a client. Architects need to plan a lot of their designs and how those designs should be. They would wonder how do you start from the beginning, how do you think of the project, and how do you go through the process. As an architect, it could be very amazing because there probably will be a place that has nothing on it, but you could make it be something else. What I really like about being an architect is that there would be an empty space right in front of you, and you can have the power to make something spectacular right in front of you. You could have many ideas about what it could be, and many possibilities. Once you have a plan on what it should be, you will have an opportunity to see your creation grow each day. When the building is finally constructed, you will have the chance to see your creation finally created. The building would stay there for a long time, and other people would also see that creation. The budget is one of the most important things in mind in architecture. A client only has a limited amount of money and should be used wisely. During the presentation, they said that if a client spends \$20 dollars on something, then the architects would make that something to be \$40 quality for the client's view. Also, architects need to have a plan to make all the budget counts and to make the plans to be an excellent quality.

On Monday, May 3rd, we at Makerspace were pleased to welcome the Ikon 5 architects. Their members included Arvind Tikku, Joseph Tattoni and Harjit Jaiswal. The team of Ikon 5 joined us to share an inside look into the architecture experience as well as the process of getting hired at Ikon 5 and the design process itself. Ikon 5 has 2 firm locations, one at West 25th Street in Manhattan and the other in Princeton, New Jersey. Their work specializes in master planning, feasibility studies, programming, and interior design. Over 80% of their projects are higher education clients throughout the country, and they take pride in their fully collaborative efforts in all their projects. Each project is led by principals and a dedicated staff to ensure the quality of the work is of designer excellence.

Ikon 5 is a very impressive firm as it is a relatively small firm compared to the other big names in the industry, but their presence is felt just as much. They shared with us the entire process on how a project is started, how they are contacted by the contractor, how they brainstorm the concepts, how they enter negotiations and then later begin the design process. Next they shared with us some of the more interesting projects they have worked on and are currently working on. They later held Q and A's with everyone in Makerspace as we asked them more specific questions about the design process and how everything is accounted for. My question was about their library project, specifically what ramps and other routes had they planned for customers with disabilities and/or are in wheelchairs. They explained to me that this is one of the first things they account for in the design process as they hold massive amounts of respect for those individuals and work to ensure comfortability for those with accessibility needs as they don't want them to feel like outliers or have accessibility simply be add-ons in the design. The team at Ikon 5 are very experienced and capable architects who take pride in their collaborative efforts to produce designer excellence and leave an impressionable impact on the communities with which they work.

Gilver Bueno-WHSAD Senior

Today Makerspace Studios had the opportunity to meet with Ikon 5, an architecture firm, and it's representatives, Arvind Tikku, Harjit Jaiswal, and Joseph Tattoni. The representatives of Ikon 5 began showing Makerspace participants case studies. Being able to see the case studies of the professionals and understand where we can improve our own work on our current projects helped in a major way. Understanding the simplicity and complexities in certain areas showed us how we should go about the creation of case studies.



Also, we learned how understanding the amount of people involved and how important each of the jobs of everyone involved is essential. Everyone has a job and every job provides help in a crucial way for the project and for the building or creation in question. One thing worth mentioning is the use of watercolor through floor plans and sketches. Something eye-catching and not normal for what we've seen and assume of architects. It's a small change from the standard and bland idea of architecture that some people think of. As Arvind Tikku and Joseph Tattoni spoke over a video showcasing some of the importance of jobs and Ikon in general there was a lot to take in. The main topic of the video which was showcased were some of the projects done by Ikon.

One of the projects they have worked on is Medgar Evers College here in New York. They've added and showcased some of the additions to both the interior and exterior of the CUNY school. The stairways and the open areas for study and conversation were beautiful and showed serious consideration for those using those spaces. The large open interior areas allowed natural light and connections among people. Additionally, the exterior parts of the building took light into consideration in a much larger way, with panels that reflect and allow light to shine both inside and out for no dim areas. This is a smart idea for those who prefer to study outside with nature but struggle with too little or too much light to handle. After ending the discussion the three representatives opened the floor up to those with questions.

WHSAD and Newtown Creek Alliance Garden Project

Written by: Britney Carryl

Made up of WHSAD students and staff and members of Newtown Creek Alliance, the gardening group undertook the process of turning something neglected into something respected.



Over the last couple of weeks, students and teachers have been working on a garden project. They had transformed a weedy piece of land into a beautiful site. I was one of the students who took part in beautifying it. Students from all grades were involved. During the meets we got to talk to different people and just have fun. During the pandemic, students weren't able to meet in person. This limited them from doing hands-on projects like building models, community service, and much more. Over the last couple of months, schools were reopened and that opportunity slowly came back. Below is some of what we accomplished and did during the last couple of weeks.

The first day, we gathered together at the back of the school and discussed what we were going to do for the next couple of weeks. We were separated into groups. After that, we introduced ourselves to get to know each other's name and the basic stuff. Each group had a section to themselves to work on. We pulled the weeds out of the ground to clear the land. As we were working on that, other students would go around the school and gather rocks. These would later be used to form the pathway inside the garden. We decided on a curved pathway, and we laid the rocks out accordingly. The atmosphere we worked in was nice. Everyone was kind to each other. No one felt pressured. It was a time of enjoyment and work.



Mr. Giambrone (right) and Yu Feng Zhou (left) spread some of the mulch in the pathway.

The next meeting, we started gardening portion. A few instructors from Newtown Creek Alliance showed us how to plant the plants. They showed how to get them out of the pot, how far to dig according to the size of the plants, etc. We focused on planting and later took a lunch break. We ate pizza and talked to one another. After we finished eating, we set the sprinklers up to give the plants water. There wasn't much to do after so we ended kind of early. We wrapped things up by saying our goodbyes.

The last meeting, we got a truck full of mulch. A lot of mulch. Mulch is usually used to help moisturize the soil, keep the soil cool, suppress the weeds (stop them from growing and spreading), and to make the garden look even better. To transport the mulch from the sidewalk into the garden, we used trash bins, and then we leveled the mulch. During this activity, a lot of students were needed. Some would shovel the mulch, others would lift/fetch the bins, and the rest would spread the mulch out in the garden. After we were done doing this, there was still a lot of mulch left. The teachers decided to place the rest around the school. Since it was like 80 degrees outside, we were dying. I'm joking, we were sweating a lot though. We finished a whole box full of water bottles. It was hot. While students waited for bins to return, they joked around. They even built a shovel tower. I witnessed that legendary moment with my own eyes. We went back to work.... We spent the rest of the afternoon doing so. After we were done we went home.

Mr. Giambrone's Perspective

This project required a lot of teamwork and dedication. As we continued to work throughout the weeks we grew together as a community. It took some effort to plan it. Members of the Newton Creek Alliance and the WHSAD green team partnered up to make all of this possible. The idea was first introduced back in January and submitted to the Office of Sustainability. It was accepted and given funds. The soon to be garden would be a place where students can learn, people can relax, and for other environmental purposes. It was made specifically for the monarch butterfly, for when they would migrate. Being able to finish it was truly a blessing. Thanks to everyone who participated, we now have a beautiful garden in the community.

Planning for the WHSAD garden and green space renovation all began earlier this January when the WHSAD Green Team met with members of the Newtown Creek Alliance to discuss a grant proposal that would be submitted to the Office of Sustainability. It was not long after when we found out the good news that we were awarded with enough funds to turn our green space into a beautiful place of learning and growth! Our proposed plan then went into effect as we held several more meetings to coordinate the ordering of a variety of plants and when the planting would take place. It did not take much effort to recruit helpful WHSAD students to assist with the planting of what would soon become a beautiful garden. The efforts of the students and staff of WHSAD were truly on display during the three days of renovation. All participants really came together to make this space not only something they could be proud of, but a place that staff and students could utilize for educational

purposes. For instance, some of the plant species that were used in the green space certifies the space as a Monarch Waystation where monarch butterflies could rest along their migratory journey. Besides this being an exciting thing to have on our campus, it also provides science teachers with an opportunity to educate students why this is important and what this provides for our ecosystem.

This past academic year was not the easiest due to the effects of COVID-19. Both staff and students were unable to really partake in hands-on, educational activities. However, the renovations of this green space truly provided that opportunity for all participants to communicate and work together, in-person. Not only did this provide participants with this opportunity to socialize and work together with others but the students, little did they know, were learning about different plant species while also being exposed to some skills needed for effective planting! Needless to say, a couple of “green thumbs” were born as a result of this project.

The goal for this project was always to provide a space where teachers, of any subject, could bring their students outside for class. Any teachers, science or not, can freely teach their class outside or use the plants to educate their students on specific topics like the functioning of an ecosystem, photosynthesis, biodiversity, and many others.

I am proud of the work that the WHSAD community was able to do and I look forward to seeing the many benefits that this garden provides to our community.



Ilona Iberle's Perspective

Do you love gardening? I don't, lol, but the two days that I did gardening with my school was actually fun for me. It was fun because I got along with some people there and talked to them and made some friends. We helped plant around the campus, and made the school look healthier and more pleasing to the eye. On the first day we were put into groups and each group had a section for us to pick up all the grass that was on the ground so it could be just dirt all around. While we were doing that, another group was getting the bricks so we could make a little pathway in the small garden. Then on the second day we were put into groups of 2 seniors, and 1 freshman. I bonded with my group, and it made gardening feel like more of an activity than a chore. The third day we had to dig and place mulch around the campus. It was a lot of work but we finished it by the end of the day. Around the campus, it looks a lot more green, healthy, and alive. The activity made me want to come to school and get more involved in things. It was an opportunity to get to know my peers and make our community look better.

Julian Agosto's Perspective

When I was pulled out of Ms. Newton's class to help work on the garden I thought to myself “ It's nothing that special. I'll just pull out some weeds and get it over with.” But little did I know that it was a pretty cool experience. I met a lot of new people, made a ton of new friends and I've gained experience on how to actually work. And with this whole experience, I saw that there were a ton of new things to this school that I've never known. I didn't even know there was a Garden!

But when the time came after hours of work and hanging out with new people I realized I wanted to do this some more. So I asked Ms. Spaziani and she said I could join. I even got my own shirt. So what can I say I've gained out of this whole experience? I could say I've gained some new friends, a new path to where I want my career to be, and a shirt.

Silas Rodriguez-WHSAD Senior

The WHSAD garden renovation was a long and at times, difficult project to finish. It involved seniors, freshmen and teachers all getting their hands dirty for nature. First we had to strip the area clean, by removing all overgrown weeds, unwanted plants and trash. After that was done we had to turn the dirt and make the area somewhat level so we could carve out a pathway. The design of the garden was created by some of the students on autocad which entailed a small curved pathway going through the middle of the garden. To do this groups of students went around the school with a shovel and wheelbarrow to take the bricks surrounding the trees. After we finally were able to get all the bricks into the garden



of which there were way too many bricks, we dug up the intended pathway and laid the bricks. After that we turned the soil on each side of the pathway and were able to get to planting. Everyone got down and started digging holes for the delivery of plants we had gotten. Despite it looking like the end, the hard work was still yet to come. The next work day after we got all the plants situated with a sprinkler system, we had gotten a dump truck to drop a huge pile of mulch right on the corner of the school. We had so much mulch we were able to put a healthy amount around the entire school with plenty to spare. When they first dumped it we had a group of people shoveling mulch into empty trash cans so we could spread it all around the garden. After our garden was done there was still a huge pile that looked almost untouched. So we decided to load up as many empty bins as possible and take them around the school in the hopes of making the pile disappear. In the end we did succeed and several teachers cleaned up what remained. And at the end of the day there was a pretty nice looking garden left behind. Ironically, despite what seems like an indictment of the work, all of this was a form of therapy for me. For over a year, I had been so isolated from the school that being in there with teachers and some of my closest peers from the years at WHSAD, felt euphoric in a way. It felt like life before covid as we joked around and ate pizza together. All this compounded even more so by the fact that we graduate in a matter of weeks. But I'm happy that I could spend just the littlest of moments with my peers, even if that consisted of gardening which is something I am not very good at.

District 33 Council Candidate Interviews

Written by: Kole Mclaurin

Disclaimer: All candidates were contacted for an interview, and these interviews do not represent any endorsement on the part of Williamsburg High School for Architecture and Design.

Before I began writing for The Column, I wasn't very interested in, or even aware of the importance of civic engagement and local politics. However, since I've begun, I have seen the importance of these things and now know that the people that are elected to local government are instrumental in bettering the community. Facing problems, big and small, head-on, our elected officials can make life just a little bit easier for everyone.

April Somboun-aprilsomboun.com



April is one of 8 candidates for the council of Brooklyn's 33rd district. She brings an entirely different and unique perspective than the other candidates to the table. She highlights her experiences growing up saying, "I've been poor, I've been on the brink of not having a home, we had nothing...something that differentiates me really is that I understand the struggles of individuals and working families." As you can see, growing up in poverty, Somboun has seen the side of New York that not many of her peers have likely experienced first-hand. Because of this, she has become an advocate for the inclusion of everyone and knows just how important things such as affordable housing, education, jobs, and safer communities are to people in the city.

“On my contract with District 33 is my commitment to my community, and that is being 100% transparent. Having a website that has everything and being able to communicate and have a one-stop destination for information,” is what April says when asked how she plans to achieve her goals. Somboun is also willing to compromise in order to achieve the greater goal, using transparency and communication as ways to benefit the residents of district 33. She is also the only mother in the race, which gives her even more perspective. This gives her an understanding that could allow her to better adhere to the needs of people in the communities. She knows that she needs to work side by side with residents in the field to really be effective in inspiring change.

Benjamin Solotaire-bensolotaire2021.com



Benjamin is another one of the 8 candidates for the 33rd district’s council position. One of his main goals is to communicate with the residents of the community in order to properly address problems such as affordable housing and environmental issues. When asked about his main goals, his response is, “The first thing I would want to do is go into the community even before I’m sworn in and talk more deeply about what their goals are and what they want in the district.” He also believes that it is important to find a consensus on these topics and to him this means that you know exactly what you want and how to get there.

Benjamin has also spent the last 5 years in city government and spent the prior 5 years volunteering, which have given him a good background as a New Yorker and a public servant. When elaborating on how his experiences in volunteer work have better equipped him, Benjamin touches on some of his work with children in the community. He states, “I spent a couple years working with New York Cares, mostly doing reading tutoring for kids either in public schools or homeless shelters...once a week I lead a team of 4 to 5 people that would go to homeless shelters and read to kids from 5 to 10 or so.” Benjamin then adds on that they would do other things than reading like just talking or playing games or going outside. He also touches on his time spent with formerly incarcerated people at the Fortune Society, stating, “Well my direct job wasn’t service to the formerly incarcerated, I was there and exposed to them and their stories, and heard a lot about the trials and how hard it was to get your life back on track as somebody coming out of the criminal justice system.” His past experiences and exposure to different types of people have helped condition him to be better prepared for the council position.

Elizabeth Adams-www.elizabethadams.nyc



Elizabeth is a big advocate for protecting the environment. She says that one of her first goals would be addressing the climate crisis in the city, especially in black and brown communities that have been impacted disproportionately. In addition, Elizabeth says, “Our neighborhoods in the 33rd District, particularly have a long history of environmental abuse along Newton’s Creek and along the waterfront, and there’s been a lot of toxins in our soil and our air,” and she then goes on to say, “I want to address our climate justice needs through more green space, more parks, community composting, more green roofs, and looking at ways that we get off fracked gas, fossil fuels, infrastructure and shift to renewable energies.” As you can see she wants to find solutions for specific problems in the city. She then adds that she wants to bring in younger people and people from different generations to aid the solutions for these problems in their communities.

Elizabeth aims to inspire change by bringing community organizing into policy making, because they see first-hand what is going on in the communities and would be able to give insight on how to improve things. With her being the youngest person in the race, Elizabeth’s roots in the district and overall activist’s approach is what differentiates her by giving her more perspective on certain issues in the communities. She also believes that it is important to find new ways to reach people in the communities and become more accessible, whether it be on social media or any other platforms, because she says government has cut itself off for too long. To be exact, Elizabeth states, “Social media is expanding in all sorts of different ways. We have lots of ways that people have connected online, through Whatsapp groups, and all these different spaces that I think are really incredible tools for communication and for organizing and activism on local issues.” Elizabeth shows an eagerness for utilizing different platforms of communication to assist in improving the effectiveness of her solutions for the problems in the communities.

The Pilecki Project–Witold Pilecki’s Great-Grandson Speaks to the Group

Written by: Mahalia Saint-Eloi

On Saturday, April 24th, WHSAD had a meeting with the creators of The Pilecki Project, a project about the life of Witold Pilecki, a Polish resistance leader and fighter who volunteered to go to Auschwitz, one of the worst Nazi concentration camps. Pilecki worked undercover to recruit people for his resistance group. The Pilecki Project enables students to interact, communicate, organize, and realize projects with one another while learning about Mr. Pilecki and how his story inspires people to this day.



Each of WHSAD’s participants answered the following questions about the presentation:

Can you talk a bit about what you’ve done in the Pilecki Project?

What did you take away from Krzysztof Kosior?

What did this meeting leave you thinking about?

In what ways do you think you could help those around you similarly to what Pilecki did?

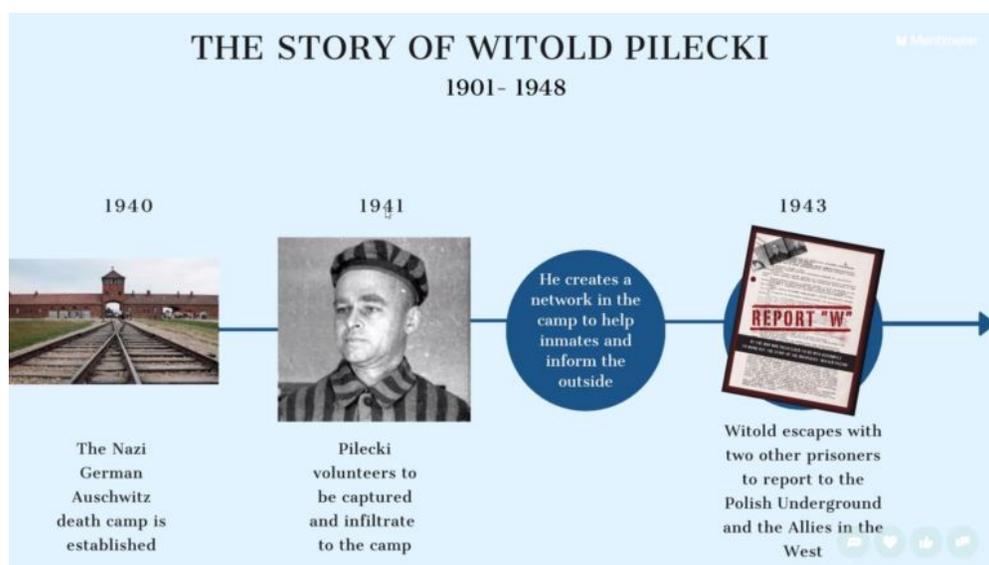
Jessica Como, 10th grade History Teacher

It was an incredible experience to hear Krzysko Kosier share personal family stories about his great grandfather, Witold Pilecki. What I took away from that Q&A session were the ways in which Pilecki’s memory is kept alive, the importance of telling his story, and how we all in a way share a similarity with Pilecki.

This meeting allowed us to think about Pilecki as an everyday human being in addition to the hero we all recognize him as. This meeting left me thinking about the characteristics I and others in my life share with Pilecki. We could all emulate Pilecki by speaking out about the injustices we see occurring in our lives today. It is especially important to be an upstander in order to address bullying, racism, injustices, and intolerance.

Yu Feng Zhou, senior

So far, we have only met two times for the Pilecki Project, so we are only in the introductory phase of this project. The first assignment's purpose was to share out and show something from my background. Sadly, I couldn't find much, but I managed to share out about myself. The second assignment was to create a timeline that consists of two events Witold Pilecki took part in or two crucial moments of his life, two important events from my country's history, and four moments from your family history that I find most important.



So far, we have only met two times for the Pilecki Project, so we are only in the introductory phase of this project. The first assignment's purpose was to share out and show something from my background. Sadly, I couldn't find much, but I managed to share out about myself. The second assignment was to create a timeline that consists of two events Witold Pilecki took part in or two crucial moments of his life, two important events from my country's history, and four moments from your family history that I find most important.

One of the timelines participants in The Pilecki Project analyzed.

Through Koiser, I was able to hear Koiser answer some questions that doesn't have official answers to. On top of that, Koiser talked about this project as a good way to preserve the memories and the history his great grandfather has contributed to. While preserving his will, this project helps to see how students want to learn more about how his great grandfather did things to help out.

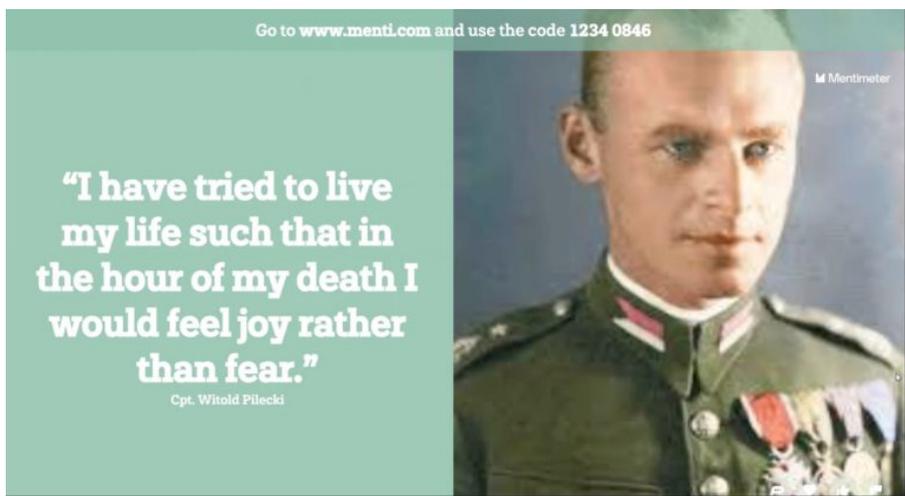
This second meeting left me thinking about what traits does a normal high school student like me have in common with Pilecki and what traits are wanted by a normal high school student like me?

Even though there are no events like a war taking place, there are still people suffering due to various reasons. For homeless people, people like me can spread the word about there are places like a soup kitchen that offer some temporary shelter and get fed. For those who are discriminated against in public, people can and should stand up to give a hand to those who need it. Heroes like Pilecki aimed to provide a world for everyone to have a peaceful life, a life with the least amount of suffering. We, as the future generation in this world, should help preserve the peace these heroes started.

Dimitri Brown, senior

When Krzysko Kosier spoke with us on April 24, 2021, he mentioned how his great grandfather's legacy affected both his great-grandmother and grandmother. Given that they were relatives of Witold Pilecki, it was hard for them to find jobs because of this. They were often treated poorly and fired from their jobs leaving them with little money to feed their children. As years went by relatives would suffer less from Witold's actions and people would become more respectful and nicer towards the Pilecki Family.

This meeting left me to think about Witold Pilecki's life. How different it could've been if the Nazis and U.S.S.R hadn't invaded Poland, or if he hadn't gone to war. Another thing I thought about after the meeting is where is the location of Pilecki's body? Is there any trace of his body left?



For me personally, I can help those around me by simply taking the initiative to make myself available to those who need my help, offering advice to others, and displaying selflessness. In today's society, I believe that it is necessary to use these tactics to assist others because each and every one of us goes through tough times. Because of this, we each need someone who is present when issues arise in an effort to encourage one another. People like me who are able to provide support when needed can sometimes influence humans to do the same.

Writer's perspective on the meet:

Witold Pilecki's story was extremely inspiring how this one man was able to do something no one else would've dreamt of doing at the time, especially being of Polish descent. Quite frankly, this has to be the most heroic act Pilecki could've ever done by volunteering and staying at the concentration camp for almost three years. He was able to witness firsthand the horrible, unspeakable things the Germans were doing to the Jews, Poles, and other Europeans that Germany occupied. I hope that throughout my lifetime I am able to help others the way Witold Pilecki did. I believe that we have to be supportive, sympathetic, and willing to support one another so that we can grow and change, especially when it is not just one's life but so many others' lives as well.

Origami with Make: STEAM

Written by: Sheena Luke



At WHSAD, students are exposed to various activities which are often integrated into classes.

Among the activities that students have been participating in recently is origami with Make: STEAM educator, Kate Yourke. Beginning on May 6th, this activity was included in the daily schedule as Ms. Yourke collaborated with students to create pieces and teach design applications. In order to realize the work students produced, Ms. Yourke taught a 4-class curriculum organized by aspects of origami.

During Class 1, students were introduced to Yin and Yang, a Chinese philosophy that complete opposites hold a position to balance each other out, even when not being generally connected. During this first-class students were introduced to symmetry and opposition in artwork, as well as Notan, a Japanese design principle used by artists that creates unique designs by combining negative and positive space. Along with this, students were encouraged to create their own Notan Design using paper or through Google Draw.

During class 2, students explored the origins of paper, as well as cut and reverse folding patterns. Patterns such as the valley and mountain folds are illustrated to permit movement while preventing wrinkling or distortion of the paper between the folds.

Class 3 tackled biomimicry- the creation of products that are designed based on processes and creatures found in nature. Furthermore, the use of origami in engineering was briefly described, with students learning how the Starshade and Miura-ori fold were constructed using origami. A major focus of this class was tessellations or repeating patterns of shapes. These patterns are often found in design but can be found in everyday objects, as well.



Cases of origami being used in various methods are further expanded on in the following examples. Among the various ways of utilizing origami, researchers at the University of Oxford used origami to develop a biocompatible aortic heart stent that could be inserted into the artery and then expanded to improve flow. Another example of origami is its ability to produce highly effective energy-absorbing structures by using creases to control deformation.

Class 4 allowed students to create and submit developed miura-fold origami pieces.

Students created multiple pieces of Notan Design origami as well as Miura-fold pieces during this four-day activity. Student work is an active showcase of all they've learned and taken away from the event. In addition, students provided feedback on their experience and what they learned.

Jennifer Segundo Ramirez

We had an origami class in Ms. Sabic's room led by Ms. Yourke. Her origami classes were spectacular. On the first day, we were shown how to do many different cuts in a small paper. We should glue it to the opposite side. When everything was glued down, it looked very cool. The next day, we did a lot of folding. We started with the little index, large index, and paper. We had to fold the paper in half and make it into a v shape. Open the paper and according to the pattern, there is a pattern that is mountain and valley. Mountain means the first V that will pop out and valley means it goes inside.

When I did origami, it was hard at first but mostly the second day was the hardest. The folding and getting the pattern in the V and making sure the pattern kept going. This took me many tries to do. I didn't know how to get it right on the first try, so I kept practicing after school. Therefore, when we had the final project it would be easier and faster. So origami isn't something easy and you should have a lot of patience because you will not know right away how to do it correctly. It takes time and many tries and practice. It was so hard for me because I felt like I couldn't do it and wanted to give up. But Ms. Yourke kept telling us to not give up and to keep trying because it isn't something that you will be able to do so quickly, it takes patience. She even told us, it would sometimes get hard at first when you don't have any practice in it but when you practice over and over, you start to get the hang of it. It wasn't easy for her at first either. So we should have a lot of patience and don't give up, no matter how hard it is. With the more practice you get, it gets easy.



Julian Agosto

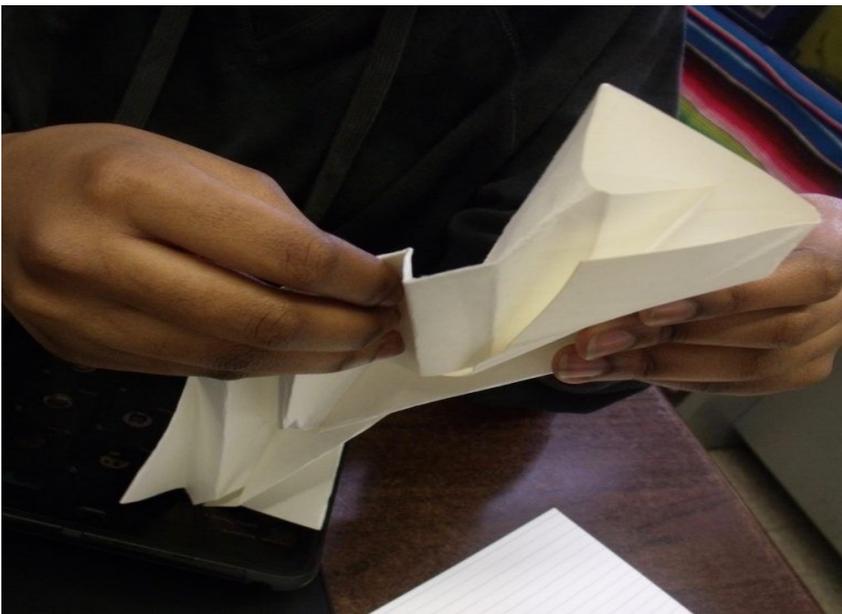
I was a part of the origami lessons with Ms. Yourke and to be honest it was pretty fun to do. It gave me time to have my eyes off the screen and do something physical for a change. It taught me a lot about how paper works and how architects see things. Even though I wasn't too good at origami, Ms. Yourke helped me through it, and it was pretty cool to look at. Doing origami with Ms. Yorke gave me a chance to socialize with my other classmates. There were different types of illusions that I could do for hours if I just got good at it. Overall it was a good experience and I would totally recommend doing it.

Alfredo Cuenca Valle

The thing that I have learned from doing origami is that it is really fun to do and you can find a way to make something amazing. You get creative with a piece of paper. Many colors can be used with this origami. Many different shapes can be done as well. It can help you relax as well and de-stress. It's something you can do everything and you can try for yourself.

Jarely Flores

Origami was invented by the Japanese about a thousand years ago. Origami, also called paper folding, is the art of folding objects out of paper to create both two-dimensional and three-dimensional subjects. It's made with paper folding, which is an art form from Japanese culture. What I learned from doing origami is to be aware of what is happening in the moment and focus, developing abilities and skills such as coordination, perspective (eyesight), and patience. Once you get the hang of learning origami, it can be a healthy benefit and a hobby for people. Origami is a peaceful and calming way to help you relax. Doing origami can be difficult/stressful because looking at a structure for paper can look easy but once you do it with your hands and trying to get it right it's hard. It will take time for people to get used to it or maybe it can be easy for others. JUST REMEMBER DON'T GIVE UP. When I do Origami with paper it is hard but once you ask for help or maybe look at the way and movements they do, it will get easier.



As an intro to positive / negative space in design, I folded the paper into a mountain fold to make it straight and equal at the end of the paper. Then I did two equal cuts on the paper where you folded the paper, to make a big box. Once I cut the two strips with scissors, I had to fold and unfold in order to make it a box. After doing that I pushed it to the negative side which is inside of the paper. The positive side is outside. Then on the negative side, you will see the shape of a box. You can do another box on top of the first box but I stress but it didn't look the same as how the teacher did it the first time. I kept trying because I didn't give up. the second time I forgot to do it so it stressed me out again. I didn't want to waste time making a second box on top of the other box, so I decided why not make a big box and make it look like it's getting smaller. To make it look like a pattern. Something I should do next for another project such as this is have patience because it takes time.

Junior, Lawrence Pierre, Designs Mini-Golf Hole Focused on Climate Change

Written by: Silas Rodriguez



WHSAD has partnered with Two Trees, a realtor and management company in Brooklyn, to help design a temporary mini golf course as well as an urban farm just north of Williamsburg's Domino Park at North 1st St & the East River. WHSAD, however, wasn't the only group involved in the design as the project is a collaboration between many local artists, not for profit organizations, and climate change activists to all create elements of the course.

The 15,000 square foot 18-hole miniature golf course at the site of the proposed River Ring project is meant to be a golf course with the theme of climate change and humans overall impact on the environment. The name of the course is "Putting GREEN" and while ticket prices are still to be determined, the course is on track to be opened this summer at affordable prices for all community members. All proceeds from the course are meant to be put towards the community. According to the Two Trees CEO, Jed Walentas, "We're thrilled to build these spaces at no cost to taxpayers, with all proceeds going straight back to the organizations who are on the ground every day fighting this existential crisis." Links to articles about the project have appeared in both Brooklyn Paper and TimeOut

To speak more about WHSAD's experience working with Two Trees, here's an interview with Junior, Lawrence Pierre, who was tasked with designing a hole for the golf course.

1. What did you work on, and how did you get involved.

I had the opportunity to work on a design proposal for a mini golf hole for a climate change project in Williamsburg. The hole is meant to be fun but also informative about the effects of climate change and methods of water mitigation, specifically in waterfront neighborhoods. I was motivated to make an enjoyable course and a course that pushes people to take action in stopping or at least slowing down the effects of climate change.



2. What did you find particularly interesting about the work?

While conducting research on waterfront resiliency, it was interesting to see all the ways storm surges and erosion can be mitigated. Some of the solutions to mitigate storm surges and erosion include floating wetlands, rip rap revetments, and reef balls.



Floating wetlands - container gardens that float on the surface of the water.



Rip Rap Revetments

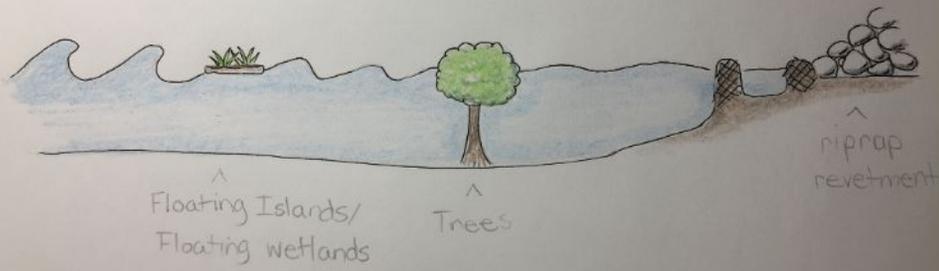


Reef Ball

3. What were some challenges you encountered in the process?

After I submitted the project to Bridget McCrum from Two Trees, she gave me feedback and clarified what they are looking for in the design. I had found myself focusing too intensely on the increase in erosion and floods climate change causes, rather than the designs to mitigate or prevent it.

The waves get smaller as they pass through the various storm surge mitigation systems.



As Lawrence research different mitigation methods, he incorporated such strategies into sketches.

5. What did you learn working on the project and how could you apply these skills in future work?

I learned much about climate change. For example, I learned that rip rap revetments (layer of stone placed over fabric across coastline) are a good way to mitigate shoreline erosion as they can last for 50+ years, according to Water Resilience Program. I can use what I learned from this project to design even more informative/ sustainable structures in the future.

6. How did your classes at WHSAD help you on this project?

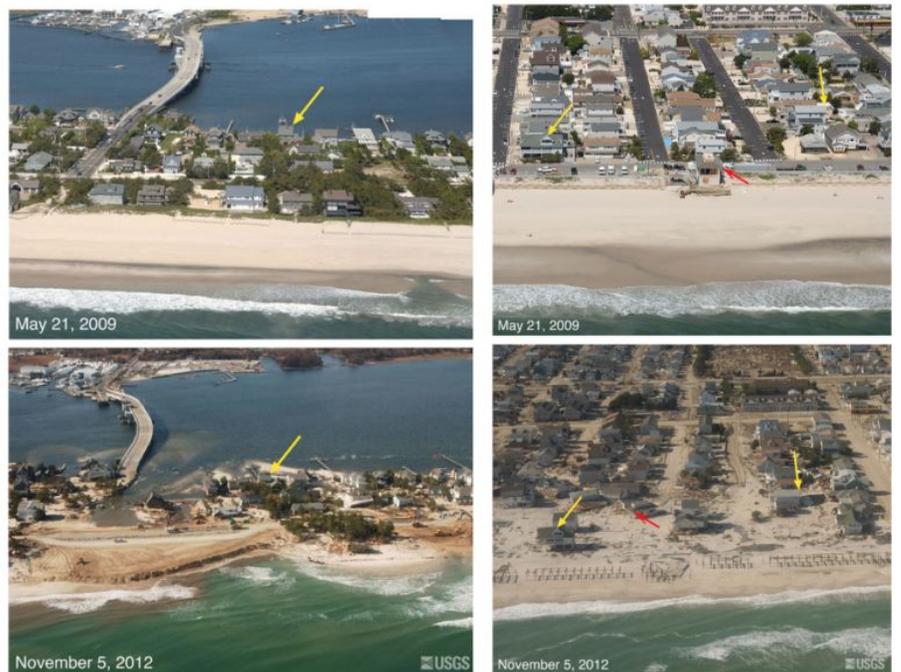
I used a program called Miroboard that I had recently been introduced to by my Architecture and Design teacher, Ms. Moos. This program helped me, my classmates, and my teachers communicate our research, ideas, and designs.



Schematic Design - Isometric View 2

4. How did mentors assist you in realizing your vision for the project?

Mr. Rodriguez and Ms. Moos helped make the project presentable. They also helped with research such as mangrove trees and how they can break up waves especially during a storm surge (link to video on simulated mangrove trees). My classmates Raymundo Gomez, Kevin Hernandez, and Deselle Thompson also helped with ideas and research. One idea we had was to simulate a flooded neighborhood on one side of the hole and an unscathed neighborhood on the other side hole. The unscathed side would have all the water mitigation plants and structures while the destroyed side has nothing.



7. What are you looking forward to about golfing the hole you created?

I'm looking forward to seeing my design on paper come into life. I'm also looking forward to how the architects at Two Trees refine the project into something that is more informative and fun.

Student Personal Essays

Running in NY, Ecuador, Anywhere.

Written by: Pedro Astudillo

I started running in freshman year. It started as a way to try to lose weight and rapidly progressed into an actual passion. When sophomore year rolled around, things were going pretty great. Coming out of a good freshman year, I couldn't wait to see what that year had in store for me. Races were going well, practice was amazing, and we had a really amazing team with fantastic runners. It seemed like this year was going to be the best year yet. Then March came. Next thing I know my sophomore year was already written out for me. No more seeing my friends, teachers, or my teammates. After a brief period of sadness and self evaluation, I decided that I could regain control of my future. I had gained a lot of knowledge about running throughout freshman and sophomore year, and I decided to make a training program. I got two of my teammates to put their trust in me, and we got to work, starting in June and finishing early September. After countless miles and runs and track workouts, the work had paid off. Although the summer was an absolute blast, junior year was still a big question mark; no cross country season nor school. I kept running to try to maintain my fitness. I had fun little challenges like my monthly 5k and 10k or any other fun challenges to keep running fun. Then by February I went to Ecuador.

Ecuador is very hot, and extremely humid during the winter, not to mention how much it rains during that time of the year. Running was interesting there. It was hard to breathe due to the humidity and the heat. This left me with having to run often at night, and I would never run outside of my gated community. This made it very difficult to run because the neighborhood wasn't very big, just a little bit over a kilometer around. I kept going nonetheless, just kept on running with high hope in my heart that we would be back to racing soon. Then I received a text from my coach saying that we're going to come back to racing again. This was the best thing I could've heard. I got more motivated and stayed going and now we're back to it.

Throughout the times of uncertainty, people just kept on wondering: why did you keep on running not knowing if we would get to normality? I'll tell you why. I kept on running because I wasn't running just to get faster for races or anything like that. Rather I had built a passion for the sport of running and I wanted to dedicate myself to this sport for as long as I could. Without knowing if we would come back or not I still had the hope in my heart, but I knew that I didn't need an official race to run my personal best. My runs are for me, and so I felt that I would do my own time trials and little meets on my own. And I'll say this, if you commit to anything I think it really changes you as a person. Once I committed to this sport, everything I did revolved around it. All my decisions were to try to be a better version of who I was when I started. I also think that the most important part is to keep it simple and have fun because there are moments of frustration in anything we love, but we need to take a step back and make sure to remember why we enjoy it so much in the first place. For me, it's because running makes me push myself and to prove that I could do so much more than what I think I can. That is my story.

Returning to Reality

Written by: Mildred Amofa

It's been a year since Covid's anniversary and I personally don't think it's getting any better. All we can do is learn to live safely with a deadly virus going around. Personally I have been trying to do things differently everyday so that I am not stuck in an endless cycle of misery. That's why the returning of sports has been a life saver for me because I didn't think I would get the chance to participate in them ever again. Even though covid is around I feel like being able to leave my house and go workout with my friends is refreshing. Being able to play a sport makes me feel like life could be normal again.

Getting a good workout and then a nice stretch after to make sure I don't wake up sore the next day is something I've missed. I've been inside my house for a year gaining covid-19 pounds and this changes everything. Being back in the gym just brings back so many memories when we didn't have to worry about wearing a mask and just being normal. I feel as if the team still has some work to do on getting back to the



team feeling because it has been a year since we all played or even talked. I asked a few of my teammates, “ how does it feel to be back playing volleyball?” and their answers were similar to mine. The feeling of being overwhelmed is taking over everyone (we don't want to mess up). Karla said that's “ she feels overwhelmed because she feels all eyes are on her and she feels pressured to be great because things aren't the same.” She's right things aren't the same it's been a year since most of us even touched a volleyball, let alone interacted with people. Some of us having been thinking about our future since we are going to college soon and playing volleyball is a big part in that. Playing volleyball in college can lead to sport scholarships but also a lot of stressors. For instance Zandria, a student from bp said “ volleyball is a hobby for her and it keeps her mind active”, but she is at a point where she doesn't want to play volleyball in college because it's not her passion but it's something that brings her joy in the short term. In her words “ being back feels like I never left”, there's a nostalgic feeling to playing volleyball because of all the memories we shared as a team. Even with the nostalgic feeling there's also feelings of disconnect like we're together playing as a team but we're not really together. The disconnect feels like the beginning of quarantine where you had to plug in your phone to stay connected to people.

The team is getting to be more like a team as we get closer to playing games and the more practices we attend. Over the last few weeks it seems like everyone feels more comfortable and aren't stressing as much over the little mistakes and are playing volleyball because they enjoy the sport. Even though there feels like a disconnect right I believe when we continue working with each other that will no longer be the case. I still don't know how games are going to work but I'm just excited for what's to come and the rest of the team feels the same way. PSAL is just doing a trial run for sports and if this goes well there's going to be a season in the fall and that makes me happy. Volleyball is a sport I enjoy playing even though I have my off days I can let all the frustration, anger and sadness on the court without feeling like my emotions are getting in the way of me being great. Adjusting to being back in the school is going to take some time but all we can do now is try to get back to normal with the virus still lingering.

Getting on Payroll

Written by: Matthew Zaczeniuk

Getting on payroll is a great opportunity to make a nice sum of money throughout your high school years and create connections with different teachers and outside people. Getting on payroll can be a bit of a challenge though, and when going through the process of applying for it we, Matthew Zaczeniuk and Marc Joseph, realized that it was hard to know everything that we had to do. While the amazing teachers and staff at our school provide the students with great resources, such as exact steps for getting on payroll through the school website Whsad.org, it can still be difficult to know exactly what you need to look out for (hint emails!). So we decided to create a guide for new and upcoming workers to help streamline the process and for you to start getting paid as soon as possible. And while we and the people at school are here to help, understand that the process takes a little bit of time, and it's all up to you how fast you want it to go.

To get started head to your assigned guidance counselor and let them know you want to apply for payroll. They will either tell you what to fill out or help guide you to someone who knows what documents are needed to be filled out, which there are quite a few of. To get on payroll you need to sign many documents including the most important ones being an i9 form and either a blue working paper or a green working paper. These papers will dictate how much you will get paid and what types of work you are eligible for, and it takes a while to complete the process of receiving them, including the document being mailed to you by snail mail. For clarification, a blue working paper is given to students under the age of 16 (14-15), while the green working paper is given to students 16 and over. These papers take time to fill out, but remember that this process all depends on you, and the faster you sign the documents presented to you the sooner you can get your blue or green working cards. To receive the working paper, you will have to talk to Ms. Wilson who will need to set up a meeting with you and another official. During the meeting, you will have to show legal documentation such as a passport or a birth certificate, and a doctor's note, which should be from a physical you had to take. This step should have already been discussed with you and Ms. Wilson. After everything is checked over and approved, you will have successfully received a blue or green working paper. The paper is sent by mail and may arrive at your home within a week or more. If you have sent anything by mail or heard stories from your parents, then you would know how long it may take for documents or papers to arrive. After your paper arrives, you will have to sign the paper with a signature. If you have never signed something, then this is a great first step into adulthood! My advice would be to just put your initials. Be creative with it, but I recommend practicing on a separate piece of paper first. After you sign your paper, you will have successfully completed the first step. You see what I mean? This process is a pretty lengthy one, but if you stick with it we believe it will be a breeze to complete.

After you get your working card you will need to look for internships, mentorships, and other working opportunities. If you struggle with this process, it's a good idea to look on the school website for current working opportunities or ask senior architecture teacher Mr. Codio, as he will always have something for you or direct you to other teachers or staff in the school. If you go the route of looking for opportunities on the school website and you find something you are interested in, you can email Ms. Wilson to see if you are eligible for the internship or if you're in person see her at room 139. If you are eligible for the internship, she will walk you through all the forms you need to sign, and from there the process begins again, but hopefully you will have been through it the first time and know what you need to do.

From our past experiences, having to go through the process of filling out pages of paper work just to be able to get on payroll was something completely alien to us. I know when I first started, I was shocked at the amount of paperwork I was responsible for and needed to fill out. My mom laughed at me saying that it doesn't get any easier from here, and that she has to deal with this all the time as an adult. It was hard keeping track of everything I needed to fill and sign not only due to the fact that there was so much paperwork, but also because my school emails get flooded with notifications from google classroom, and I would have to 'star' or remember all the important emails related to work. One big mistake I made during this process was not paying attention to my emails. I would get emails saying what forms I needed to complete, and see them like a week since they were sent out. This almost made me lose my spot when I tried applying for SYEP, which is a summer employment program for young adults. That is a completely different process but very similar to applying for payroll, with some additional paperwork that's needed in order to apply. So, if you take anything from this, remember to keep your eyes locked on your email, because the last thing you want to do is to miss an important email and fall into an unfortunate situation.

Fascist Architecture

Written by: Kevin Garcia

In the early 20th century, Fascism started in Italy following World War I. It also started other fascist movements which were influenced by Italian Fascism that subsequently emerged across Europe. Fascism is a form of far-right, characterized by dictatorial power, forcible suppression of opposition, and strong regimentation of society and the economy, which came to prominence in early 20th-century Europe. During this ascent of fascism, a new style of architecture emerged. This particular architectural style resembles ancient Roman architecture. The style is popular for its use of symmetry, a lack of ornateness, and simplicity in terms of the general composition. Buildings were made out of limestone and other stones to be durable and to represent their cultural style to demonstrate power to the generations after.

EUR is a residential and business district in Rome. It's not only known for its residential and businesses but also its historical aspects. In 1938, Benito Mussolini built what at that time was a futuristic city located at the edge of Rome. Mussolini wanted to build “la Terza Roma”, the Third Rome, a rebirth of a great city and an Italian Empire for modern times. This city is described as the architectural embodiment of fascism as it has uniform buildings and rigid grid-plan streets to celebrate order and conformity. This city speaks of a powerful past and a promising glorious future. The building in the center of this city, the Palazzo Della Civiltà Italiana is a building that was constructed to celebrate the Italian people and their talents. Many tourists and even residents of this area say it has a “monolithic starkness”, while it reminds others about the ideology of fascism during its most popular times.



Palazzo Della Civiltà Italiana

During one of the darkest and most brutal times in history, in Nazi Germany, fascist architecture started getting popular due to Albert Speer. Hitler envisioned the unification of Germany through fascist architecture in what he described as "mass experiences." He wanted to contrast locations where more than thousands of citizens had the opportunity to gather and join the patriotism of community events and to listen to his demands and speeches as well as those given by his party. One of the locations that Hitler favored the most was the Olympiastadion, where he gave a speech in which more than 600,000 people attended to listen to him. The Olympiastadion was mainly built for the 1936 Summer Olympics. Another building, Deutsches Stadion, which translated means “German Stadium,” never had its time to shine due to the outbreak of World War II. Designed for the Nazi party rally grounds, Deutsches Stadion’s construction began in September 1937, and its completion was to be during the year 1943; however the construction was interrupted and never finished. Like most other monumental buildings in Germany, the building didn’t reach its peak due to the outbreak of the war.



Palazzo Dei Congressi in Rome



Olympic Stadium in Berlin during 1936 Summer Olympics



Olympic Stadium in Berlin in current times

Pride Profiles

Written by: Elliana Duran

Marsha P. Johnson was a African American gay liberation activist along with being a early time drag queen. Marsha P. Johnson was born in New Jersey then later moved to New York City. Marsha is such an important LGBTQ figure because she truly stood for her movement. At the time it was more prominent that being a part of the LGBTQ community was a mental illness; there were constant police raids, constant threats and abuse, and shunning by society, all abuses which Marsha would constantly experience. But with her strength and passion for wanting liberation, she would remain strong against all of these experiences and held protests to fight for gay rights. Marsha and a friend of hers, Sylvia Rivera, founded STAR (Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries). This organization was to support people of the LGBTQ community who had been left homeless due to the unaccepting community. The Stonewall protest was what started the wave of supporters and a true bond within the LGBTQ community. Marsha P. Johnson is an important role in the community due to her love and passion for a change, spending most of her life helping others while also fighting for hers and others rights. She is the reason June is PRIDE. Even after her tragic passing (July 6, 1992), she has her institutes that are still currently helping those that have experienced the homophobia that still takes place till this day. Marsha P. Johnson was a true hero to the community and should never be forgotten.



Amandla Sternberg is an African-American actress and singer who has taken everyone by the heart. She is well-known for her role in “The Hate U Give,” bringing attention to the truth of living as a black person in this world and also her role in the “Hunger Games”. Amandla is a very outspoken woman and does not fear to share what she believes in. Amandla first came out as bisexual in 2016 when she was 17 but now has come out as gay. “Yep, Im gay.” “I was so overcome with this profound sense of relief when I realized that I’m gay- not bi, not pan, but gay- with a romantic love for women.” Sternberg states. I find it important that she did not fear to talk about her true feelings. There is a stigma that sexuality is a phase which is just completely untrue. In a society where being straight is normal, people of the LGBTQ have to find themselves out, and for Amandla she discovered that she had a romantic love for women and women only. Amandla Sternberg showed that you learn more about yourself throughout time, you shouldn’t feel ashamed if your feelings changed but instead feel happy that you are getting to know yourself more and living your truth. Amandla is a young idol for many, and it is truly beautiful that she keeps the sense of transparency to inspire others.

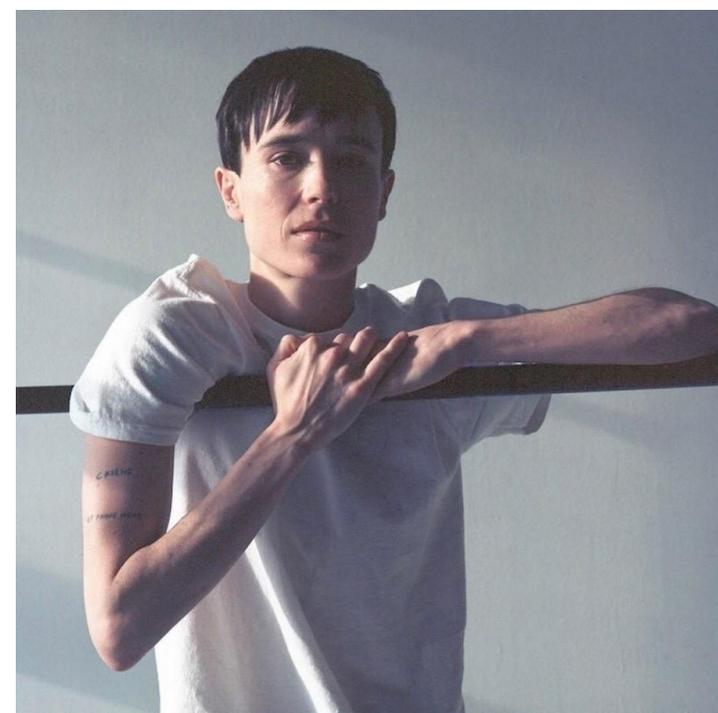




Montero Lamar Hill, who is more popularly known as Lil Nas X, is a African-American rapper and singer who is also a part of the LGBTQ community. I think it was important to include him because of his true impact. As a man who mostly has a predominantly young men audience that was often homophobic, it is important that he came out and does not hide it in any sense. Lil Nas X is not scared to share his views and experiences since coming out. Lil Nas says that he mostly struggled with the homophobia that is prominent in religion which caused him lots of religious trauma. He then came out with his song Montero which he says he was kind of scared of releasing: "At first I was really afraid of alienating my straight fans." "But then it was kind of like, if they feel offended, they were never really here for me. They were here for whatever version of myself they made up in their head". Lil Nas is very close to his fans while he is on social media which creates a great bond between them. With this bond he shares his experiences while still remaining entertaining, so in this process he helping others see that he is just a man at the end of the day no matter what sexuality.



Lauren Jauregui is a Cuban-American singer and songwriter who was well known for being a member of the pop band "Fifth Harmony," and she is also bisexual. She came out on a Billboard op-ed saying, "I am a bisexual Cuban-American woman and I am so proud of it." She says she felt motivated rather than scared when it comes to showing off who she is as she wants to encourage people to find the strength to accept themselves. I think it is important to include her experience because it is quite common when someone comes out. When Lauren came out, lots of fans started shipping her and Camila Cabello (who is straight). Lauren said that during the time of the shipping it was traumatizing. She said it actually played on a harmful stereotype about queer people and caused her a lot of stress. "People thought Camila and I were into each other and that made me so uncomfortable. Like, disgustingly uncomfortable, because I was queer but she was not and it made me feel like a predator." She continues to say that the videos and images that would be shown portrayed her as an aggressor because it was always her that had the "masculine" image and how it portrayed her as trying to turn Camila. These forced stereotypes are very harmful and damaging because it gives into the predator stereotype. Thankfully the rumor has died down a lot, and Lauren has been able to talk about her experiences and educate people while doing what she loves. She has created a safe space for fans of hers to truly express themselves and who they love.



Elliot Page is a Canadian actor and producer who is also a Transgender male. There is no age to have gender dysphasia and Elliot is not shy to say so: "I wanted to be a boy. I would ask my mom if I could be there someday." After cutting his hair, he was perceived the way he finally wanted to be: a boy. But that was short lived when his first big break took place when he had to play the role of a daughter which then went on to be perceived as a girl. During December is when Page posted to Instagram coming out as a man: "This feeling of true excitement and deep gratitude to have made it to this point in my life mixed with a lot of fear and anxiety." Elliot Page is someone who has inspired many to be their true selves. Elliot spent his whole life playing woman roles but has now been able to break that cycle and live his truth. Being stuck in a body you know isn't truly yours is hard and for him to be able to break through those chains and be his true self is truly inspiring and beautiful.

Knicks and Nets Playoffs

Written by: Kole McLaurin



New York professional sports teams have always been great, from the 70s Knicks and the 80s Giants, to the early 2000s Nets. Over the last 8 or so years though, New York teams have been nothing short of mediocre, especially in the NBA and NFL. However, that has changed recently in the NBA. Both the New York Knicks and Brooklyn Nets made the NBA playoffs this year. This was the first time for the Knicks since 2013 and the second time for the Nets in the last 2 seasons. These positive seasons show signs of a promising future for both NY teams that their fans should look forward to.

Now we all knew that the Brooklyn Nets would definitely make the playoffs and maybe even the NBA Finals, with their acquisitions of James Harden and Blake Griffin to go along with Kyrie Irving and Kevin Durant. So, their gentleman's sweep of the Boston Celtics in round 1 was a surprise to no one. On the other hand, not many predicted the Knicks making the 4th seed in the east with a 41-31 record. All season the Knicks were surprising fans with their amazing play and great coaching. Their off-season acquisition, Julius Randle, also surprised fans, becoming a first time All-Star and winning Most Improved Player. The Knicks also added another fan-favorite veteran player in Derrick Rose mid-season. He added a much needed boost of scoring and playmaking off the bench in his second tenure with the team, even managing to pick up a first place MVP vote. Additionally, the Knicks' seasoned, hard-nose coach in Tom Thibodeau also won the Coach of the Year award. He was another integral part to the Knicks' surprising playoff run and it was his second time winning the award, after winning his first in 2011 with the Chicago Bulls in Derrick Rose's MVP season. Although the Knicks had a disappointing outing in their round 1 loss to the Atlanta Hawks, their core players have real potential to make it farther in the following seasons.

Currently, the Brooklyn Nets are facing The Milwaukee Bucks led by last year's MVP and Defensive Player of the Year in Giannis Antetokounmpo in the second round of the playoffs. At this moment, the Nets are up 2-0 and have another game scheduled for tonight. They took their 2-0 lead with a very convincing 125-86 win and they even led by 49 points during the game. The baffling thing is that James Harden went down with a hamstring injury in the first minute of game 1, so the Nets have been running teams out of the gym without their star guard and leading playmaker. And not to mention, the Milwaukee Bucks aren't just any old playoff team either.

They lead the league in scoring in the regular season and have one of the best defenses in the league. They showed their greatness in their first round sweep of the Miami Heat, a team that beat them en route to the Finals last year in the bubble. So as you can see, the Bucks are maybe a top 5 team in the league and that only makes the Nets' victories over them more impressive.



Scouting

Written by: Waylon Gomori



Scouting is easily the best group I have been a part of. The interpersonal and personal skills you learn are very important. You also learn things like proper manners, how to respect people, time management, and perseverance. I think that it's a great opportunity for kids and young men. Scouting is split into 3 groups until the age of 18. There are Cub Scouts, which is for kids ranging from 1st grade to 5th grade, and Boy Scouts which is for kids ranging from 6th grade until you are 18. There are also girl scouts, which is for girls of all ages until they reach 18. They are also working right now to change it to just scouting, so boys and girls will be together.

The most important skill I've learned is the respect for others. In scouting, respect is everything, and they teach it to you from the moment you join. Anything from saying sir or ma'am, or even just saying thank you to someone.

I also really enjoy the camping trips. We do tons of different camping trips throughout the year. We do weekend camping trips, such as back to basics or shooting sports weekend. We do a week-long summer camp every year, which is my favorite. Weekend camping trips are fun, but kind of short. Shooting sports weekend is a very fun one for me. During shooting sports weekend, we get to shoot rifles, shot guns, bows, and also do things like tomahawk throwing. I enjoy it because it's not something you get to do every day, or even at all here in the city. I also like the back to basics weekends we do, because it's just a chill weekend up in the woods. For the back to basics weekends, we leave Friday night, and head to camp. Once we get there we set up our tents, make some snacks, and just hang out for a bit before we go to bed. On Saturday we get up, and sort of just do our own thing. They do some lessons for kids who need them, like knot tying or rank advancement. Or even whittling or totin chip for some of the newer scouts. On back to basics camping trips, you do everything for yourself. If you want food, you have to make it. If you want to go somewhere, you have to get a buddy or a group and go. If you want to sleep all day, too bad. We wake you up somehow. Back to basics is all about honing your own skills, and working on yourself for the weekend. It's up to you what to do, but if you're going to sit there on your phone all weekend, just don't go. Personally, I love cutting wood. Every camping trip that we go on I make sure I get at least 5 minutes to cut some wood. I grab the axe bag, set up the axe yard, and just cut. Once you earn your totin chip, you can use things like axes, hatchets, and saws.



All of scouting is based on you. In Cub Scouts, you have leaders planning activities for you and bringing you places, but once you get into boy scouts, it's up to you. You make your own schedule and your own timeline. The troop does try to assist you in making those decisions, but they can't make the decisions for you. If you want to do no work and just go to the meetings as a pastime, no one will stop you. However, this is a huge waste of an opportunity not a lot of people get. You get to choose how scouts goes for you, which is different from most other places that you go to. If you want to take a certain merit badge, go for it. If you want to do some rank advancement, go for it. You can only go as far as you push yourself.

The Totin chip is an award you earn after proving that you know how to safely and properly use tools like axes and saws. To earn it, you have to have an adult demonstrate the proper use and safety of the tool. Then, you have to show that you understand what that means, and follow those rules when doing it yourself. You have to physically be able to use the tools or else you can't earn totin chip. If you are working on learning how to use the tools and can't do it right away, you just work on it some more and come back when you're ready. There's no time limit to how early you need to earn it or how late you can, but the troop does try to make sure kids earn it as soon as possible. I earned my Totin chip during my first year in the troop. Some kids took a year or two to earn it. It all depends on you and how much work you're willing to put in. My dad pushes me a lot in scouting. He pushes me to take advantage of all the opportunities I'm getting from it, and he really pushes me to push myself to do better. I'm very lucky to have him there to be the extra bump I need sometimes.



In scouts, there are merit badges. To reach eagle, you need to have all the eagle required merit badges done and have a certain amount of normal merit badges done. The eagle required merit badges you have to do, whether it's fun or not, but the other merit badges are up to you. There are over 100 different merit badges to complete, so I'm sure you can find some you like. I have about 10 merit badges done, and I enjoyed all of them. Most of the merit badges are fun. There's shotguns, rifles, archery, sports, there's merit badges for pretty much everything. I had fun with cycling and rifles. For cycling my dad and I did a 40 mile bike ride around all 5 boroughs in a giant bike ride. It was so much fun, and I would definitely do it over and over again. I did rifles at summer camp in 2019 I believe, and it was cool. I struggled with just breathing slowly to control the shake, but I did good. I'm pretty sure I still have one of my targets in my room as well.

The memories I have from scouting are crazy. Crazy in a good way though. I have so many. I could talk for days about everything I've done and the opportunities I got from it. There are some good, some bad. But there isn't light without the dark. I've had an unbelievable amount of fun throughout scouting, and I'm sure I'll have more in the years to come. I've made a good amount of friends through it and now it's like I have three dads because of my scout masters. A scout troop is a family, and you would feel it if you were there.

Scouting is definitely about the experiences on camping trips and in the meetings, but it's also very heavily about the service and remembering those who fought for this country and those who died for this country. We do a lot of public service around the city in my troop. We do beach clean ups, food drives, and more. But one of the biggest things we do is planting flags on veterans graves and march the Memorial Day parade. Sadly, this year we didn't have a parade, but we still planted flags. On Memorial Day weekend, my troop went out in the rain to Greenwood cemetery to help put American flags on any veterans' graves that were there. We showed up at about 9 o'clock, and we took a bunch of flags and just started walking. We walked around and through the whole cemetery, putting new flags on graves that didn't have one and swapping out old flags. This is the 3rd time I have done this, and no matter how bad the weather is or how time consuming it may be, I am proud to do it and proud to say I am doing it. Those veterans fought in rain or shine and died, the least we can do is respect them.

Judas Priest and why I like them

Written by: Sebastian Mitchell



The January 2021 Decibel article is about the making of Judas Priest's album, Painkiller and how they had to find a new double kick drummer after Dave Holland left the band. Eventually, the group went with Travis Scott, and according to Priest's lead singer, Rob Halford, Travis' drumming on Painkiller is "one of the greatest heavy metal drumming performances." The article also goes into how Halford had never done that type of vocal performance but that was the best key vocally to get the album's message across. The album had an impact on both the band members and other bands out there, according to Halford.

He states that some of his friends had said that Painkiller made their bands come together and guitar players pick up their guitars. Personally, Painkiller is a great album, and the title song is probably one of my favorite ones from the band (after Turbo Lover ofc). It's just much heavier, the guitar riffs, the vocals, everything. It brings this type of adrenaline if that makes sense. The band in general is badass, and I look up to them so much, both music and appearance wise. Their music is probably what got me into heavy metal and all that stuff. Halford was my awakening to being into leather and all that stuff when he had his era with the whips and motorcycles. Apart from Painkiller, British Steel is a very good album, and it's the first record I listened to from them. Judas Priest and Halford are my biggest inspirations and someone I look up to a lot, mainly after finding out Rob Halford is gay.

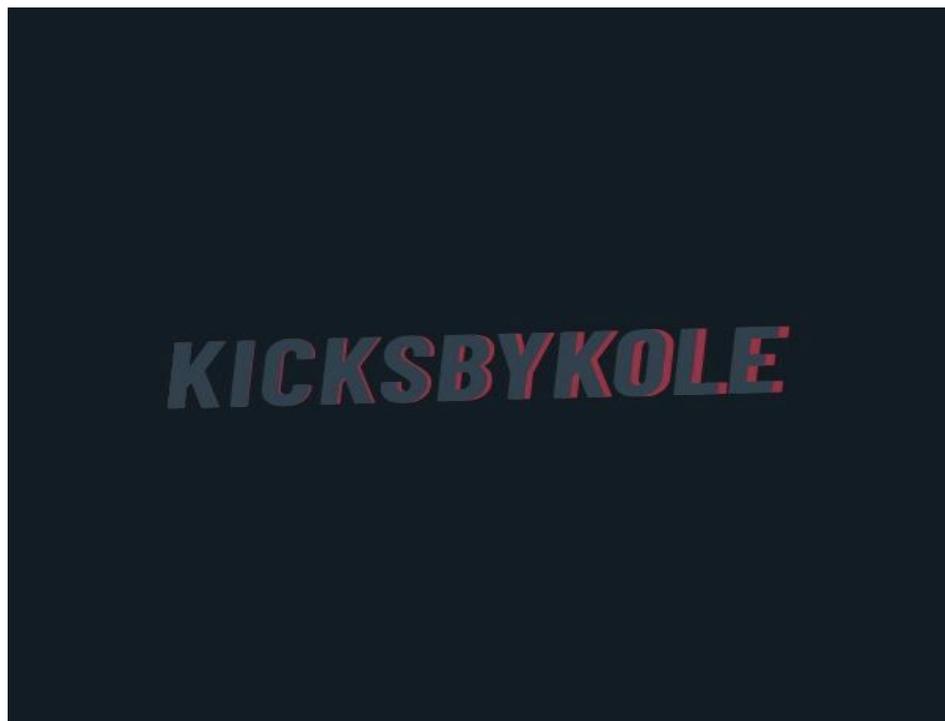
In 1998 Halford came out on MTV, becoming the first heavy metal icon to be out as gay. Halford described how the band, label, and management was very supportive of him, but he was advised to be discreet. He also states, "I was constantly held back. I allowed myself to be intimidated." He later described how most of the time he was lonely and how in his young adulthood he struggled with drug and alcohol abuse. Years later, in his book, Halford expressed how he had a suicide attempt back in 1985. Unfortunately, his ex-boyfriend who at the time was also struggling with depression and addiction, committed suicide. Halford said that if he wouldn't have gotten help, he would have probably attempted to end his life again, and probably would have succeeded.

Not only has Halford had a big influence on heavy metal, but he's influenced many of his queer fanatics, including myself. Many fans have sent him thank you letters or expressed how happy they feel to be represented by him in the heavy metal community. Halford's becoming the first openly gay metal icon was a big thing back in 98 and even now, he encourages LGBTQ fans to come out and live their lives as their true selves: "If you're still in the closet, you can't really focus on life and what you're here to do in life when you've got that shadow hanging over your head. Black it out, smash it down, burn it, tear it apart... Gay metalheads, man, just come and join us and just get out and just have a blast. Have a good time with your life and don't be afraid." -Halford, rolling stone.

Personally, his words are something we should all live by. We don't have a lot of time in the world, instead of dividing one another, we should learn how to love our peers and be content with who we are. We should embrace it, be proud, and be true to ourselves.

Sneaker Entrepreneurship

Written by: Kole Mclaurin



Sneakers have always been a big part of my life. From when I was a little kid, my shoes have always been the most important part of my outfit. Whether they be clean or beat up, the sneakers on my feet have always been fresh. And of course sneaker fandom has been integral to many other people's lives, with hundreds of new shoes releasing every year. This mass production of shoes definitely doesn't go unappreciated, as lines are often wrapped around the block on release day.

I've always liked shoes and paid attention to what I was wearing and because of this I have amassed quite the collection of shoes. Even though I can't fit most of them, I am proud to say I have them.

However, with no use for them, besides sentimental value, I decided I should try to sell them to some of my friends who could use them more than I could. To my surprise no one wanted to buy old worn shoes from me, so I gave up. Then one day I got the idea from some Youtube videos to sell them on an app called Mercari, where I had previously sold old video games. I thought, "What would be the harm in posting some old shoes up and seeing if they sell?" Since I'd never even used this app before, I definitely was not expecting anyone to show any interest in my shoes. However, I began receiving likes and offers within a day and finally I got the notification that someone bought them. I was excited because I realized how simple it was to make money off of things collecting dust around my house. So once the shoes sold I decided to keep going, ergo, I scavenged my house looking for any shoes that weren't being worn. Then I realized that there was a prominent market for designer clothes, so I bought a used Off White belt from my brother for \$60. Even though I was pretty skeptical about why my brother was willing to sell me a \$200 belt for only \$60, I still took a leap of faith. Within a day or two, I had an Instagram account up and running dedicated to selling sneakers and other streetwear and I soon posted my first item up for sale. One tactic that I used to maximize the possibilities of a sale was posting the belt on multiple platforms. So I basically put the belt up on Instagram, Offerup, Facebook, Snapchat, Mercari, and some other places. Because of this I was expecting to receive many offers, especially because the asking price was so low compared to retail. However, I did not expect to receive a serious offer from someone I knew within an hour. This was my first sale and I made a \$40 profit.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
1	Item Name	Size	Date Purchased	Price Paid	Date Sold	Sold Price	Time Elapsed	Profit %	Profit
2	Carmine 6	11	March 25, 2021	\$180	April 4, 2021		10 Days		
3	Space Jam 11	6.5	April 1, 2021	\$89	April 4, 2021		3 Days		
4	Yeezy Ash Blue	11	March 21, 2021	\$210	April 6, 2021	\$241	17 Days	14.29%	\$30
5	Off White Belt	Small	March 26, 2021	\$60	April 1, 2021	\$100	6 Days	66.67%	\$40
6	Closing Ceremony 11	10.5	April 5, 2021	\$75.00	April 12, 2021	\$95	7 Days	26.67%	\$20
7	Varsity Red Jordan 6	10	April 10, 2021	\$96					
8	Cap and Gown Jordan 13	8	April 10, 2022	\$80					
9	Deep Royal Blue Jordan 12	11	April 10, 2021	\$75					
10	N7 Jordan 8	10	April 14, 2021	\$150					
11	Cool Grey Jordan 9	8.5							
12									
13									
14									
15									
16									
17									

Kole's spreadsheet system includes items, dates of purchase and sale, and profit percentage.

After each sale, when my capital increases, I use a large sum of that capital to invest in more shoes. Reinvesting is my favorite phase of the process and it is also the easiest because all I do is spend the entire day surfing through different apps looking for good deals on sneakers that I know that I can flip for more money. For example, when ordering my most recent haul of inventory, I was specifically searching through Depop, Offerup, Mercari, and Grailed. What I would do was start with Jordan 1s, then go shoe by shoe all the way up to Jordan 14s, saving any good deals on shoes. I would always skip the Jordan 2s though because the demand for those is much lower than the rest of the models. On Depop, there was a pair of blue suede Jordan 12s and black Jordan 13s that caught my eye. Correspondingly, I carefully examined the pictures of the shoes that were provided and I decided to pull the trigger.

The way that I decide what shoes are worth buying is comparing the asking price, the actual market price for its conditions, and the market price for the condition I know I can bring it up to. This phase lasts until I only have a few dollars left. Next, I wait for my shoes to arrive, which is pretty much the phase when I relax and focus on other things. Once I receive the shoes I clean them to the best of my ability and I try to present them as well as I can, when I take pictures of the shoes from multiple angles so that the buyer can inspect the shoes before making an offer. Lastly, I post the pictures to different platforms. I usually begin receiving lowball offers in the first day or two, then I begin receiving serious inquiries. Finally after about 4-5 days of waiting, I make the sale and ship the shoes within the next couple of days. For the most part I am only taking 1 box of shoes with me to the post office, but on one of my more recent endeavors I shipped 3 pairs at once. When the shoes arrive at the buyer's home, I receive the funds and my rating and I repeat the process over again.

At this moment I have a pair of shoes that arrived yesterday that I'm going to restore back to the best condition that I possibly can. I purchased the shoes for \$96 and I am looking to make at least \$20-\$30 in profit. I also have a pair of shoes at home that I am repainting as practice, and I may sell these shoes if I do a good enough job. While I am finishing my paint job and my restoration, I will be waiting for 2 more pairs of shoes and my business cards that I ordered. I believe the business cards were a good investment because they can make my brand look more professional and make it easier to get more recognition. By putting a business card in each box of shoes that I sell and having my logo in the background of all of the pictures of the shoes, I am making it where my brand name is always lingering in a buyer's mind. Because of these promotions and the catchy name, people should think of my brand when thinking of buying sneakers.

I've also learned to use spreadsheets to help me organize my entire business. These spreadsheets allow me to keep track of what I invest in and how much I invest. As a result, I have been able to document exactly the shoes and supplies I've bought and how much I've spent on them. My supply inventory spreadsheet displays how much I spent on everything that I use to restore the shoes. This cumulative price of the money that I spent on the shoes and the money that I spent on the supplies is listed in the total expenses spreadsheet. In the same sheet, I listed my total profits and this is currently negative because I am yet to make back my investments. However, this should not take long if I keep going. Lastly, the total investments column displays how much I currently have invested. My goal is to be an instantly recognizable name in the sneaker selling business. To become that I need to stay consistent, make smart investments, and build relationships.

As of now, however, I am looking to move on from purchasing 3 shoes at a time from 3 different places and begin to purchase 10+ shoes in bulk from a single buyer. Not only will this help maximize my profits by allowing me to bargain and buy shoes for much less than market value but it could also reduce shipping costs and waiting time. And who knows, maybe in the future I might branch out into restoring shoes for people instead only selling them if I ever become skilled enough in that arena.

How exercise changed my life

Written by: Mohammad Hassan

When you think of fitness and just improving your physical well being, what comes to mind: dieting, high intensity training, and psychological struggle? Who said that fitness and health has to be that restrictive? I wish I would have asked myself these same questions when I put my body through hell. I kept putting my body through so much to a point where I didn't even have a goal in mind, that I just had to fit in and feel normal. That's when I actually started to lift weights while being conscious of the value that is resting and recovery. That time I spent at gym felt therapeutic for me because I was always way in over my head. When people picture weight lifting, they just think of bodybuilders or guys who just want to get abs and get girls. But the reality...my reality, is that weight lifting changed my life in the most influential way that you could not possibly imagine.

It all began when covid took over our lives. We were forced to stay for our safety and the safety of others, but being completely honest, it wasn't my biggest worry. I was already overweight at the time and I knew If I was just going to stay home all day, I would just eat whatever I wanted out of plain sight. Then it hit me. I realized that this could actually be my chance...my chance to prove to my family, my so-called "friends" that I am not just some overweight and insecure kid, but someone who is capable of great change. So for the next seven to eight months, I trained everyday and ate a pretty restrictive diet which then led to some issues, but we will cross that bridge when we come to it. I did not have a weight scale at home, so I had tracked my progress in the mirror. I began to see drastic changes in my appearance which just boosted my self-esteem through the roof. I felt reborn physically and mentally. But I lost something during this amazing journey, my happiness for life and food. I always considered food such a comfort and when I set restrictions on what I was allowed to eat, it had taken a toll on how I went about my days. For instance, whenever I made my meals in the kitchen while my mom was eating, she would ask me if I wanted whatever she had made for dinner. Of course I wanted to eat it. I love my moms cooking, it is the same food I grew up on. But I fought every instinct and feeling I had and respectfully said, " No thanks mom. I'll just eat the food I made." I hated saying that to my mom because I know she put a lot of work into making the food. But somehow, I felt that my goals were the top priority at the time and because of that, I missed out on something even more important, memories.

Sure, I was skinny? Yes. Did I finally achieve that body figure that I have worked so hard for? Yes! But at what cost?

I realized I was more at loss than I ever was in my entire life. Now that I reached my goal, where do I go from here? My mind was just riddled with questions that I didn't have the answers to and it was really getting to me. But I realized, it was not from my exercising, it was my diet that was too restrictive in all aspects. There were days where I just ate salads and canned tuna because I thought carbs were...THE ENEMY!

But recently, I realized that I now have to conquer something even more detrimental to my health, the ability to look at food as something to be enjoyed, not as a set of numbers and calories. This is a goal I thought I would never set for myself because I almost convinced myself that there is no cure for what I had brought upon myself. But I can now proudly say that I have reached a major milestone to get back to a happy life. On May 13th, 2021, it was Eid ul-fitr, which is a islamic holiday that marks the end of the month-long fasting of Ramadan and it is a day filled with many festivities. This was one of my favorite holidays out of the year because it was a day I spent with my entire family and we ate amazing food and spent the whole day together. My mom would go all out, but due to covid, not many people were able to come over. But it did not matter because the only thing I was concerned about was calories, calories, calories!!

WHSAD ART

Artist statement from freshman Marc Joseph:

This render was one of my favorites to make as it took a good amount of time to make and had the medieval architecture style. As of any project I start off by going on google or pinterest to find inspiration on what to construct. I saw this medieval town with all the different buildings like a farmhouse, a pug, and a light tower structure. I did not feel like making the whole town so I decided to make one of the more interesting buildings that wasn't too simple. After finding the building in the picture I basically made a mental image then cut the image separating all the different structures I would need to make a whole structure like the roof, the chimney, the different rooms, windows, and doors. Then I observed the image and started building the different structures adding as much detail as I can. After I made all the structures I went to different websites to find the different textures I needed such as wood, stone, and iron. Lastly I added all the textures to the different structures and put the building together. Although this project took a bit of time to make it was still really fun putting all the skills I have learned to work and constructing something I am very proud of.



This Lonesome Road

By: Leins Barthe

So here we meet
Along this lonesome road
On paths of misery, on paths choked with loath
Where you, Ulysses have lead me
Through these Mojave waste and places of old
From the Goodspring Boneyard
Where you hoped I lied
Only to stick it to fate to show I hadn't died
Through the sand of the Mojave where your shadow peeked and writhe
Through whispers, I learned you are like'th to I
Through the Vegas Strip where I meet the House and Bear
Through the toxic red clouds of the Madre where your presence once more rised
From ramblings of a man who tried and reached to close to the sun and sky
To the silent pantomimes of a woman whose life who too had been dressed with strife
Through the canyons of Zion where the Dead Horses ride
Where the White Legs tried to bleach their hides
To be one with The Bull, Caesar, and his eighty mighty tribes
Where the Sorrows wept for all lost souls of both ally and foe
Wondering in fear where the winds of war would blow
To the labs of the Big MT. where the Old World and science still lived on
Thinks tanks still wondered, morals long, long gone
Innocent minds, cut, lost and lobotomized to a single cause
Where tapes left behind revealed the nightmares I would find
The place where you hoped I would find the end of my line
Instead of strife, I strived, becoming stronger than any alive
To where I found the place where you stride
Down this Lonesome Road
To this...Divide
A land Torn, Gouged, and Ripped open wide
A land Torn, Gouged, and Ripped open wide
Where the wind blows so hard
Skin rendered from Flesh and Bone
Not even current state of the Mojave wastes can ever compare to this
Hellish place alone
Where the Old World flags solemnly flies
Adorning Bunkers, Silos, Missiles alike

Where nuclear hellfire still burns bright
Where the Skinned remnants of the Bear and Bull who once fought opposed
Now fight alike, Marked, following no outside order, no rule but the divides
Hunting any unfortunate soul to enter this divide
The place where I now travel and you speak through an electronic eye
Revealing the past and what died
Hope
HOpe
HOPE
HOPE
Hope had died in this divide
A Package from the Bear
Bearing markings and Flags of the Old World Face
With hopes, it's worth could be proved in this place
Delivered to hopeville in hands of Pride
A Courier who had built the community of hope
Left behind a Divide
Whose package had Awakened Old World Beast
Who rumbled and roared from their sleep
Trapped within their cages was their Anger released
Ripping open the earth
Burying Thousands beneath their feet
Burning any too close to their invisible heat
Now here we stand in this Divide
Where fate will finally decide
Whether you Ulysees or I shall Survive
On Lonesome Roads and beneath deadly skies

Artist Statement:

During the summer of last year, I like many of you were bored out of my mind, and during that crippling boredom I came across the video game Fallout New Vegas. The synopsis of Fallout New Vegas goes like this “ you as a character known as the Courier. While transporting a package across the Mojave Desert to the city of New Vegas, what used to be Las Vegas, the Courier is ambushed, robbed of the package, shot, and left for dead. After surviving, the Courier begins a journey to find their would-be killer and recover the package, makes friends and enemies among various warring factions, and ultimately becomes caught up in a conflict that will determine who controls New Vegas and the Mojave Wasteland” I was appealed by this story and I decided to give it a try. After two days of playing the game with little sleep, I had realized that I was very much hooked and had found my new inspiration to get through the pandemic. This poem is a “Thank you” letter of sorts for keeping me sane and preventing me from falling down a pit of despair. This game has also reinvigorated my creativity that had died with the lack of inspiration after being stuck at home for 3 months.

Sketches done by Saba Shukvani

Mongolian Ambush



Artist Statement:

This drawing depicts the battle scene where Mongol warriors suddenly attack the enemy. A combination of training, tactics, discipline, intelligence and constantly adapting new tactics gave the Mongol army its savage edge against the slower, heavier armies of the times.

Mongols pioneered the use of feigned flight and surprise attacks. They would often retreat during the battle and divide into smaller groups to encircle enemies and lead them into an ambush.

Mongolian battle tactics proved to be highly effective as they defeated army after army and conquered most of Asia, Europe, and the Middle East.

Buccaneer



Artist Statement:

This drawing depicts a buccaneer. Buccaneers were a kind of privateers or free sailors peculiar to the Caribbean Sea during the 17th and 18th centuries.

The term buccaneer usually refers to all who were operating against the Spanish in the Caribbean during that time, whether part of the original group or not. One of the best-known buccaneers, Captain Henry Morgan, was a privateer working for England, whose raids on Portobello and Panama City made him a legend. Francois L'Olonnais, another well-known buccaneer, was a full-fledged pirate.

The history of the pirates and especially the Golden Age of Piracy always fascinated me since I was a kid. Learning about buccaneers who were different from pirates in many ways but also similar to them inspired me to depict how a typical buccaneer from the 1600s would have looked like.

Battle of Hattin



Artist Statement:

This drawing depicts a battle of Hattin which took place on 4 July 1187, between the Crusader states of the Levant and the forces of the Ayyubid sultan Saladin. The Muslim armies under Saladin captured or killed most of the Crusader forces, removing their capability to wage war.

As a result of this battle, Muslims once again became the eminent military power in the Holy Land, re-conquering Jerusalem and many of the other Crusader-held cities. This battle and subsequent Christian defeats prompted the Third Crusade which started two years after this battle.

I was always interested in this historical period and wanted to create a drawing that depicted how one of the battles during the Crusades might have looked.

The Battle of Hattin was one of the major battles in the conflict between the Christian and Muslim forces which inspired me to create a drawing about it.

Elliana Duran



Digitally done on Procreate using iPad and Apple pencil.

Eyes have always been my favorite thing to draw, the windows to someone's soul. The eyes tell us so much about someone which is just so inspiring to me.

It took me about an hour or so, I'm pleased with how messy yet put together it came out, I'd like to work on more pieces that have more meaning in more hidden ways.