



ATHLETIC DIRECTOR NED GALLAGHER TO STEP DOWN AFTER SCHOOL YEAR

Following more than 20 years leading the Athletic Department, he plans to return to teaching full-time



Photo courtesy of The Archives

Outgoing Director of Athletics Mr. Ned Gallagher plans to spend more time teaching, coaching, and advising in the 2017-2018 school year.

By **Jackson Elkins '18**
Associate Editor

Many Choate students know him through his weekly announcements during school meeting, characterized by his sensational jokes, but Mr. Ned Gallagher is much more than just a witty mind and smiling face. For the past 21 years, Mr. Gallagher has contributed in many ways to Choate, from teaching to coaching to advising. But he is perhaps most widely recognized for directing Choate athletics, notoriously and consistently one

of the most time-consuming and intense jobs on campus. On top of this, some would consider it a thankless job, as many Choate students do not realize the effort that goes into scheduling meets, ensuring there are buses for away games, getting (and keeping track of) uniforms for every level of each sport, going to New England Preparatory School Athletic Council and Founders League meetings, making sure there are referees, and following through on a multitude of other duties. Soon, however, some of Mr. Gallagher's duties will lighten as he will be

stepping down from the position of Athletic Director at the end of this school year — following 21 years of being one of the best in the prep school league.

In terms of the decision to step away, Mr. Gallagher said that “nothing in particular” prompted him to leave. He elaborated, saying, “To be honest, it's been something that I've talked about with the Headmaster and the Dean of Faculty for a few years now, and articulating my desire to go back to teach full time.” Mr. Gallagher's tenure as AD certainly was a factor as well.

He said that after 21 years, “I'm ready to go back to what I started doing, which is teaching, coaching, and advising.” Furthermore, Mr. Gallagher figures that it is time to “let someone else take a whack at it. I've sort of done the things that I've set out to do, and really it's just good for career growth to mix it up.” Recognizing that in 21 years he really has accomplished his goals, he figures that it is “time for a change” for the athletic administration.

Mr. Gallagher will remain

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At Conference, Students Reflect on Campus Diversity

By **Grayce Gibbs '18**
Associate Editor

While most Choate students were in the midst of the first full week back after Thanksgiving, a select group from Choate traveled to Atlanta, Georgia to discuss important issues about religion, socioeconomic status, race, and gender, along with other diversity identifiers.

Six students participated in the 2016 Student Diversity Leadership Conference (SDLC) and 19 faculty members participated in the People of Color Conference (PoCC), both sponsored by the National Association of Independent Schools, and held concurrently in Atlanta between December 8-10. The conferences are multicultural and multiracial gatherings of leaders from independent schools worldwide. The students chosen to go were Abigail Drummond '18, Zara Harding '18, Taylor John-Lewis '19, Richard Lopez '18, Julian Yau '18, and Charlie Yockey '19.

Faculty, including Ms. Isabel Aguirre-Kelly, Ms. Tiffany Kornegay, Mr. Mustafa Abdul-Rahim, Ms. Cathryn Stout, and Dr. Keith Hinderlie, attended PoCC, a separate conference that ran concurrently with SDLC.

Since the SDLC group got back to Choate, they've been meeting regularly — ei-

ther weekly or biweekly — to talk about what their goals are at Choate, what they hope to change, and how they're going to do those things.

According to Harding, “There have been a lot of discussions about what we can do at Choate.” She continued, “I can't go too into detail about what we're doing during the meetings, but just to give an idea, it's really about planning. We're looking at what are the issues, what are the things we need to fix, and then how we are going to fix those things. We look short term, medium term, and long term, from activities we can plan to certain rules we can try to change.”

Now in its 26th year, SDLC, according to its website, “Focuses on self-reflecting, forming allies, and building community.” At the conference, students spent time working in large group sessions with the rest of the attendees; in “family” groups of around 70 people; and “home” groups of seven or eight people. Trained adults and peer facilitators, many of whom are SDLC alumni, led the groups. The website notes, “Participants develop effective cross-cultural communication skills, better understand the nature and development of effective strategies for social justice,

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Creative Writing Capstone No Longer Signature Program

By **Ethan Luk '20**
Staff Reporter

For many years, the Creative Writing Capstone has been one of Choate's Signature Academic Programs, but that well-known fact is now about to change. Next year, the Creative Writing Capstone will officially find its new identity as an advanced elective available for more sixth form students, though the curriculum of the course will remain the same.

The Creative Writing Capstone is unique among Capstone programs. In order to participate in a Capstone, students submit a project proposal, meet individually with a teacher, attend courses related to their topic of interest, and complete and present their project in the spring. In contrast, students in Creative Writing Capstone meet regularly the first two terms.

With the recategorization of the Creative Writing Capstone, students may still design Capstones in English or creative writing.

“We observed that the number of applications to the Creative Writing Capstone has diminished in recent years. Four years ago nine people applied, two years ago there were seven applications, and last year five students applied,” Mr. John Cobb, the Creative Writing Capstone teacher, remarked.

He listed various reasons why the number of applications have dropped down. “The normal application process would include a prospective Capstone student's submitting a portfolio of his or her work, and a group of English teachers would read the portfolios and decide who made the cut. A number of students commented that putting together and submitting a portfolio was too daunting of a task. Some students decided not to apply because there was chance that they would not be accepted. Hence, for some the possibility of rejection may have played a role in their decision to apply.”

Another issue that ultimately led to the change of the Creative Writing Capstone program was that students who participate in other Signature Academic Programs were excluded from participating. “For example, students in SRP (Student Research Program) or Arts Concentration couldn't take the Creative Writing Capstone because the school only allows students to participate in one signature program. With the writing program becoming an advanced elective, students who are enrolled in SRP and Arts Con can now take the course,” Mr. Cobb stated.

However, Creative Writing

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RENOWNED TRANSGENDER ACTIVIST DELIVERS DIVERSITY DAY KEYNOTE

By **Alyssa Shin '18**
Copy Editor

Choate celebrated its fourth annual Diversity Day on January 16, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day, to bring community members together through celebration of differences and similarities.

Larisa Owusu '17, a member of the Diversity Day Planning Committee and Co-President of Choate Diversity Student Association (CDSA), said, “Diversity Day is a time for the entire school to get together and have difficult and meaningful conversations that many do not or have never had. It is a time to grow as a community and as an individual. It is about listening to people who are not often heard, coming in with an open mind, and learning how to criticize people's ideas and not their being. Overall, one thing that Choate needs to work on is its ability to communicate. Diversity Day is a great way to begin this kind of open, raw communication if done correctly.”

At the core of the day was the keynote speech delivered by Mr. Tiq Milan, a transgender activist, freelance journalist, and media consultant. Mr. Milan sought to address diversity, empathy, inclusion, and the theme of the day, “you don't know me until you know me,” by relating these themes to personal experiences and social



Photo by Donessa Colley/ The Choate News

Mr. Tiq Milan, who was assigned female at birth, spoke of inequality and trans rights during his address.

media comments about diversity related issues.

Mr. Milan commented on creating a space for everyone: “People shouldn't be forced to be boisterous, forced to have a voice when they haven't really found that voice in themselves. If someone is scared about what is happening in this world or scared to have an opinion, that's okay. Go ahead and take a step back and understand better. Everyone's not going to be an advocate. Everybody's not go-

ing to be a powerful voice. And we shouldn't expect everyone to be an advocate or powerful voice. We have to make space for everybody. I do this work so other people don't have to. I'm good at talking about being trans but a lot of people can't. That's why I do this.”

While the fundamental goals of this Diversity Day were similar to those of the past, it differed in many ways. Previously, underclassmen and upperclassmen had the same schedule.

However, this year, third and fourth formers started the day with workshops at 8:30 a.m. and ended with the 11:30 a.m. keynote address, while the fifth and sixth formers started their day with the speech before moving on to workshops like “Political Correctness” and “Positive Stereotypes” in the afternoon.

Danielle Young '17, a planning committee member, said, “Our goal when changing the

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NEW STARBUCKS OPENS ALONG ROUTE 5

By **Kate Spencer '20**
Staff Reporter

For the past six months, Choate students and Wallingford residents have been anticipating the opening of the new local Starbucks. Starbucks, whose previously closest locations were in Meriden and North Haven, has opened a shop in the new strip plaza along Route 5 at the former site of Merriman Motors. The coffee chain is a little less than two miles away from Choate, about as far away as Walmart, making it a location that students can potentially visit. The chain has more than 50 stores in Conn., and according to the *Record-Journal*, the opening of Starbucks was planned to follow that of a hair salon, an AT&T outlet, Hannoush Jewelers, and Pancheros Mexican Grill in the plaza.

Starbucks has sparked much comparison between the chain and the Lanphier Café. Students have been discussing what sets the two coffee providers apart, provoking different reactions.

"If I need to go to Starbucks for anything, it's there. I don't have to go to Meriden and get a day permission. So it's actual-



Photo by Elle Rinaldi/ The Choate News
A sign stands in front of the new Starbucks on Route 5, encouraging passersby to check it out.

ly really convenient," explained Serena Levin '20. "They have real food at Starbucks; I like the breakfast sandwiches. I wish Lanphier had those."

"I think a new Starbucks is great because it is such a ubiquitous brand, and it also serves as a great spot outside of campus to hang out with friends," Ethan Luk '20 explained. "At the same time, there is certainly some risk to the Lanphier Café's business because, as we all know, Lanphier is sort of the Starbucks we never had in Wallingford. It would definitely provide some competition, but

it's a great addition to the Wallingford community."

Grace Lawrie '19 said, "I think I'll definitely be going to Starbucks, but not as much as I would the café. It's still an Uber ride away, so it's a tradeoff."

In contrast, some boarding students have expressed complete disinterest in the new coffee shop. Ryan Kim '20 commented, "Starbucks is so good, but it costs too much, so no, it won't change my life."

Lily Ding '20 also noted that the Lanphier Café already offers a wide selection of drinks and pastries, and believed that stu-

dents would be satisfied enough with the café to not venture to Starbucks.

Additionally, for day students, there is little to no effect for the creation of a new Starbucks. Katherine Lima '20 remarked, "As a day student, having a new Starbucks in Wallingford is kind of irrelevant to me, because I could just go before school. Starbucks isn't totally different from Lanphier, because Lanphier is just a knockoff Starbucks."

The new Starbucks' offerings and accessibility have influenced people who adore the coffee chain, but there are plenty of students who are indifferent. A key example, Jonathan Geller '20 said, "I don't really go to Starbucks anyway, so I don't really care."

Christine Mason '19 believes it is a simple matter of personal preference. "It's a little bit far, and I'm personally more of a Dunkin' Donuts person, especially since I'm from New York. We have a lot of Starbucks. I would rather go to Half Moon and get something more interesting."

Kate Spencer may be reached at kspencer20@choate.edu

Creative Writing Capstone Now Advanced English Elective

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student Elena Turner '17 believes that having a larger class size due to opening up the class will decrease the value of the class. "It would be worse if the class had ten people. I understand making it more open, but having only five people makes the class more intimate." She continued, "One time we wrote slam poems, and it was the most emotional day of my time at Choate. Because there were so few students, we were able to connect, and after that we became really close." She also believes that too many people will make it so that "we won't be able to give workshoping the attention it deserves."

The curriculum and format of the Creative Writing program will still stay the same, according to Mr. Cobb. "We're simply changing the program to an advanced elective. The content of the course will remain the same," he said. Students are also encouraged to delve deep in all different forms of writing, whether it's slam poetry or flash fiction. A typical day in class would include students sharing and critiquing each other's work.

Mr. Cobb mused, "The creative writing course offers a fantastic opportunity for Choate's best creative writers to put together a body of work that they can use to promote themselves to colleges or simply express themselves through words. It will open new doors to students who previously didn't have the chance to join the Capstone Program."

However, there will still be prerequisites for the class. To be considered, students must take either Introduction to Creative Writing or Intensive Creative Writing, or they can submit a few examples of their creative work and secure a recommendation from an English teacher. "As much as we want a diverse group of students across the School, we still want to make sure that students in the course can handle the intensive writing we do," Mr. Cobb commented.

"I'm happy that the creative writing program is now an elective. I can continue to pursue my other interests and fit creative writing into my academic schedule," Kate Spencer '20 commented.

Ethan Luk may be reached at eluk20@choate.edu

ITS CONSOLIDATES NETWORK TO IMPROVE WI-FI

By **Grace Zhang '20**
Staff Reporter

All of Choate's campus will be covered by one Wi-Fi network, faster network, "Choate," by this September. Choate's Director of Information Technology Services, Mr. Andrew Speyer, predicts that "the dorm experience will improve dramatically in spaces where they don't have the 'Choate' network now, especially in big places like Memorial House, Nichols, Bernhard, and Tenney that are all on 'CRH'."

Choate ITS has been working to convert the "CRH" network to the "Choate" network for the past three years. The motives are simple: improving life both inside and outside of the classroom. "It's part of infrastructure improvements. We're committed to wireless across campus to make it better and faster, as much as we can," said Mr. Speyer.

For a time, the only Wi-Fi network on campus was the one called "CRH." This network was made by a company called Juniper and is an older, slower Wi-Fi than "Choate," made by Aerohive. The newer network has the highest designation for Wi-Fi speeds, Wireless-AC, while "CRH is older and does not have that AC designation," according to Mr. Speyer. He continued, "We switched from Juniper to Aerohive because of scalability, maintenance cost, and speed. It's a much better product in terms of coverage and how many devices can connect. It's easier for us in ITS to manage."

Many students agreed that switching to one Wi-Fi network is more convenient. "They should switch to one Wi-Fi," said Gigi Sherbacow '20. Jessie Goodwin '20 added, "That'll make things easier. I don't think there's anything negative about that." Others seemed to think the switch will not have much of an effect on them. "I don't think that having one network is going to make that much of a difference," stated Josephine Mah '18. Lucy Carpenter '20 "never even noticed there were two."

There is no doubt in many students' minds that Choate Wi-Fi needs changes. Mah shared a problem she experi-

enced with the Wi-Fi: "The science center's Wi-Fi is always really spotty, and our class would get really annoyed because a lot of our work is based on the Internet. People would get frustrated because the science center's Internet is just not good." Sherbacow, a Nichols resident, added, "The Wi-Fi in the basement is very slow." Aurelie Temsamani '20, also a Nichols resident, agreed, simply stating, "The Wi-Fi is so bad." Because most dorms are still on the older "CRH" network, students are hopeful that the addition of the new "Choate" network access points in coming months will help address these problems.

While this project has run smoothly for the most part, Choate ITS had its fair share of bumps in the road with the conversion. "Last year, we made a couple of changes and we switched our email into the cloud, into Office 365, and we realized that our coverage with the newer model, 'Choate,' especially in Humanities and Steele, was poor," said Mr. Speyer. "This was because we didn't have an access point in every classroom — we had access points in geographic areas that cover multiple spots. It was jamming. The Aerohive's one problem was the coverage. We were scrambling trying to add in access points. This year it's been much better. We don't have as many drops or problems."

While the conversion is well on its way towards its set end date, some students have concerns. "I don't know if switching over to one Wi-Fi network is reliable because there's nothing to fall back on if one of them doesn't work," expressed Vincenzo DiNatale '19. "Though right now, the Wi-Fi in the library works for me constantly." Other students are satisfied with the way the Wi-Fi network at Choate is now, and so, change or not, it will be fine. "I think that it's pretty fast," said Jordan Obi '20.

Mr. Speyer expressed that the change should not necessarily be seen as "bad" to "good." Rather, he stated, "we are going from a good to a better performance."

Grace Zhang may be reached at gzhang20@choate.edu

DIVERSITY DAY PROVOKES DIVIDED REACTIONS FROM STUDENTS AND FACULTY

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structure was primarily informed by feedback from past facilitators. They really wanted to be involved in the discussions with people in their grade and felt that they couldn't because they were busy facilitating other forms. This year's structure helped to accommodate those desires."

Additionally, in the past, all students participated in activities such as associating identifiers with questions posed by facilitators. However, this year, only third and fourth formers participated in such activities, while upperclassmen partook in discussions and reflections.

Helena Yang '18, a facilitator, said, "One thing I remember most about facilitating third formers is that they weren't as exposed to terms that we go over, so discussions were limited. We were the ones educating about these concepts, so we felt the responsibility to do the best we can to introduce the ideas in a way that is unbiased by our personal views. As for fifth and sixth form discussions, I think the adjustments they made, such as focusing on specific topics, fostered a safe environment and productive discussions."

Last year, each form was separated into large groups of fifty students and four or five facilitators, while this year, underclassmen were divided into groups of around forty students lead by a group of four facilitators and upperclassmen were divided into groups of 11-17 people lead by one facilitator to create a more personal, comfortable atmosphere for students to share their perspectives.

Many students noticed the differences and the effect they had on the quality of the experience. Spencer Jimenez '18 commented, "Last year, I felt that the groups were very big and you didn't have time to be personal. The small groups this year were more personal. Especially at the beginning, when we had the English class, I already knew those people so it was easier to connect with those around me."

Julia Gottschalk '20 said, "I had expectations that it would



Photos by Michael Li

In addition to listening to the keynote address, students and faculty members participated in workshops.

be terrible because that is what I heard from others, but it was better than expected. It was interesting learning about other people's views on these matters, but I wish that people had more of a chance to tell personal stories of times they encountered diversity."

Jerri Norman '17 expressed, "I would love to have more underperformers helping with Diversity Day because having a senior voice isn't always the best, not that we didn't try our best to be

inclusive, but I think it would bring so many fresh ideas and new perspectives to the planning of the next Diversity Day."

Mr. Kojo Clarke, an adviser to CDSA, added, "If everyone walked into Diversity Day thinking, 'What can I learn that might help me be more on the same page as the people around me?' and 'What can I share that will let other people also be closer to being on the same page with me?' I think that would help, because we're both

addressing the responsibility to hear other people but we're also taking advantage of the right that we have to be ourselves as well. My advice is to be open, don't just lean into discomfort from someone else sharing, also lean into the discomfort of what you yourself want to share but you're not sure if people are ready for it. Maybe they are, so give them a chance."

Alyssa Shin may be reached at ashin18@choate.edu

DIRECTOR OF STUDENT ACTIVITIES REEVALUATES EFFECTIVENESS OF PORTAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

By **Lauren Dorsey '18**
Reporter

In previous years, it was not uncommon to hear students complain about the large number of emails received from Mr. Jim Yanelli, Director of Student Activities. Before this year, students who wanted to announce anything, ranging from club meetings to special events, emailed Mr. Yanelli, who would then send the announcement to the entire student body. However, Mr. Yanelli has recently attempted to shift to using the announcement feature on the online portal instead.

According to Mr. Yanelli, "Emails diffuse information, then kids get announcements from multiple sources. Suddenly, what would be a clean and definite pathway to information gets a little more confusing. The announcement portal provides a definitive location for receiving consistent information."

The announcement section can be found on the top left of the Choate website once students or faculty have logged in. Although the announcement portal existed last year, it was largely used for announcements outside the community,

informing parents and alumni about upcoming events. Mr. Yanelli said, "The portal has changed significantly since last year. The more that the portal is used, the better it becomes and the more vibrant and vital it can be"

While the Student Activities Center relied almost entirely on the announcements portal to communicate events at the beginning of the year, Mr. Yanelli noticed a significant decrease in the number of students signing up for events and heard a few direct requests from students to send out all-school emails, which promoted him to reintroduce announcements via emails. Mr. Yanelli said, "Recently, I have been sending almost all of the information that comes my way to the whole community via email, in addition to updating the portal."

The announcement portal provides a definite location for receiving consistent information.

Mr. Jim Yanelli
Director of Student Activities

Some students believe signing into the Choate portal

can be troublesome. Kendall Redlitz '17 said, "I don't check the announcement section. I'm just too lazy to log on every time." Kristen Andonie '17 said, "I've never paid much attention to the portal and the lack of student announcements isn't really enough to make me start."

Other students appreciate fewer emails. "When you're getting a lot of spam from colleges, it's nice not getting as many emails on daily basis," said Redlitz. Nicole Yao '18 said, "I really like the announcement section. It puts everything in one place, rather than making me to sift through all the emails sent throughout the week." Other students recognized both the pros and cons of the emails. Andonie said, "The number of emails was slightly cumbersome, but at least I knew what was going on in the community."

Some students have not noticed a difference in the frequency of emails or the recent additions to the announcement portal. Kay Ingulli '18 said, "I didn't realize that I was receiving fewer emails from Yanelli, or that the announcement section of the Choate webpage was regularly updated." Mr. Yanelli recalled

that in the beginning of the year, "we advertised access to the portal all the time, but my sense is that students were uncertain about how to get to the information."

Sam Markowitz '17 said, "Everyone is different, some people don't really check their email, so keeping both the portal and emails updated will probably satisfy everyone."

Suggestions for future management of announcements vary. Andonie said, "Someone could create an email group, like the type many clubs use, so that if you wanted to look at the announcements it would be more convenient than having to go to the portal, but it wouldn't be difficult to find or clutter inboxes as much as regular emails did in the past."

Mr. Yanelli concluded, "From my perspective students tend to use social media more for news. I think the communications office is well aware of that and trying to make social media options for kids. That sounds healthy and robust and where kids are in terms of where they transmit information."

Lauren Dorsey may be reached at ldorsey18@choate.edu

OAKDALE SHOOTING PROMPTS REVIEW OF CONCERT POLICIES

By **Anjali Mangla '20**
Reporter

In October, rapper Lil Uzi Vert held a concert at the Wallingford Oakdale Theater. A few freshmen boarders, including Sutherland Brown '20, Lucas Nelson-Madore '20, Andrew Price '20, and Gavin Galiardo '20 scored tickets. As they entered the building, they received a call from the Dean on Duty telling them to immediately return to campus. Two months later in late December, a shooting killed two people at a Meek Mill concert in the same theatre, renewing concerns about student safety at the Oakdale.

Boarders do not need permission to go into Wallingford during the day, as it is considered a part of Choate campus according to the Handbook. The Handbook also states, "In general, underformers are not allowed to leave campus on academic nights to attend concerts, sports events, etc." The concert was on a Saturday, however, and the students would have returned before curfew.

However, according to third form dean Mr. Gordon Armour, "We have different rules about concerts because people are apt to be in altered states in concerts, and therefore they act a little less logically than they might otherwise." This is supported by the Handbook, which states, "Students may not go directly from school to a concert, unless driven there by a Choate parent (not a car service, taxi, sibling, or friend) who then assumes responsibility for the student(s)."

Mr. Armour also believes that even if an activity is allowed in the Handbook, faculty members have the autonomy to prevent students from doing certain activities. "We have to trust the adults to understand that

the Handbook cannot cover every single situation possible and that certain situations arise."

Day student Selden Griffen '20 attended the Lil Uzi Vert concert as planned. Griffen commented, "The Dome at Wallingford is notorious for its bad concerts and the use of drugs and alcohol inside. At the most recent concert there, a performance by Meek Mill, someone also got shot in the parking lot. Since the shooting was after the Lil Uzi Vert concert, I assume the reason that freshman boarding students were not allowed to attend was because of the dangerous people there and the risk of drugs and alcohol."

He added, "I have never been harmed in any way during any of my visits, nor have I felt the need to partake in any of the illegal activities that may go on there."

Lucas Nelson-Madore '20 said, "Our teachers had even asked us what our plans were for the weekend, and we told them we were going to a concert, and they didn't say anything against it."

Sutherland Brown '20 added, "We were very mad about because it was not brought up in any conversation."

However, Clara Haxhi '20 said, "The School's safety policies are pretty fair, though I do think it may have been inappropriate the way the school handled the situation by calling them en route."

Third form dean Ms. Emily Lovejoy White encourages students to trust the judgement and experience of faculty, "Faculty members can just have a sense sometimes when something doesn't seem right."

Anjali Mangla may be reached at amangla20@choate.edu

DIVERSITY LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE EMPOWERS STUDENTS



Photo courtesy of Ms. Cathryn Stout

SDLC attendees travel to Atlanta, Ga. to discuss diversity.

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practice expression through the arts, and learn networking principles and strategies."

Speaking to her experience at SDLC, Harding added, "It was life-changing. I know that sounds corny, but it really was. It was like Diversity Day on steroids, except that everyone wanted to participate in the conversations, and so the discussions that were generated were really, really effective and really deep. I think aside from that, the most incredible part of it was

how close I felt to the people that I met after being around them for such a short period of time."

Harding added, "Even though it doesn't necessarily have anything to do with diversity, my biggest take-away was the way that we form relationships with each other. At SDLC it was so easy to approach people. Here, if you don't know a group of people you just write them off. Don't assume something about someone because of how they look or what you've heard - just speak to them."

Richard Lopez '18 described

his time at SDLC, "It was a phenomenal experience that allowed me to share my stories. We had an affinity group for Hispanics and Latinos around the United States, so I got to see a hundred kids from across the U.S. from private schools. We all got to share our experiences and our emotions as to what's going on in the world. It was very emotional for me. I felt amazing afterwards, I was finally able to share my stories in a safe place where I wouldn't be judged for what I said. I think that's something we lack at Choate. If you say something at Choate it's not a guarantee that it will remain in the circle; it's kind of likely that it'll spread, and you'll get criticized for it."

On why he wanted to go to SDLC, Lopez said, "I knew SDLC would give me the opportunity to share personal stories of my own that relate to who I am and who I identify as: A Hispanic or Latino within the United States. I wanted to talk about the issues that I've seen, not only at Choate, but also around my home

and in the United States in general. And I wanted to hear about the experiences of others."

Abigail Drummond '18 commented, "I wanted to go to address problems here at Choate. It's about much more than just racial problems; there are gender problems, sexuality problems, and socioeconomic problems. I wanted to get perspectives from other students around the US and see what they were doing."

It was like Diversity Day on steroids, except that everyone wanted to participate in the conversations.

Zara Harding '18

Drummond concluded, "One thing I got out of it is that 'your voice is power,' even as a student. You can use your voice to get your message across to make real, tangible change."

Grayce Gibbs may be reached at ggibbs18@choate.edu

SCHOOL CREATES SPECIAL SCHEDULE FOR PRESIDENTIAL INAUGURATION VIEWING

Written by **Nina Hastings '18**,
Associate Editor;
Reporting contributed by
Sonali Singh '20, Reporter

For the Inauguration of President Donald Trump P'oo today, H block and conference period have been eliminated from the class schedule, and an almost two-hour midday break from classes has been added. The altered schedule is meant to allow students time to view screenings of the event and participate in related discussions. Counselors will be available throughout for support, while the dining hall is to remain a politics-free space for those who don't wish to take part.

According to Dean of Faculty Ms. Katie Levesque, the schedule was similarly changed for Barack Obama's 2009 inauguration. Due to students' age, this year's election has been the first for many in which they've felt truly involved and aware. Weston Miller '17 said, "I've grown up in the U.S.

but have only really been through one administration change that I can remember, and that was going from Bush to Obama. I didn't get to watch Obama's Inauguration in 2009, so I'm excited that I'm going to have the opportunity to watch one now."

Several students plan to attend the screenings. Betsy Overstrum '20 explained, "Events like this can create valuable discussions and help students have an environment where they can express their opinions. I will watch the inauguration, because I feel that it is the start of a new beginning, and I want to know what's going on. Whether or not I support Trump, I want to hear his ideas for the country. I don't want to be oblivious."

Aurélié Temsamani '20 added, "I plan to watch the Inauguration. It should be very interesting, and I feel that I should be informed and listen to what Trump has to say about the upcoming four years."

However, Gina Driscoll '20 said, "I respect those who feel affected by the election and try to see from their perspective, but I do not think the schedule change will be valuable to me since I am not partial to politics and would honestly rather be learning. I do not plan on watching the Inauguration. As interesting as it seems, there are better ways I can utilize my free time."

The decision to have counselors during this time received mixed reviews. Jack Miley '20 stated, "I do not know how these counselors could benefit anyone in the community, nor do I believe they are necessary or even constructive." Overstrum explained, "For people who have strong opinions, it's good that they can have a mature adult to talk to, but I don't think their presence is that necessary." However, Temsamani said, "I like that they provide an option to talk about this event. It's always helpful to talk to somebody if you need to get some emotions

out." Josephine Mah '18 commented, "I feel as though the counselors were considered more useful during the election than now, but if some students are still in need of someone to talk to, I can understand that."

Ollie Chessen '19 hopes the day will be one "where people come together, rather than be divisive. I hope the community can achieve that through the plans set out for the day." Mehreen Pasha '18 concluded, "It's really important that we're taking time out of our day as a school to observe this national event, and I like how there are certain spaces on campus where students are able to watch it or discuss it or even not engage in it at all, so it's being really inclusive for the entire community."

Nina Hastings and Sonali Singh may be reached at nhastings18@choate.edu and ssingh20@choate.edu, respectively.



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MANAGING EDITOR

Sabrina Xie '17
PRODUCTION EDITOR

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Grace Zhang '20

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EMBRACING DIVERSITY, BUILDING COMMUNITY

By **Eben Cook '18**
Associate Editor

Diversity Day — a time for a part of the student body to reflect on what it means to live in a community like Choate's, and a time for the other part to just be happy that they don't have to go to classes. However, it would be a mistake for any student to think of this day as a "day off." In fact, the day's conversations should be just as mentally straining as those that arise in any typical class. Diversity Day is necessary for this School, for it is crucial to understand the backgrounds of students with different skin tones, sexualities, religious ideologies, and other identities that Choate students may have. The open conversations provide a platform and a voice for all students to be able to share their personal stories and intently listen to what others have to say.

It would be a mistake for any student to think of Diversity Day as a "day off."

There is no time as fitting as the week of Inauguration Day to hold discussions on white privilege, political correctness, student romantic relationships, pressures to conform, "positive" stereotypes, and so on. Given the unusual (for lack of a better word) whirlwind of events that have transpired in the past few months, our nation has become more and more divided each and every day, intensifying an atmosphere of social turmoil. It is our job as students, who have the privilege to go to a boarding school represented by 39 states and 42

countries, to embrace our heterogeneity and take advantage of a full day of in-depth conversations on complex topics that can be approached from several different viewpoints.

Thanks to enthusiastic organizers, Diversity Day sets the table for a plethora of different discussions throughout the day, providing all students the resources to learn a lot from their peers. That being said, when looking at the bigger picture, each student is only participating in three conversations throughout the day. Three 45-minute periods, and that is it.

Diversity Day can only be deemed a success if the conversations do not come to a close. Remember when *Slut: The Play and Now That We're Men* took the main stage last September? The reactions and conversations could be heard in classrooms, the dining hall, music rehearsals, and even athletic fields. They also didn't die down the day after the plays were put up: they lasted for at least two weeks. Those additional discussions in informal environments are what will really make Diversity Day an overall success, as it is easy to sit through the day staring at a blank wall and not taking in any of the conversation.

My first conversation of the day was on the topic of white privilege. I was one of two white people in the discussion, and the rest of the group con-

sisted of students of Asian and African descent. Needless to say, the conversation was incredibly enlightening, and I really enjoyed being able to hear the thoughts of those who do not share my pigment. We talked in depth about how the main problem of white privilege is the lack of acknowledgment of the privilege that white people inherently possess. We went even further and came to the conclusion that a white person speaking at a special program about their acknowledgement of having privilege would be more intriguing to the audience than a person of color speaking about their feeling oppressed. All in all, those 40 minutes were an extraordinarily eye-opening experience, and I would not have learned so much had I not been wholly engaged in the experience.

As touched upon in one of my Diversity Day discussions, many students who oppose the idea of Diversity Day believe that students at Choate are set in their ways and unwilling to listen to the opposition. If that's the case, then why bother discussing anything, let alone topics as thought-provoking as the ones considered on Diversity Day? Although Tiq Milan, the keynote speaker of the day, stated that people who are stuck in their own ways are not worth discussing with, it's

hard to determine who is "stubborn" when many of the students in your conversations are strangers. It's at least worth a shot to try and inform others.

Diversity Day can only be deemed a success if the conversations do not come to a close.

At the end of the day, there is nothing negative about taking part in discussions that could open our eyes to the injustice that is still well and alive in 2017. Feel free to not take part in any of the dialogue on Diversity Day or in any of the dinner table conversations that may ensue — just know that these glaring issues being placed at the forefront on Diversity Day are inescapable, and if we do not make an effort to bring all of our opinions to the table, our campus will turn into one of those partitioned communities we so often read about while scrolling through social media.

Eben Cook is a fifth former from Wallingford, Conn. He may be reached at ecook18@choate.edu



FINDING REFUGE IN NATIONAL PARKS

By **Sabrina Xie '17**
Production Editor

My parents have always been highly conscious of the rapid pace at which the world changes. In 2000, my father read a news article about the extinction of the Pyrenean ibex, a subspecies of the Iberian wild goat, once found throughout the Andorran Pyrenees. At that time, my brother had not yet been born, but my parents had already decided that they would make sure their children saw the natural phenomena and wonder of America — glaciers, endangered flora, volcanic craters — before it disappeared, or became so isolated that to experience them would require a long-term pilgrimage.

As far back as I can remember, I have visited no less than one national park, protected area, or wilderness zone a year, usually during the summer. The significance of these trips and adventures has never laid in the collection of collectibles or the pictures taken, but in the stories that our family has accrued to recount to each other.

I've come to look forward to these trips with my family, more than a vacation on a Mediterranean cruise or tours through some megalopolis.

I don't have a grudge against cities or anything. I've found some of my favorite ramen shops in Manhattan and I've spent great afternoons biking around Portland and Shanghai. But when I'm out camping or hiking, and visiting places like the national parks, my system slows down. I spend more time sitting and observing — really observing — rather than just doing. Without the distractions of cell phone vibrations or traffic signals, it becomes easier to look and see the beauty all around you.

I'll admit, too, that I enjoy the fear that can be found only in isolation. While camping along the Appalachian Trail, before we knew how to properly store our food, my brother and I heard countless noises as raccoons scratched at our food supplies or clawed at our tent.

fort. Its tail swayed on the water, its jaw stretched open, but it remained still, watching us with cold eyes. There are few thrills that quite match the shiver down the spine I felt then, knowing with sincerity that I do not stand atop the food chain. It wakes you up, in a different way.

Backcountry also has a side effect of sharpening the connections between the people you choose to surround yourself with. Over the years, these trips have built the bedrock on which my relationship with my brother is built. We don't necessarily speak more on these trips, but it seems that the mix of experiences naturally forms a flexible glue that holds us together.

Off the Golden Ring in Iceland, where the weather was below-freezing more than not, we trekked with only GPS coordinates through rain and mud to reach Brúarfoss. I saw with fresh eyes how water could fall into itself, the small waterfalls running into a deep chasm of blue raspberry. My brother fell into the water and pulled my father and me with him. Our boots and coats were marinated in the deep blue water the next morning.



When we returned to Grand Canyon national park during the London Olympics, we rafted down the Colorado River to reach Elves Chasm, a hidden little canyon off the river, where the warm red rocks are covered in emerald green moss and constantly bathed in glassy water.

These destinations may not be easy to get to, but the colors seem to be more vivid if an expedition draws a little blood first.

There may be many aspects of the world that I am unhappy about these days, but the one thing that I have always appreciated is the ease with which I could vanish into the wilderness. With the noise and clamor that we soak in every day, this kind of remoteness is now more precious and fragile than ever. Deep in the wilderness of national parks, I can surrender myself to what Gretel Ehrlich called the "absolute indifference" of nature. Out there, where there is nothing, we fill up the emptiness with experiences and stories.

Sabrina Xie is a sixth former from Farmington, Conn. She may be reached at sxie17@choate.edu

THE CASE FOR KEEPING QUIET

A sixth former on embracing failure, and why she won't be engaging in the college conversation

By **Jessica Shi '17**
Features Editor

In the previous issue of *The Choate News*, Anselm Kizza-Besigye '17 wrote an Opinions piece titled "The College Conundrum," and in it, he explored the often harmful ways with which we approach conversations about college applications and decisions. As no words of my own can capture the eloquence with which Kizza-Besigye writes, I will quote a few sentences instead.

Regarding a rejection letter he received, Kizza-Besigye reflected, "Though none of my accomplishments or attributes had disappeared, I felt as though a few individuals' approval had diminished the value of my qualifications."

And a few paragraphs later, he then articulated what I interpreted to be a central point of his argument:

"We also create a hostile environment for the proliferation of covert, often unfriendly gossip when we normalize our reclusive behavior surrounding college. By approaching college decisions with silence and caution, we make our processes topics of backroom conversation, rather than trying experiences to which we can all relate."

While I agree that there are certainly issues with the gossip-ridden culture that surrounds college related discussions, I would like to push back on the points Kizza-Besigye raises in the above two quotes.

Let's start with the first one. It perpetuates a common piece of advice that we are given throughout this process by counselors, advisers, and even our peers: that not getting into a college does not imply failure. Except — it does.

Logically speaking, if you like a college, decide to apply to the college, try your best to get in to the college, and then get rejected, you have failed.

And so, contrary to Kizza-Besigye's remark, I believe that college rejections *do* diminish the value of your qualifications. They show that for at least one reason (and this reason may very well be an artificial product of the inherent biases of admissions criteria), ultimately, the rejected applicant, by definition, did not qualify for an acceptance.

Of course, college is not the be-all-end-all standard for achievement in life, but there is such a thing as success and failure within the admissions process. It's simple: if you got in, you succeeded; if you did not, then you failed.

For me, personally, I have already failed to earn an acceptance to some colleges; I also anticipate failing to earn an acceptance to many more. I am of the firm belief that I have failed and will continue to fail because I am just not good enough to be admitted into certain institutions.

Even if you agree with me, the natural next question is: so what? What is the benefit, you ask, of self-critical language like

"failure" and "not good enough"?

In my experience, its effect is to make college admissions a personal process concerning you (as in, an individual) and your accomplishments (or the lack thereof) rather than a competitive process against one another. If I look to other people who I know have gotten into schools that I haven't, my instinctive reaction is to compare myself to them, but if I step back and question the merit of my own credentials, I can avoid the damaging culture of bringing down other people.

There is such a thing as success and failure within the admissions process.

That brings me to the second quote from Kizza-Besigye: the notion that our environment on college issues is "hostile" because we are not open enough about it, and so the natural solution is to discuss it more freely. I would argue in favor of the opposite remedy: in order to eliminate any unhealthy college dialogue, we should eliminate *all* college dialogue.

Yes, that's right. I believe that from the day we are assigned our counselor until May 1st when we submit our enroll-

ment deposit, we should just not talk about college.

I remember four years ago, when I was applying to boarding schools, I told absolutely none of my classmates, including my closest friends, about what I was doing. They had not the slightest idea where I applied or that I was even applying. It was not until I was one-hundred percent sure of my decision that I informed them. I would be attending Choate come fall.

Looking back, I am very glad that I made that decision as a middle schooler. By not sharing anything about the process with others, it became entirely about me doing the best I could to create a thoughtful application.

I am not proposing that the school enforce this deliberately extreme suggestion of mine, to eliminate all college dialogue, because that would be a ridiculous and obvious violation of free speech. Within reason, people should talk about what they want to talk about if they want to talk about it.

I *am* proposing, however, that we as a community rethink the purpose of these college conversations. Does bringing up the topic of applying to college on a regular basis do more good or more harm? I lean toward the latter.

Jessica Shi is a sixth former from Andover, Mass. She may be reached at js17@choate.edu

JERUSALEM SHOULD BE FOR ALL RELIGIONS

By **Nicole Weinrauch '20**
Opinions Writer

Jerusalem, a city hemmed-in by its surrounding hills, always seems to have a magnified importance — a 5,000-year-old mix of glory and controversy far beyond its actual significance. It's in the news again, this time in a politicized challenge to its role as the meeting point of the world's three monotheistic traditions.

Actually, the controversy focuses on an area the size of just 20 football fields. On October 18, UNESCO's World Heritage Committee issued a rebuke of Israel's current supervision of what is known as the Al' Haram Sharif in Arabic, the Har Habayit in Hebrew, and the Temple Mount and Noble Sanctuary in English. The specific complaint — intrusions by non-Muslims and security forces into areas under authority of the Muslim Waqf — is not my concern. Rather, it is the unsettling suggestions created by the resolution, which omits reference to Jewish and Christian claims to the site. The resolution presents an opportunity for us, as an academic institution

dedicated to an unbiased study of history and to multicultural harmony, to engage in a better conversation.

On the Temple Mount stands the al Aqsa Mosque and Dome of the Rock, on top of the ruins of Judaism's two holiest Temples. The Temple Mount is also the site of major events in the life of Jesus. It's been called the world's most unfortunate coincidence of geography, an emotion-packed flashpoint for historical and modern conflict. But the ancient city that is home to this site also has a very different tradition, one just as old as conflict — the co-existence of many ethnicities, sects, and faiths. It is, indeed, the original world model for diversity and inclusion.

And yet UNESCO's resolution only refers to the Arabic names for the site and its structures — a move interpreted by many as a rejection of historical Jewish and Christian claims to the Temple Mount itself. In its only reference to a Jewish structure adjacent to the Temple Mount, the document puts the Western Wall (the remnant of the

Second Temple) in quotation marks, as if to question that claim, as well. The implication of Jerusalem as above all Muslim, with Jewish or Christian attachment secondary or doubtful, is hardly concealed. To subvert the connection between Jewish attachment to Jerusalem and the modern state of Israel injects political ideology into a matter of faith. It sniffs of anti-Semitism. At the least, it suggests modern Israel's existence is less than fully legitimate because Jews have no special relationship with Jerusalem. If no Temple Mount and no Wailing Wall, why not no Israel, too?

There are hints of irony here, given UNESCO's purpose to promote peace through international collaboration in conserving culture and history. The problem is that tasking the preservation of culture to the United Nations opens the process to politicization through majority rule. What is more intellectually misguided than using modern politics to disavow historical reality? Think about it. Let's examine why we study history. Understanding what is true and untrue about

the past does not in itself resolve conflicts. Rather, an accurate perception of the past is an essential starting point. "Accurate" means analysis of facts in the absence of political influence. History should not be subject to reconstruction to fit dominant present-day views. UNESCO's resolution ignores well-documented facts concerning the convergence of Judaism, Christianity and Islam in this small hilltop town. Ignoring history is a colossal mistake, and an example of the purposeful ignorance that a bureaucracy like the UN creates. This has little to do with settlements, borders, walls, wars, or any other events in the 68 years since the U.N. voted in favor of an independent state of Israel. It is an effort to de-legitimize the country's reason to exist.

Moreover, the resolution rejects the true tradition of Jerusalem as that rare thing — a symbol of shared communal attachment, inclusiveness, and celebration of diversity. UNESCO makes Jerusalem provincial when history shows it to be the opposite: one of the world's most enduring

examples of cosmopolitan tolerance. It is not simply the ancient birthplace of monotheistic peoples. It is a bazaar where various strains of Western civilization merge, sometimes easily and sometimes not. To misinterpret this great heritage is to depart from human history, to cast off the potential for peace.

No doubt, struggle for Jerusalem's control is the city's dominant narrative since its original conquest of the Canaanites by the Hebrews in the fourth millennium BCE. But beneath the passions and politics is an unchanged reality of inter-communal co-existence and cultural beauty. The great ritual of Jerusalem is the bazaar — the Greek Orthodox Arab buying his coffee from the Armenian shop in the Jewish Quarter as the muezzin's call to prayer melodically reverberates through the crisp, warm air. This is the history, the precious tradition, that UNESCO attacked.

Nicole Weinrauch is a third former from Singapore. She may be reached at weinrauch20@choate.edu



Transition Train

Donald J. Trump
[@realDonaldTrump](https://twitter.com/realDonaldTrump)

Totally made up facts by sleazebag political operatives, both Democrats and Republicans - FAKE NEWS! Russia says nothing exists. Probably...

John Lewis
[@repjohnlewis](https://twitter.com/repjohnlewis)

We honor Dr. King's legacy through service to our community and adherence to the philosophy & discipline of nonviolence #MLKDay #goodtrouble

President Obama
[@POTUS](https://twitter.com/POTUS)

Thank you for everything. My last ask is the same as my first. I'm asking you to believe—not in my ability to create change, but in yours.

Donald J. Trump
[@realDonaldTrump](https://twitter.com/realDonaldTrump)

For many years our country has been divided, angry and untrusting. Many say it will never change, the hatred is too deep. IT WILL CHANGE!!!!



Susan Walsh/AP

Vice President Joe Biden tearfully received the Presidential Medal of Freedom with Distinction from President Barack Obama.

Eight Years Later: Thanks, Obama



State of the Nation

By **Liza Mackeen-Shapiro '18**
Associate Editor

At 12:00 p.m. today, Donald Trump, Choate '18, will be sworn in as the 45th President of the United States. Barack Obama's time as president will officially be over. Implications surrounding a Trump presidency aside, the loss of Obama is a tragedy of its own.

Throughout his eight years as president, Obama has done a remarkable job of revitalizing the American economy. When he entered office, America was in the middle of the biggest recession since the Great Depression. In response to the economic crisis, Obama enacted several measures. On February 17, 2009, Obama signed the American Recovery and

Reinvestment Act, a stimulus package designed to alleviate unemployment. Although it was derided by both conservatives and liberals alike, the act saved an estimated 1.6 million jobs each year for four years, increased economic output by 2-3% from 2009-2011, and prevented 5.3 million Americans from falling below the poverty line in 2010.

off. When Obama took office in January 2009, the unemployment rate was 7.8%. As of December 2016, it had fallen dramatically to 4.7%.

In addition to improving the United States economy, Obama's administration has dramatically advanced social progress. As an advocate for LGBTQ rights, on September 20, 2011, he repealed the controversial "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy that forced gay and lesbian service members to conceal their sexuality for the duration of their military service. He also officially revoked government support for the Defense of Marriage Act and signed into law the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act, which added gender-, sexual-, and disability-based attacks to federal hate crime laws. Additionally, Obama has been a fierce proponent of gun control. Through various executive orders, he has strengthened background check requirements, increased funding for mental healthcare, and enacted other measures to attempt to decrease gun violence rates.

However, perhaps Obama's most important social accomplishment (and arguably the most important accomplishment of his presidency) is the

Affordable Care Act, a.k.a. Obamacare. Although Obamacare is not without its problems, it has been an enormous force for good in the lives of millions of Americans. A March 2016 study from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services found that 20 million people have gained healthcare coverage since the Affordable Care Act was passed in 2010 — a number which, the report notes, marks a "historic reduction in the uninsured." Thanks to his passion for social progress, Obama has bettered the lives of innumerable Americans.

Above all, Obama has proven himself to be a man of immense character. Unlike practically all other presidents, he has managed to serve eight years without having any major scandals. Departing from the affair-ridden traditions of other Democratic presidents such as John F. Kennedy and Bill Clinton, Obama has remained lovingly and faithfully devoted to his wife, Michelle, throughout his entire presidency. He is a doting and dedicated father to his two daughters, Sasha and Malia, remarking in his Farewell Address that "Of all that I've done in my life, I'm most proud to be your dad." Remarkably, he has also

avoided any scandals in his professional life. Sure, there have been some controversies, but Obama has had no Watergates, Iran-Contra affairs, or WMD flights of fancy. Despite what Fox News and other critics claim, he possesses great personal integrity, and has ran his administration with that as his guiding principle.

To quote the writer Ta-Nehisi Coates, "For eight years, Barack Obama walked on ice but never fell." He took office with enormous odds stacked against him, and yet emerged with an illustrious legacy of social change, economic development, and personal integrity. While he undoubtedly deserves a break after eight years of tireless public service to spend time with family and his dogs Sunny and Bo, it is hard not to wish that he could remain president for a little while longer. To President Obama: thank you for all that you've done for this country. We will miss your eloquence, intelligence, and virtue when you leave the White House today. You've truly shown us the audacity of hope.

Liza Mackeen-Shapiro is a fifth former from New York, NY. She may be reached at lmackeen Shapiro18@choate.edu

TIME TO FIGHT SECOND AMENDMENT MADNESS

By **Imad Rizvi '18**
Opinions Writer

On December 14th, 2012, in Newtown, Conn., an armed and mentally unstable man stepped into Sandy Hook Elementary School. After five minutes that included over 150 gunshots, twenty children and eight adults were dead.

Guns are a constant threat in our society today — on average, they kill ninety Americans each day. That's one every 16 minutes, resulting in an annual death toll of about 33,000. It is unacceptable that gun deaths remain so prominent in this country, and it is time for better regulation, including stricter background checks and bans on certain weapons with extremely dangerous capabilities.

Ownership of guns is widespread in America — the US has the highest per capita ownership of guns compared to every other nation in the world. In all 50 states, you can get a permit for the concealed carrying of these weapons, and in many you can even get one for openly carrying guns. Although the second amendment ensures the right to bear arms — arguably in a militia — the guns of the constitution's time period pale in comparison to the power that firearms have today. Gun control is a necessary means to ensure safety and reduce violence.

First, citizens should not be able to purchase automatic or rapid semi-automatic weapons. Automatic and semi-automatic weapons, which can be fired as many times as the shooter pulls the trigger, should be banned by law because of the potential destruction they can cause. Weapons

like these that can rapidly disperse bullets were made for effectiveness in warfare, and there is no place for them in the lives of a regular citizen. After all, when are you going to need to be able to shoot 120 bullets in a minute when hunting deer? Additionally, background checks must be performed on anybody in this country who wants to buy a gun. Currently, background check laws in this country are far too relaxed. Federal law mandates

that only licensed gun sellers are required to conduct background checks. However, many private gun sellers (particularly those at gun shows) are not licensed. This allows anyone, regardless of criminal record or history of mental illness, to purchase guns freely from these unlicensed sellers. Background checks must be expanded to encompass more things such as mental health and historical criminal activity.

A man in Florida named

Omar Mateen was known as an aggressive man who had a past of violent behavior towards those around him. Mateen's wife, who had left him, described him as "mentally unstable" and "disturbed." Despite mental issues, Mateen held an active firearms license and legally owned many guns since he wasn't required to take any psychological test to buy them. With these weapons, Mateen killed 49 people in the Pulse nightclub in

Orlando before he could be stopped. Extensive screening on those hoping to buy a gun would help prevent incidents in which dangerous people acquire deadly weapons.

These reforms may seem logical and just, but many oppose even the slightest changes to their ability to buy guns. One argument against gun control is that guns are needed for self-defense. Yes, there were 1.2 million violent crimes in 2012, but only 259 of those were from

guns in self-defense situations. That's .0215% — hardly enough to use self-defense as a valid argument against gun control.

Another common argument is that mass murderers don't follow laws anyway, so gun control measures are useless. However, in many situations that have involved many deaths from guns, the murderers used weapons purchased or gained legally. Proper gun control measures would make it more difficult for these murderers to get the weapons they desire. Additionally, if we stopped making laws because we were scared criminals wouldn't follow them — why make laws at all? Gun control will not stop all murders but it can provide a deterrent and make it difficult for the murderers to commit their despicable acts. The final justification — that is part of the Constitution — is also not a valid excuse because the Constitution can be rewritten, and it should be.

If proper gun control measures — or even small, common sense regulations — are not implemented then more death and destruction will ensue. The frequency of mass shootings in America has already desensitized many from the pain of witnessing these events. High numbers of killings will not disappear on their own. It is time to learn from the deaths in Newtown, Orlando, Aurora, San Bernardino, and Fort Lauderdale, and it is time for effective legislation that can finally bring an end to this senseless violence.

Imad Rizvi is a fifth former from Glastonbury, Conn. He may be reached at irizvi18@choate.edu



Illustration by Julian Yau

The Headmaster's Headquarters: A Peek Inside

By **Kristen Andonie '17**
Staff Reporter

Every room tells a story about its occupant, and Headmaster Dr. Alex Curtis's office is no exception. Tucked away on the first floor of Archbold, his office may single-handedly offer more resources on ancient architecture than the entire Paul Mellon Arts Center, yet despite the limited space it still manages to represent the spectrum of his passions.

While a single step into the office reveals the cozy elegance of the room, the more intricate details that reflect Dr. Curtis's interests are only exposed through close observation. The artwork on the walls, the literature on the shelves, the awards on the windowsills — those are the storytellers, the objects that constitute the core of Dr. Curtis's office.

Perhaps the most prominent pieces in the room are four engravings, two set in Italy and two that are Choate-related. (At Swarthmore College, Dr. Curtis majored in ancient history and minored in Latin and Art History; he holds a Ph.D. in architectural history from Princeton University.) While the pieces look like detailed sketches, they are actually printed from metal engravings (a single engraving can produce many prints, each considered originals).

One engraving depicts Choate's soon-to-be-constructed auditorium as though it were a ruin a thousand years in the future. At the bottom, there is an Italian inscription that translates to "Rome's very ruins teach us." To Dr. Curtis, this aphorism serves as a reminder "that even the greatest place is transient. Legacy is important — I mean, the buildings in these engravings have survived fifteen hundred years. But things will continue. Nothing is forever."

Another engraving depicts George St. John's architectural plan to build Memorial House



Photo courtesy of David Nesdale

This engraving depicts the original plan for the placement of Memorial House, a mirror reflection of Hill House. It hangs on Dr. Curtis's office wall.

on the hill where the track currently sits. "Hill and Memorial are the same building, so the idea was that they would be mirrors of each other," said Dr. Curtis. However, George St. John walked his dog from peak to peak and used a stopwatch to time himself. Realizing the trek consumed over ten minutes, he chose to confine the building to a closer area.

By that time, the idea to design Hill and Memorial facing each other had been steadfastly established. "They had gone as far as to make this engraving to show people they were going to do it, and they were fundraising for it. It wasn't just a whim," noted Dr. Curtis.

And cancelling the design was no simple business. For the new plan (the design we have on campus today) to work, houses like Squire Stanley had to be uprooted from their former locations along Christian Street and physically moved to alternate locations. Dr. Curtis explained, "George St. John — who was responsible for all the great Georgian buildings on campus — realized he was wrong. He was strong enough to change his mind when he was wrong."

Aside from engravings, Dr. Curtis has shelves packed with books, categorized by genre. Most of his books are related to art history, but he has ample selections of soccer team Leeds United titles, as well as non-fiction works written by notable alumni and guest speakers. A Sherlock Holmes enthusiast, Dr. Curtis also keeps an annotated volume of the most famous fictional detective in his office bookshelf: "Reading it takes you ten times as long because every part of it has notes explaining the background or inconsistencies with other stories."

Dr. Curtis's most treasured book in his office is the *Macmillan Encyclopedia of Architects*, which he purchased as a graduate student. "This was before the days of Google. This was the book," emphasized Dr. Curtis.

Other interests are displayed as well. On the windowsill stands a plaque Dr. Curtis was awarded for his contributions to Princeton's Women's Rugby Team, which won the national championship twice under his coaching. President George W. Bush sent Dr. Curtis a letter of congratulations, which hangs proudly on his office wall.

As Headmaster, Dr. Curtis has naturally met with many important guests. According to Dr. Curtis, one of the most remarkable individuals he has had the honor to welcome into his office is Brad Snyder, a blind Paralympian who visited Choate in the winter of 2014. His favorite office visitors, however, are his own students here at Choate. "I'm very proud of our students. Last spring, a group of students came in to talk about divestment, and I remember that more than most famous persons," said Dr. Curtis.

As saturated with his hobbies and passions as his office is, what ultimately matters most to Dr. Curtis is setting an example of inclusion for the Choate community, hence the rectangular discussion table that sits at the heart of his office. "I hope very much that I am a collaborative leader," Dr. Curtis said, "It's very important to me that I have a space that we can gather people regularly to talk and hear and listen to each other, and I hope that that goes on throughout the school."

Kristen Andonie may be reached at kandonie17@choate.edu

TOMORROW, CHOATE MARCHES FOR WOMEN

By **Kristen Altman '18**
Associate Editor

Picture the entire town of Wallingford trying to fit in the PMAC. Tomorrow, January 21, the streets of Washington, D.C., and other major cities will be much, much more crowded. Held on the day after the presidential inauguration of Donald Trump, the Women's March on Washington will greet Trump on his first day in office — by staging hundreds of international protests against his presidency.

Spanning the United States and abroad, locations include New York City; Tokyo, Japan; Anchorage, Alaska; Lancaster, England; and our very own Hartford, Conn. According to the organizers an estimated 725,000 people are scheduled to attend either the Washington march or a sister march. Many in the Choate community will be among them.

Passionate about social justice and political activism, Edie Conekin-Tooze '19 is one such attendee. After the results of the 2016 presidential election, Conekin-Tooze felt that she needed to act. Following the election results, Conekin-Tooze attended two protests: one in New York and the other in New Haven. Traveling with her mother to Washington, D.C., she plans to make the Women's March on Washington her third overall.

"I think it's important to fight against the normalization of the hatred that Donald Trump stands for," said Conekin-Tooze. "As a woman, and especially as someone who believes in inclusivity and diversity, it's important for me to say, 'This isn't okay. This isn't normal. This isn't the world I want to live in.'"

Chemistry teacher Ms. Julie Oxborough-Yankus also plans to attend the Women's March but in New York, not Washington, instead. By participating in the event, Ms. Oxborough-Yankus hopes to expand her voice beyond the Choate community. She said, "We're a select population here on campus, and I just want to get a bigger sense of what's going on. It's important that our new president know that there are a lot of people who have some very strong opinions about his campaign, from women's issues to human issues."

However, students have questioned the march's commitment to inclusivity. Mirialie DeJesus '18, president of the Hispanic-Latino Forum, expressed concerns about the event's accessibility to women of color. "The organizers of

the event claim that they're pro-women's rights, but it's not clear which women they're fighting for," DeJesus said.

DeJesus's criticisms mirror those of organizations such as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). As of January 11, the NAACP Portland chapter has pulled their support for the march, citing the organizers' reluctance to address issues affecting women of color for fear of being too "political."

According to the march organizers, the event hopes to represent all women in the protest. In the Women's March on Washington's Unity Principle, the organization explained their dedication to inclusivity: "We must create a society in which women — in particular Black women, Native women, poor women, immigrant women, Muslim women, and queer and trans women — are free and able to care for and nurture their families, however they are formed, in safe and healthy environments free from structural impediments."

Though the march advocates female empowerment, members of all genders are welcome to attend. However, they must share the core belief of the event: gender equality.

Among them will be biology teacher Mr. Deron Chang. By participating in the march, Mr. Chang hopes to act in support of women's rights. He stated, "I think it's just as important for men to be involved in the Women's March as it was for whites to be involved in the Civil Rights Movement. I want to have women see that there are men out there who will stand with them." Mr. Chang plans to attend with his wife, Ms. Penny Chang; his daughter, Abigail Chang '19; and his son Callum Chang, who is in sixth grade.

Mr. Chang said, "I think if my son is exposed to this, and if he sees that there are a lot of people who are focused on this one thing, then it must be pretty important. None of us are governors, none of us are mayors, none of us are senators, but we're all coming together to express our opinions. I think that's incredibly powerful for a sixth grader to be part of."

For those who were troubled by the results of the election, attending these marches is one of many meaningful ways to protest. Ms. Oxborough-Yankus said, "It's not convenient for me to attend the march. But it's not enough for me just to say 'I wish I could go.'"

Kristen Altman may be reached at kaltman18@choate.edu



Across

- 1 Actor Hamm
- 4 It's not Linux
- 6 Home for a pastrami on rye
- 7 Absence of difficulty

Down

- 1 Recipient of the Beatles' "Hey"
- 2 Up for any military service
- 3 Lovegren '18 (check masthead)
- 5 Half a Mandarin thank you

1	2	3	
4			5
6			
7			

The solution for this puzzle can be found online at thechoatenews.choate.edu

TWO STRANGERS, TEN MINUTES, ONE QUESTION

Before last Monday, Amir Idris '17, a four-year senior from South Euclid, Ohio, and Alice Xu '18, a three-year junior from San Francisco, Calif., had never so much as heard of each other. As their first ever conversation, Idris and Xu sat down to discuss the following question. (Okay, so really, two — related! — questions.)

Is it ethical to eat meat? Is it unethical to kill bugs?

AX: I just killed a spider this morning.

AI: Actually, that's funny because I saw a spider this morning, and I did not kill it.

AX: I used to be really scared of ants, even if I killed it with a tissue, so I would drown it with liquid soap. So now I feel like a horrible person...

I was reading this thing online because I was researching whether lobsters feel pain or not, and it said that bugs don't really feel pain. When you kill them, they don't suffer, I guess because their brain isn't complex enough to process that pain. So I don't see what's unethical about killing them.

AI: I don't know if it's about pain, per se; it's more about experience. Personally, the reason that I eat meat is it's sort of death for a purpose, in terms of human survival and us continuing to live.

But in terms of bugs, I don't really gain much from killing a spider in my shower if it's not

going to bite me, and so I figured why end its short life and everything it knows simply because I'm scared of it — when a giant alien could do the same thing to me.

AX: That's true; that's true. But in terms of eating meat, I mean I'm not a vegetarian or vegan, but I understand the other side of the argument, how they say you could totally survive without eating meat.

People just eat it because they like it. There is a purpose to eating meat, but it's not required for survival.

AI: That's true. Although my thought is that the animals that you would encounter in the wild are also going to kill you. It's not like as we domesticated animals, the animals were all nice to us, and we started killing them. It was a survival instinct.

In modern times, we've taken it to a point where we don't really need to eat meat, and we don't need to slaughter them on a mass scale. But the ethics behind it hasn't changed much since hunter-gatherer times, in my eyes, at least.

AX: Whenever we (humans) do something, we always say it's man-made or something, but I think in the long run, it's still just evolution and how nature made us to be. So I guess when we do kill animals to eat them, it's just how it is. We can't really change that because they're not intelligent enough to domesticate and eat us, so then we do that to them.

LET IT SNOW? SOME THINGS TO KNOW

As we start to see more snow this winter, we should remember to appreciate Choate's Facilities Services. To understand the magnitude of the work that goes into maintaining the safety of our campus during the winter months, here are some statistics, provided to *The Choate News* by Mr. Jeffrey Miller, Director of Facilities Services at Choate.

THERE ARE...



10 full-time employees from the Grounds Department

and 6-20 employees outside of Grounds



WHO USE...



4 full-sized trucks with plows



3 smaller sidewalk units with plows



80-90 tons of salt per year



and 1 tractor with mounted snowbrush

TO CLEAR...



37" of snowfall annually



on 1,600 outdoor stairs



8 miles of sidewalk



and 12 miles of roadways and parking lots.

GUEST DANCE PERFORMERS ENTANGLE AUDIENCE AT THE PMAC



Photo courtesy of the Hartford Courant

By **Neve Scott '18**
Associate Editor

Last Friday, January 13, at 7:30 p.m., professional dancers Lacina Coulibaly and Wendy Jehlen took to the Paul Mellon Arts Center's main stage to perform their dance duet, "Entangling." The origin of this unusual name comes from the dance's inspiration of quantum entanglement. Quantum entanglement is a phenomenon in which two atoms that are physically separated in space and time become — for all intents and purposes — one. The dance examines interpersonal energies over extended distances, derived from a description of the spectacle on a podcast called Invisibilia.

The story encapsulated the unending journey of two atoms searching for one another, initially physically detached, and then coming together as one. On the stage, light was used intel-

ligently to display the two atoms as being distinctly separated, with single light beams occasionally connecting the two on the dark stage. They danced together, always streamlined in unison, displaying the feeling of the tug of invisible connections at all times. The story was truly romantic at its core and encapsulated the idea that distance cannot prevent attraction. Coulibaly and Jehlen strung together different dance styles, such as African, Indian, Capoeira, and contemporary, and the mashup played out beautifully on the stage. Although some of the pieces on their own were broken down into choppy portions with vastly differing music, the integrity and complexity of the dance remained very much intact. Through various lifts, turns, and rolls, Coulibaly and Jehlen connected with an undeniable force.

Both Coulibaly and Jehlen are widely celebrated dancers with many artistic styles in com-

mon. Jehlen's strengths lie in her storytelling, which includes a variety of dance styles, such as Odissi, Kuchipudi, Capoeira, Kalaripayattu, West African dance, and contemporary dance. She has been recognized for her work by groups such as the Association of Performing Arts Presenters, the Boston Center for the Arts, the American Institute of Indian Studies, the Boston Dance Alliance, the Fulbright Program, and the National Endowment for the Arts. Jehlen has been the Artistic Director of ANIKAYA Dance Theater since 1998, an organization that, according to its website, "weaves together music, dance and storytelling to create works that pull from the full range of the body's communicative capabilities."

Coulibaly, on the other hand, is deeply invested in traditional African dances, as well as contemporary influences. He has collaborated with many renowned

international dance companies and individually with artists. He aims to provoke questions of the integration of the traditional and the contemporary. His latest solo, "Transcendence," shows this most explicitly, examining faith in urban life and religion. Coulibaly has also worked at many colleges and universities, including Yale, Brown, and Cornell.

Last week, Coulibaly continued his pattern of teaching in higher learning institutions by teaching master classes to the dance program at Choate. He taught Choate students traditional West African dance and also picked ten students to work on a piece of his creation, to be performed in the spring. This piece, choreographed entirely by Coulibaly, mixes contemporary and West African styles.

Neve Scott may be reached at nscott18@choate.edu

Hamilton Chicago's Familiar Addition: Jin Ha '08

By **Simi Sachdeva '19**
Staff Reporter

Photo courtesy of NYU Tisch.



Walking around Choate's campus, hearing the soundtrack of *Hamilton: An American Musical* being played, sung, or discussed is not a rare occurrence. The show has been a success both in New York and in Chicago, as well as among members of the Choate community, so we are lucky to call an the actor of the Chicago production one of our own. Jin Ha '08 is cast in the world-renowned show *Hamilton* in Chicago. He is a member of the ensemble, playing the father of the Schuyler Sisters, James Reynolds, and Philip's doctor. Ha is also an understudy for Alexander Hamilton, Aaron Burr, Laurens/Philip, and King George III.

I remember failing so many times and so hard in class. Learn to fail and fail better. It's so crucial.

Jin Ha '08

Ha began his interest in the performing arts in middle school, playing Phantom in Phantom of the Opera, and then later being a member of Choate's oldest a capella group, The Maiyeros, which he was co-president of for two years. Looking back, Ha cannot recount a single event beginning his career in theater, "It's been a long journey of certainties and uncertainties that have led to where I am today." Ha associated his draw to theater with moving around as a child, commenting, "The sense of community in theater comforted me." He was also drawn to acting after seeing others act. "As an immigrant from South Korea by way of Hong Kong, I learned a lot about the English language and about Western culture from the countless hours I spent watching TV growing up," he explained. Ha stated, "The thrill and ecstasy of performing has always been with me. I'm scared of heights, so the adrenaline from performing in front of 2,000 people every night is more up my alley — as opposed to jumping off cliffs or parasailing."

Choate was a large factor in Ha's pursuit of a career in the arts. Ha gushed about his alma mater's program: "Choate has, hands-down, one of the best art centers I have ever seen if not have ever worked in, and that includes my time at Columbia University and at New York University." Surprisingly, Ha did not participate in Choate's Arts Concentration program because he was unsure about pursuing arts. Instead, Ha was in spring musicals, like his older sister, Jeein Ha '00, and acted in several plays, such as one directed by Ms. Tracy Ginder-Delventhal.

Ha took Acting 100 and he recalled that the class "blew his mind." He says that the course taught him his most important lesson as an artist, the value of failure. "I remember failing so many times and so hard in class. Learn to fail and fail better. It's so crucial."

Shockingly, Ha did not major in theater in college. He applied to the school's theater program, but later changed his major to East Asian Languages and Cultures. Ha explained, "Choate fostered my interest in theater by fostering my interest in people." He added, "To be an actor is to understand the human condition." To anyone interested in the arts, Ha's only advice is to "keep learning about the world. Study science. Study mathematics. Study history, especially. Study literature. Everything informs your work as an artist."

Choate fostered my interest in theater by fostering my interest in people. To be an actor is to understand the human condition.

Jin Ha '08

Ha regularly asks himself why is he doing what does. His answer is quite wise: "I'm interested in deconstructing and restructuring the all-too-common narratives that have and continue to saturate our media, art, and entertainment." Ha strives to represent people of color, different sexual orientations, and levels of ability. "It's about representation in a meaningful way. Not two-dimensional caricatures or archetypes to serve the same outdated tropes or stories or protagonists. Ableism is quite rampant in our society, and people with physical or mental disabilities (or who are differently-abled) deserve more representation and humanity in our art and media."

Ha's goals for the future are lofty, though he's no doubt committed to the performance arts. Some of his goals include dismantling the patriarchy, eliminating micro-aggressions worldwide, and, with art as the medium of his message, telling stories that have never been told before. As Ha wisely stated in his final remarks, "I identify as an activist first, artist second."

Simi Sachdeva may be reached at ssachdeva19@choate.edu

Spotlight on the Highly-Acclaimed Captain Fantastic

By **Maya Birney '17**
Reporter

Mark your calendars; the 89th Academy Awards ceremony will take place on February 26th! With the awards season upon us, a horde of Oscar-worthy films have been flooding the theaters, and I've had the privilege of viewing a generous handful of them. Of these, *Captain Fantastic* was the most poignant and memorable. It follows the story of a socially-inept, forest-dwelling family that ultimately endures modern civilization after the death of a close relative. The protagonist is played by the rugged, yet utterly lovable Viggo Mortensen, commonly known for his role as Aragorn in the Lord of the Rings trilogy. However, in an interview with CBS Sunday Morning News, Mortensen admitted that *Captain Fantastic* would be his last role as an actor. Mortensen made sure he retired with one last bang; this film surely puts him on the list as a contender for Best Actor in a Leading Role.

wholesome on-screen family in every aspect but one — socializing with the outer world.

There are a few scenes that unnecessarily drag, but there are even more moments that dance wonderfully with the breeze of the film. For instance, the family's acoustic take on Guns N' Roses' "Sweet Child O' Mine" at the mother's funeral beautifully merges with the departure of the eldest son at the airport. I felt nostalgic and grateful for the childhood memories that the song induced; this gratitude inflated as the song came to a close and Mortensen's character advises his son, "Live each day like it could be your last. You drink it in, be adventurous, be bold, but savor it; it goes fast." I tend to fall for films that offer life advice, especially when it comes from a wise, experienced persona.

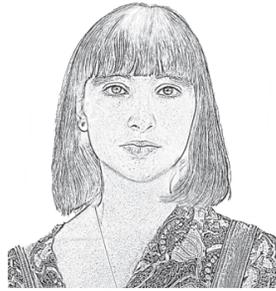
I would be shocked if *Captain Fantastic* leaves this year's award ceremony without any honors. It's a film worthy of the highest praises. If anything, it's a film that makes me want to get an earthy tattoo and to crack open a Noam Chomsky book. *Captain Fantastic* is, as its name implies, fantastic.

Maya Birney may be reached at mbirney17@choate.edu



Photo courtesy of Cine World

À LA MODE



By **Jeanne Malle '19**
Staff Reporter

Recently, patterns and daring colors have been filling the streets of the fashion capitals of the world. At Choate, this aesthetic and style is ever-so-slightly becoming more predominant, and these characteristics are incorporated into Sarah Bonnem's '19 day-to-day style. She said, "I always try wearing some sort of pattern or print. I also wear lots of big flowy pants, because they are not only comfortable, but also seem to make everything I do feel more dramatic." When I asked her where her inspiration came from, the Yves Saint Laurent 60's and 70's "Rive

Gauche" collection immediately jumped to her mind. "He did a lot of fun things and sort of played around with more casualwear in ways that had never been done before."



Photo by Jeanne Malle/The Choate News

Sarah Bonnem '19 wears her characteristic big, flowy pants.

She also noticed that a large part of her influence came from a blog called "Man

Repeller" that has recently gotten more famous than ever. A part of this website shows the finest street style of New York City, lots of which plays around with crazy patterns

and colors. The idea behind the name, "Man Repeller" is the belief that expressing your-

self or sharing a crazy sense of style can be done, and mostly should not affect the way people see you or you see yourself, even if does not fit the colloquial, conventional, accepted beauty standard. It is interesting that Bonnem connected a revolutionary moment in fashion that occurred in the mid-60's with style trends that are still influencing our world. The joining of the past decades with our own time show that the prior modern fashion exhibited the mentality that letting loose and wearing daring items of clothing empowered not only the fashion business but also the people wearing the clothes. Today, many people still come to this conclusion, unaware that these thoughts are not new. Bonnem concluded, "You have to learn to stand behind fashion being a public thing, but still not take it too seriously. There is something to be said for being able to be in a place with what you're wearing in which — when someone makes fun of it — you can say 'ok!' and know that it does not matter."

Jeanne Malle may be reached at jmalle19@choate.edu

FIELD REPORT

Saturday Games

Boys' Basketball (4-7-0)
falls to Exeter, 53-64

Girls' Basketball (10-3-0)
beats Ethel Walker, 70-37

Boys' Ice Hockey (5-6-2)
falls to Taft, 2-3

Girls' Ice Hockey (5-5-1)
beats Taft, 2-1

Girls' Squash (7-2-0)
beats Deerfield, 4-1

Boys' Swimming (3-1-0)
beats Northfield, 85-68

Girls' Swimming (4-0-0)
beats Northfield, 86-71

Wrestling (12-1-1)
beats Marianapolis, 66-15

Wednesday Games

Archery (2-1-0)
beats NW JOAD, (214-133)

Boys' Basketball (4-7-0)
beats Westminster, 67-60

Girls' Basketball (10-3-0)
falls to Loomis, 43-58

Boys' Ice Hockey (5-6-2)
beats Berkshire, 5-3

Girls' Ice Hockey (5-5-1)
falls to Deerfield, 1-2

Boys' Squash (2-7-0)
beats Kingswood, 7-0

Girls' Squash (7-2-0)
beats Kingswood, 7-1

Boys' Swimming (3-1-0)
beats Avon, 96-79

Girls' Swimming (4-0-0)
beats Porter's, 93-82

Wrestling (12-1-1)
beats Suffield, 54-21

After 21 Years, Gallagher to Step Down



Photo courtesy of Judy Donald/The Archives

Gallagher was appointed Choate's ninth Director of Athletics in June 1996.

Continued from Page 1

the Athletic Director until the end of the school year, with what he termed a "passing of the baton" occurring before fall term of 2017. "There'll be a process, which is starting now, where the administration will figure out who they choose to appoint." However, once this figurative baton has been passed, Mr. Gallagher is looking to really let the new Athletic Director go in his or her own direction, while he will shift towards more of a role in coaching within athletics. In terms of his involvement with the athletic department as an en-

tity, he said, "I think that when you step out of a position like this where I've been associated with it for so long, it's important to give whoever the successor is their space to do what he or she is going to do. I'll be happy to be a resource if they have questions or they want advice, but I'm not going to be second guessing them."

In reflecting on his time as Athletic Director, Mr. Gallagher commented that getting to know so many incredible people from various New England prep schools has been one of the most enjoyable parts of his job, "When I started, I assumed that my relationship with Athletic Directors



Photo courtesy of Judy Donald/The Archives

A resident dorm adviser throughout his career, Gallagher currently lives in Memorial House.

at other schools would be mostly competitive, but it turns out that it is anything but: it's much more cooperative and collegial because they're dealing with the same sets of problems that I am." Additionally, Mr. Gallagher said that the experience of being able to work with coaches and kids from around Choate has been fun. He also commented on the uniqueness of the position, saying, "You're dealing with pretty much every part of the school, from admissions to facilities to the college office to development to communications, everything is involved." Finally, addressing perhaps his biggest and most

significant achievement, Mr. Gallagher said that he took a lot of satisfaction in bringing together the Eight Schools League, an association created officially in 2006 and coordinated mostly by him. Member schools include Choate, Deerfield, Hotchkiss, Lawrenceville, NMH, Andover, Exeter, and St. Paul's. The association has received great feedback, even being dubbed "A Young Ivy League." Its creation is just a small part of Gallagher's tremendous legacy as Choate's athletic director.

Jackson Elkins may be reached at jelkins18@choate.edu

The Woes of Managing Wrestling

By Sarah Gurevitch '19
Reporter

Choate Boys' Wrestling has a very interesting dynamic this year, which I've become privy to through my role as manager. With two team captains and a mix of athletes from each grade, the wrestling team is anything but boring. Sam Madden '17 said, "I'm not really sure if the freshmen know what's going on half the time. Whenever I see Cam (Polemni-Hegarty '20), he's just lying on the floor. Other times, I look over to where Kyn (Toh '20) is supposed to be wrestling, but instead he's practicing his disappearing thumb magic trick."

The team has faced a major battle this year: continuing the tradition of Country Music Friday. North Peters '19, who owns the speaker system used at practice, also harbors an intense hatred for country music. As a result, our beloved tradition has been flushed out. But on the occasional Country Friday that North allows, one can observe Colin Myles '17 truly enjoying himself, which is a real sight.

Choate Wrestling is a very focused program, as you can see. And, good news for anyone 106 pounds or under, you can still join the team! A spot in your weight class is open, and we have an extra singlet just for you.

Something I bet you did not know is that Choate now has its own sauna on campus, and it is open to students! If you have yet to visit "the dungeon," AKA the wrestling room, you are truly missing out. It is by far the sweatiest

room on campus. By simply sitting in the wrestling room (as I do for two hours every school day) you'll break out in a sweat that burns your eyes. If you're lucky, you'll even get ringworm! What could be better than that?

Fortunately, ringworm hasn't been a big issue this year because of the team's amazing managers and floor moppers: Jamie Hemstock '17, Sofia Esquibies '17, and me (Sarah Gurevitch '19). If you're not sure who we are, we're

the only girls on campus who sport Choate Wrestling hats. Our wrestlers mean the world to us.

The team's practices are certainly a can't-miss event. Who wouldn't want to experience the heat and sweat of intense competition in an environment sans ventilation?

But, honestly, wrestling is an aggressive and tough sport, deserving a lot of respect. It instills core values in its players, such as Tommy Wachtell '19 demonstrates. Wachtell has gained a whole new appreciation for water because of his experience on the team. He elaborated, "Wrestling has caused me to value water breaks more than life itself."

So spread the word that Choate has a sauna – I mean wrestling room – grab your towel, and head on down. Most importantly, though, follow Choate Wrestling's official Instagram, @choate.wrestling, run by the team's passionate and devoted managers.

Sarah Gurevitch may be reached at sgurevitch19@choate.edu



Photo courtesy of Ross Mortensen

Varsity wrestler Mpilo Norris '18 faces a Hotchkiss opponent.

GIRLS' ICE VARSITY HOCKEY

BOARS TIE RHINOS IN DRAMATIC OVERTIME

By Joseph Coyne '19
Staff Reporter

On Saturday, January 15, at 5:00 p.m., the Girls' Varsity Hockey team took on the Taft Rhinos in Remsen Arena. The game went back and forth with both teams getting opportunities to score throughout the game. But in the end, even after a thrilling sudden-death overtime, neither of the evenly-matched teams could pull ahead for good, leaving the score at 3-3.

One of the highlights of the game for the Boars, along with their success with faceoffs, was the outstanding performance of their special teams. Choate's penalty kill held Taft scoreless on four tries with a power play. Additionally, Choate capitalized on one of its three power plays in the first period with a goal by Kaitlyn O'Donohoe '19 with just under five minutes left.

After the game, Coach Nicole Stock commented, "We've put the emphasis on special teams in practice these last two weeks. So for us, it was nice to gain a little momentum off of Taft's power plays and then also on our own. Ours is starting to click a little bit; we're moving the puck a little bit nicer." She added that, in some previous games, the special teams were not as efficient as she would have liked, so it has been nice watching the team break through that hurdle in recent weeks. Captain Kristina Schuler '17 was also proud of the way the special teams played, saying, "It's good to capitalize when you're a man up, but just as important to gain momentum when killing off a penalty. We have been working really hard on our power play and it's finally started to pay off in the last couple games."

A surprising strength for this year's team is the average age of the players. Girls' Varsity Hockey has nine underformers this year that are constantly on the ice, three of which are freshman. Those three freshmen played outstandingly on Saturday. They were all over the ice, persistently

chasing the puck and wreaking havoc on Taft's defense. This was shown by goals from both Gina Driscoll '20 and Effie Tournas '20, while Christina Tournas '20 assisted on her sister's goal. After the game, Coach Stock commented that it was nice to see the young players take control of the game and be rewarded for it with goals. The underformers put the team on their back in this game, scoring all three goals.

While the entire defensive group had strong plays on Saturday, including some impressive one-on-one stops from Liza Duffley '19 and Tracey Stafford '19, the defense was anchored by Lexi Takashima's '18 outstanding play. She was everywhere in this game, quelling multiple scoring opportunities for the opposition and creating some for her own team. Her quick shots from the point kept Taft's defense compressed, created opportunities near the goalie crease, and led to longer possessions. Captain Cam Leonard '17 commented on Takashima's play, "Lexi was really a force on the ice today. She was the leader of our defensive zone and had some good offensive rushes." No doubt Lexi will continue to lead this strong defense in the back half of the season.

Both captains expressed how proud they were of the team's performance despite the disappointing tie. Captain Schuler said, "We were really pumped up for the game and I think that translated really well to the compete level on ice." After the game, Coach Stock said that she was proud of the way the team fought and recovered from the few minor breakdowns that are inevitable in a fast-paced game like hockey, especially against such a strong opponent.

Hopefully this game can be a stepping-stone for the team as they enter the second half of their season. The Boars will face some tough teams at home, on the road, and, ultimately, in the New England Playoffs.

Joseph Coyne may be reached at jcoyne19@choate.edu

VARSITY SWIMMING

ONE MEET, NINE BROKEN RECORDS

By Isabelle So '20
Reporter

On December 14, 2016, the Choate swim teams raced against Suffield Academy and left with a fantastic win: boys at 97-89 and girls at 99-87; as a whole, our teams performed magnificently. Coach Sara Massa's tips – such as making sure not to breathe within the flags – won the boys their first meet and the girls their second of the season. At this particular meet, six event records were broken, and nine records were broken in total.

A relay team consisting of Samantha Scott '20, Izzy Peel '19, Isabelle So '20 and Josephine Mah '18 broke the girls' 200m Medley Relay school record, swimming a time of 2:04.39.

Next, Samantha Scott '20 broke the girls 50m Free school record, swimming a time of 27.45.

According to Samantha Scott '20, her team came close to breaking the 200 Medley Relay at a previous meet against Andover. This time, Coach Massa adjusted the lineup to enhance their speed. Scott said, "We were just pumped and had it in our heads that we were going to get the record. We swam our hearts out. And in the end, it all worked out as we had hoped." She also stated that for the 50m Free record, she was not aware that she broke it or was even close to breaking it – she was solely focused on her technique and the pointers Coach Massa had given her, such as not breathing on her last stroke into the wall.

The same day, the boys' team broke four event records, but seven including individual records.

We swam our hearts out. And in the end, it all worked out as we had hoped.

Samantha Scott '20

A relay team consisting of Thomas Issa '17, Jason Weng '17, Tristan So '17, and Scott Romeyn '18 broke the school record for the 200m Medley Relay with a time of 1:47.98. They also managed to break the 400m Free Relay school record with a time of 3:35.29. They could have snagged the pool record for this 400m as well, but Suffield took first place and set a new pool record.

However, the Wild Boars also completed the 200m Free Relay with a time of 1:36.59, which set the new school record, pool record, and the biggest win of all, the New England Record. According to So, the four of them had only planned to break the school record. Finally, Scott Romeyn '18 broke the boys' 50m Free school record and pool record. He swam a time of 23.53, being the first to claim that record since Derek Moore '93 set it in 1993.

With one win and one loss for the boys and two wins and zero losses for the girls, Choate's swim teams are showing significant promise for the coming season.

Isabelle So may be reached at iso20@choate.edu