



## IN ANNUAL DIVERSITY DAY PROGRAM, DR. LIZA TALUSAN UNDERSCORES ASIAN-AMERICANS’ ROLE IN CIVIL RIGHTS ACTIVISM

By **Claire Yuan ’21**  
*Associate Editor*

On Monday, as part of Choate’s annual Diversity Day, the School gathered in Colony Hall to hear from Dr. Liza Talusan, this year’s Diversity Day keynote speaker. Dr. Talusan’s presentation titled “Activist or ‘Act? As if!’” examined the importance of highlighting all minority groups in discussions about diversity and inclusivity — with a special focus on Asian-Americans. Regaling the audience with an anecdote of her son’s biography project, Dr. Talusan cited the *Who Is?* biography series as an example of the lack of Asian representation in society and history. She urged the Choate community to lean into discomfort and actively engage in difficult conversations in order to further diversity and inclusion, bridging the gap between minority groups and helping everyone define their own voice.

Dr. Talusan, who appeared in the documentary *I’m Not Racist...Am I?*, which was shown to students during last year’s Diversity Day, is an educator, facilitator, and strategic change partner for organizations and individuals hoping to



Photo courtesy of Danielle Capri/The Choate News

Dr. Liza Talusan, an educator and activist, delivers her lecture, “Activist or ‘Act? As if!’”

develop their understanding of diversity, equity, and inclusion. With a degree in psychology and child development from Connecticut College and a doctorate in higher education from the University of Massachusetts, Boston, she has been invited to

more than 100 schools and organizations across the country to speak and plan workshops for adults and students alike.

Regarding her speech’s approach to Diversity Day through the lens of being Asian-American, Dr. Talusan explained,

“Days like MLK Day do tend to focus on black and white relations, and, like I was saying in my speech, there were Asian-Americans involved in the civil rights movement. They were there — we were there! So I’m trying to provide voice to those stories

that almost never get told but that I know were part of it.”

Dr. Talusan’s speech was received positively by the Choate community. “I thought that it was nice she was able to bring humor to an otherwise very serious topic. I think this made people more

engaged and willing to listen to what she had to say,” said Natarsha Yan ’21. “She also made sure to be inclusive of all groups when she was talking so that everyone could relate to it in some way even if they didn’t personally identify as Asian-American.” Yan also liked the catchy wordplay with “activism” and “as if,” saying that she appreciated that the phrase was both memorable and “held a deeper meaning.”

Bringing to light the accomplishments of Asian-Americans that have often been overlooked and considered unimportant, Dr. Talusan’s presentation helped many students realize their own power and voice. Rhea Shah ’22 explained, “I myself had always wondered how I fit into the civil rights movement as a first-generation Asian, and it was interesting to see all the faces of those involved and the roles that they played that we aren’t taught in grade school.”


During her smaller group workshops, Dr. Talusan led students through the “American Dream Game,” which is based off of a game that students played in the documentary *I’m Not Racist...Am I?* The goal of the game is to

See **DIVERSITY**, Page 2



### The American Dream Game

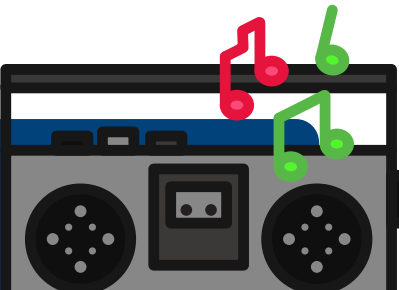
“I thought it [was] interesting to talk with fellow students about where we’d end up on the board, why we’d end up there, and how it relates to our own experience. [Dr. Liza Talusan] really wanted us to speak. She gave her own opinion, but promoted our asking questions.” — Rhea Shah ’22



### Does political correctness hinder free speech? What are the pressures at Choate Rosemary Hall to align to a specific social or political perspective?

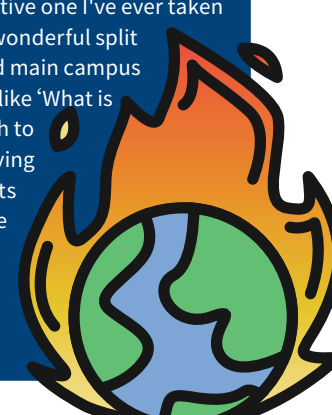
“[The facilitators] both did a great job creating a safe environment for everyone’s opinion to be heard and respected. Something that I really appreciated was their vulnerability in sharing personal experiences.” — Christina Tournas ’20

## Reflecting on this year's Diversity Day Workshops



### What is the effect of gendered derogatory slang in today's popular music?

“Most of the gender derogatory terms in rap songs are from male rappers about women. Even though everyone agreed that it is a problem and should change, people still are going to listen to their favorite problematic rappers. It’s a hard issue to fix; it’s kind of a gray area.” — Vicky Ren ’21



### How do race and class play into climate change?

“I think our environmental justice workshop was the most productive one I’ve ever taken part in. It was this wonderful split of KEC students and main campus students. A question like ‘What is justice?’ can be tough to grapple with, but having dozens of viewpoints really helped me see that environmental discussion in new lights.” — Lucas Eggers ’21

### How does geographical diversity shape a person's experience at Choate?

“I thought [the facilitators] did a really good job of explaining how your geographical diversity in terms of where you live in the United States affects your Choate experience, but I feel like they kind of neglected international views. They didn’t really talk about how neighborhoods are segregated in other countries and how that connects to your experience with diversity at Choate.” — Hunter Bershtein ’21

## Dr. York Publishes Bat-Identification Key

By **JeeHwan Kim ’21**  
*Associate Editor*

During school meeting last week, Head of School Dr. Alex Curtis congratulated biology teacher Dr. Heather York for getting her research on neotropical bats published in the December issue of the *Journal of Mammalogy*. Dr. York developed a dichotomous key — a tool that allows the user to determine the identity of bats in the natural world for almost every species that one can find in Costa Rica and Nicaragua. The goal of her key, Dr.

York said, is “to make identifying bats while they’re alive and in the field as easy as possible.”

One way Dr. York gathered information was by reading existing literature. “I had to dig through and pick out information about each species: variations in fur color, body measurements, shapes of teeth, and all kinds of things that might be used by a human looking at a living bat,” she said. “If you could dissect it, you’d be able to see

See **BATS**, Page 2

## CHOATE ENTREPRENEURSHIP CLUB HOSTS YALE BUSINESS PROFESSOR

By **Praj Chirathivat ’22**  
*Staff Reporter*

Last Sunday, Choate Entrepreneurship Connect, one of the newest clubs on campus, invited Mr. Alden Richards, a business professor at Yale University and a consultant to the School of Engineering at Brown University, to present to Choate students about the skills needed in the business industry. Ryan Cho ’21 and Adrian Kwan ’21, the founders of the club, hope to invite speakers throughout the year to connect industry leaders with the Choate community.

Mr. Richards spoke to students in St. John Hall 107 and discussed how to properly present a business venture or start-up to potential investors, either venture capitalists or independent investors. Potential start-ups provide a new and different path for small businesses to grow, and, if done right, can result in significant profit returns. Mr. Richards has career experience in various fields of indus-

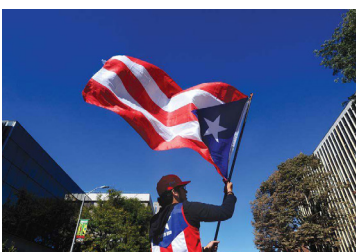
try. From 1991 to 2008, he was the founder and CEO of Space Machine Advisors, a Norwalk, Connecticut start-up risk-management and strategic consulting company for space and satellite investing. Mr. Richards’s knowledge of the space industry and entrepreneurship made him an attractive speaker for Choate Entrepreneurship Connect Club. “I took a Brown Entrepreneurship

course over the summer, and Mr. Richards was my professor,” Kwan said. “I loved the program and wanted to keep in touch with him. He was the first person I contacted as a guest speaker.”

In addition to hosting guest speakers, Cho and Kwan plan to analyze case studies of different companies in order to learn the basics of entrepreneurship. Kwan said, “We want Choate to keep in touch with the mentors we’ve invited. Students need guidance from people who have experience in the industry.”

See **ENTREPRENEURSHIP**, Page 2

**Choate Debate Dominates**  
The team celebrates another success as the season draws to a close.  
**Campus News • P2**



**CT Stands with Refugees**  
Local towns welcome Puerto Rican earthquake survivors.  
**Local News • P3**


**New Year, New Me(al)**  
Chinese Club helps students celebrate Lunar New Year with a banquet.  
**Features • P6**



**Art’s Gender Question**  
Choate is reconsidering traditional male and female roles in the arts.  
**Arts and Leisure • P7**

### What’s Inside

School News.....	1-2
Local News.....	3
Opinions: Campus.....	4
Opinions: Nation/World.....	5
Features.....	6
Arts and Leisure.....	7
Sports.....	8



Read it, then recycle it.

Visuals by Facebook, Connecticut Magazine, The Chairman’s Bao, and Choate Flickr.



**BREAKFAST SERVED ALL DAY**  
**DELIVERY AVAILABLE**



(203) 269-9507  
WWW.COLONYDINER.COM



# AN INTRODUCTION TO CHOATE ENTREPRENEURSHIP CONNECT

Continued from Page 1

Also, after they graduate, Choate students can reconnect with these speakers to find jobs.”

Initially, Kwan and Cho applied for funding from LaunchX Young Entrepreneurs, a program whose goal is to help students launch their own start-ups, by implementing the program’s entrepreneurship curriculum. However, even though they were approved by the program over the summer, LaunchX later notified all of its high-school clubs that they had closed the funding program due to a lack of funds within the organization.

Explaining his rationale for creating the new entrepreneurship club, Cho said, “We started this club because LaunchX ran out of funding and couldn’t support the high school programs anymore. While it is a welcoming challenge for us to reach out to different professors, I think we can create a better learning experience with a club we created ourselves.”

Even though there are many business-related clubs at Choate, Choate Entrepreneurship Connect Club distinguishes itself from clubs such as Distributive Education Clubs of America which is known as DECA, and Choate Start-Up. “Looking at the other clubs, Choate Start-Up analyzes real-world issues and tries to find solutions for them, and DECA competes and develops thorough business plans. We want to do something different,” Kwan said.

Cho and Kwan hope to schedule a lecture with the Director of Entrepreneurship at MIT soon. “This new club has the potential to become a networking opportunity for Choate students hoping to explore entrepreneurship opportunities and connect with professionals from various lines of work,” Cho said.

**Praj Chirathivat**  
may be reached at  
pchirathivat22@choate.edu

# Choate Debate Dominates Despite Surprises in Tournament

By **Alex Skrypek ’23**  
*Reporter*

On Sunday, January 19, the Choate Debate Team hosted and participated in the annual Choate Invitational Debate Tournament. Twenty schools attended the tournament, all of which are part of the Debating Association of New England Independent Schools (DANEIS). Choate dominated in the Novice division of the tournament. Ryan Kim ’23 won best speaker with a total of 263 points and Xavier Shattuck ’21, Erik Ely ’22, Campbell Pflaume ’23, and Okasha Bari ’21 got second place as a four-person team.

Kim said, “I didn’t expect to win, but it feels great. We had a hybrid team, so it’s really a testament to show how even if you don’t know each other, debate helps bring people together.” Kim’s situation was unique. Because Brunswick came to the tournament with a couple of people short, Kim stepped in and debated with their team. Despite never having met his partner before, the tournament was a huge success.

The tournament took a lot of preparation. Kenadi Waymire ’22, Will Flamm ’21, Jack

Miley ’20, Mr. Neil Shimmield, and Ms. Kyra Jenny were central to the organization and running of the tournament. They were responsible for communicating with the other schools in the DANEIS league, finding “runners” – volunteers who collected the score ballots from each room, developing debate resolutions, and determining a schedule for the day. Flamm, referring to a shortage of runners that made some people in the tab room responsible for scoring and collecting ballots from each room, said, “Everyone worked really well together, despite some unexpected surprises.”

The tournament consisted of three rounds of parliamentary extemporaneous debate. In this type of debate, the topic is announced at the start of each round, and the teams are allotted 10 minutes of preparation before the debate begins, forcing debaters to think on their feet and create logical narratives. The topics debated can range from being policy-oriented to being very nuanced and silly. The debates are judged based on public speaking and the persuasiveness of arguments.

The Choate Invitational is one of the final tournaments of this school year. Reflecting on the season as it draws to a close, Captain Maya Lewis-Hayre ’20 said that debaters “worked really hard and improved a lot throughout the year.” The debate team has had a wide range of accomplishments this season, from dominating at the Loomis Chaffee Invitational to qualifying two people for the World Individual Debating and Public Speaking Championship (WIDPSC), which will take place in Shanghai, China on April 8. Will Greve ’20, Vice President of the Debate Team, and Conor Brown ’22 will represent the School at Worlds. Although Brown only started debating at Choate last year, this is his second qualification for Worlds.

The international tournament is split into four events: interpretive reading, impromptu speaking, parliamentary debate, and after-dinner or persuasive speaking. Brown is “concentrating most of his energy on parliamentary debate.” Although he specializes in one event, Brown and other competitors will be competing in all of them and will be scored individually in each one. The

competitor who receives the highest scores is crowned the World Champion.

Brown entered Choate with his perception of debate as “harsh” and “scientific,” but he quickly realized that Choate’s debate team values a sense of community and treats debate as “passing an oral tradition down to new debaters, rather than maintaining a very hierarchical system.” He is grateful to have the opportunity to attend tournaments, both in New England and now internationally, with the team.

Choate Debate has had a really fulfilling season, from practices to tournaments. Lewis-Hayre said, “Everyone who comes to meetings, particularly our newer members, have made a sincere and industrious effort to improve their skills and to adjust their debating according to our feedback. My and the vice captain’s primary goal when we were elected was to cultivate a love for debate in the entire team, and even if the debaters are perhaps more responsible for it than us, I think we are all really excited to see that goal realized.”

**Alex Skrypek** may be reached at askrypek23@choate.edu

# Diversity Day Speaker Sheds Light on Asian Representation

Continued from Page 1

help students learn how to step into someone else’s shoes and experience what privileges or difficulties people of different identities might face. Each student played a character with certain identifiers from race and gender to socioeconomic status and sexual orientation, and each character was affected differently by various “life prompts,” either taking steps forward, backward, or standing still on the game board.

Before starting the game, Dr. Talusan first asked students about the American Dream and what it means to them. She then guided them to consider what might get in the way of achieving that American Dream, a question that received a variety of answers. “The game really prompts discussion; it prompts how situations are really complicated and how your experience could be very different from my experience,” Dr. Talusan said. “At the end of the game, we usually get to a conversation of ‘Is it true that everybody wants, loves, and needs the American Dream and that certain laws, policies, and structures advance some of us more than others?’”

Luke Barrett ’21, who participated in Dr. Talusan’s workshop, said, “It was a lot different than what I had originally expected. I sort of went into it expecting to just play the board game, but we actually had some interesting discussions at the beginning about what the American Dream means and how that can change based on your experiences.” He continued, “This was really helpful when

we started playing the game and understanding how it functioned. There were a lot of times when it wasn’t cut-and-dry, and there was a lot of intersectionality going on.”

In terms of the selection process for the Diversity Day keynote speaker, the decision was ultimately up to the Director of Equity and Inclusion Dr. Keith Hinderlie. “It is clear to me from adults and students on campus that there is interest and desire to have sometimes challenging, difficult conversations — particularly around race and difference — and that’s one of the areas where [Dr. Talusan] is an expert,” Dr. Hinderlie said. He hopes that Choate, as a dynamic community that is constantly interacting with one another, will engage even more effectively after Dr. Talusan’s talk.

The process of considering and selecting a speaker begins in late winter to early spring, as many of the most sought-after speakers’ schedules fill up quickly, especially around the time of Dr. Reverend Martin Luther King Jr. Day. Dr. Hinderlie explained, “With each speaker that comes, almost immediately I start thinking about what would be a nice next conversation. And I’m already thinking about after [Dr. Talusan] comes, who would be a good next person.”

During the process of selecting a Diversity Day speaker, Dr. Hinderlie also listens to student and faculty feedback. Last year, after students attended the Asian American Footsteps Conference, they returned to Choate with a request for Dr. Hinderlie to invite an Asian speaker

for the next Diversity Day. At the time, Dr. Hinderlie had already been speaking with Dr. Talusan, who identifies as Filipino-American and is strongly connected to her Asian heritage. Dr. Hinderlie explained that while he hadn’t specifically had her race in mind when inviting Dr. Talusan, he “loved to see things align like that” and to get feedback from students that guides and reinforces his decision on a speaker.

Overall, students had mixed feelings about the workshops and Diversity Day as a whole. Sarah McAndrew ’20 noted that her two workshop experiences were quite different. “My first discussion wasn’t really that effective because we didn’t really talk about the prompt. I was in the environmental racism group, but we didn’t really talk about the racism,” she said. “But in my second group, the facilitators were really good at getting everyone to participate. I also really liked the question — whether or not white people are automatically racist — because when I first came into the discussion I had the most basic view of the question, but having people from different countries, genders, sexual orientations, and more there allowed us to talk deeply about all those intersections.”

Jessica Zhao ’23 agreed that the workshops had some room for improvement. “I think the questions and conversation prompts were very interesting and had the potential to lead to great discussions, but I don’t feel that we did a good job establishing a good atmosphere. It was very uncomfortable,” she said.

This year’s Diversity Day once again encouraged students to have difficult conversations about and embrace differences within the Choate community. “What I hope is that, as a community, we gain some new insight and maybe some tools that help us continue to grow as an inclusive community,” Dr. Hinderlie said. “Just because you are diverse doesn’t mean you’re inclusive, and so the better we get at engaging in and having difficult conversations, the more of an inclusive community we can be. That’s always the big goal: to keep us moving in the forward direction.”

Students look on as Dr. Liza Talusan discusses “As if” activism.

**Claire Yuan** may be reached at cyuan21@choate.edu

# 13 YEARS IN THE MAKING, KEY TO BATS COMPLETE



Photo courtesy of Dr. Heather York

Dr. York meets a bat in South America and collects data for her key.

Continued from Page 1

more structures, but you’d lose the living bat.”

Dr. York also had to examine specimens in museums, learn from other scientists’ research, and work with living bats in order to gather as much information as possible. To make sure that her key was effective, she often asked her students to use it to identify bats. “If they would get stuck somewhere, that wasn’t a reflection necessarily of their skills. It was more like, ‘What can I do to make my key more user-friendly?’” she said.

Writing the key took 13 years. There were periods of downtime as Dr. York and her co-authors’ priorities shifted with their jobs and families, and new species in Costa Rica or Nicaragua were discovered while she was working. Some species, upon further examination, turned out to be two or three distinct species.

Furthermore, it was difficult for Dr. York, her co-authors, who are Bernal Rodríguez-Herrera, Richard K. Laval, Robert M. Timm, and Kaitlin E. Lindsay, and the scientific illustrator to work together while managing other responsibilities. “It took me 13 years from start to finish,” said Dr. York. “Since then, I’ve had three real jobs, I had a kid, I moved to a couple different states — so this key has often been on the back burner,” said Dr. York.

The dichotomous key was peer-reviewed by a scientist at the University of Kansas and another at the American Museum of Natural History. Dr. York had to explain to the editor of the journal why she accepted or rejected any suggested comments to the journal, which demanded frequent formal response. Then, the editors made changes, after which typesetters reviewed the layout. “[The key] doesn’t read like a normal article. We were really picky about how it was laid out, and we wanted the illustrations to be really close to the text that they accompanied, so we went back and forth with the typesetters,” Dr. York said.

Because the dichotomous key is not in a standard scientific format, Dr. York’s team had trouble finding a journal that would accept it. However, Dr. York’s Ph.D. advisor Dr. Robert Timm, at the University of Kansas, was the president of the American Society of Mammalogists, which publishes the Journal of Mammalogy. One of Dr. Timm’s former students asked the Journal of Mammalogy to put together a special issue celebrating Dr. Timm in which the papers in the issue would be authored by former students. Because the journal happened to be celebrating its 100th year, editors were willing to accept Dr. York’s non-standard paper.

Dr. Timm’s students wanted to surprise him with the issue, so although he was one of the coauthors of Dr. York’s key, she had to keep it

a secret. “He thought we were still floundering around, trying to find a place for our weird key, and suddenly this really big-named journal is like, ‘Yeah, we’ll publish it,’ and he couldn’t understand why a top journal would publish a key that fits better in niche-specific journals.”

Dr. York did have to provide Dr. Timm with enough information as it is highly unethical to publish something with someone else’s name on it if they’re not aware of it. In order not to spoil the surprise of the journal publishing, “I had to make up excuses about the Journal’s centenary (celebrated in 2019) and a special issue in order for him not to become more suspicious.” When the surprise party was held at the University of Kansas, Dr. York, who was unable to attend, joined through Skype. She said that “he was absolutely floored” and “so appreciative that his students pulled this off.”

Recently, Dr. York was asked by mammalogist Dr. Nancy Simmons at the American Museum of Natural History to help update the world’s database of bat species. At Choate, Dr. York said, “I teach photosynthesis and nitrogen cycling. That’s not my expertise, even though I understand it and I enjoy teaching it. So when somebody says, ‘Okay, we need a bat expert, and we choose you,’ that feels really good.”

**JeeHwan Kim** may be reached at jkim21@choate.edu



Photo by Samantha Brown/The Choate News

Students look on as Dr. Liza Talusan discusses “As if” activism.



# Connecticut Assists Families Displaced by Puerto Rico’s Earthquakes

By **Amanda Li ’21**  
Associate Editor

Since late December, more than two thousand earthquakes have rocked Puerto Rico, including a devastating magnitude 6.4 earthquake that struck on January 7. As buildings and homes have collapsed, some Puerto Rican evacuees have fled to stay with family and friends in Connecticut, which has a relatively large Puerto Rican community, constituting 10% of the state population.

Many cities in Connecticut, including Hartford, Waterbury, New Haven, and Bridgeport, have announced that they are working with the Connecticut Department of Education (DOE) to accommodate new Puerto Rican students in their public schools and provide them with food, water, and clothing.

The Hartford Public Schools system, located in the city with the largest Hispanic population in Connecticut, published an official statement on its website, which read, in part, “We stand ready to respond to the earthquakes in Puerto Rico by receiving students who have arrived in Hartford and need to attend school.”

The Hartford Public Schools system has already accommodated two new students who arrived in late December from Ponce, a city in Puerto Rico that has been the epicenter for many high-magnitude earthquakes. Many Hartford citizens have also been calling for the government to pressure airlines to lower ticket prices between Puerto Rico and nearby airports, including Bradley International.

Waterbury’s School Intake Center has also been supplied with resources such as school supplies and uniforms to make the transition easier for new students. “There are so many things that



Photo courtesy of USA Today

Earthquakes in Puerto Rico have destroyed homes, leaving residents without basic necessities.

people do have to consider, moving into a new city. We just wanted to make certain that worrying about that next step in school ... was not going to be one of the obstacles standing in their way,” said Dr. Verna Ruffin, Superintendent of Waterbury Public Schools, in an interview with *WFSB*.

In an interview with *WSHU*, New Haven Mayor Justin Elicker revealed that the city will be collaborating with nonprofit organizations to assist the evacuees’ transition. “We are open to taking in all the students that are coming, providing them with the school, transportation, coats, school supplies,” said Danny Diaz, the Coordinator of Parent Engagement at New Ha-

ven Public Schools. As of this Tuesday, fourteen new students have enrolled in the New Haven Public Schools System, and more are expected in the coming weeks. New students with limited English proficiency have been placed into bilingual programs at nearby schools. The city intends on supporting these students with federal grants allotted to the city annually through the McKinney-Vento Act, a law that provides local governments funds to help displaced and homeless members of the community.

Although most of the visitors will likely return to Puerto Rico eventually, some may become permanent members of our community. “So far, the ones to whom

I’ve spoken to are planning to stay permanently because they’ve lost their homes,” said Mr. Diaz. Junta for Progressive Action, a non-profit organization that supports Latinx communities in New Haven, and the New Haven Latino Council are helping families find homes, rentals, and shelters and hosting fundraisers to raise money for their rent and other necessary expenses. The Stamford-based organization *Americares* is also seeking donations to fund medical assistance to Puerto Rican families impacted by the earthquakes.

This event is not the first time Puerto Rican families have sought refuge in Connecticut. Following Hurricane Maria in 2017, Con-

necticut welcomed some thirteen thousand displaced Puerto Ricans, including more than two thousand new students.

Although Connecticut’s DOE doesn’t expect as many relocated students following the earthquakes, it wants to be prepared for any and all new students, so the state has already allocated around \$1 million to assist displaced families. “[We want to] make sure that the state Department of Education is positioned to support the districts that are receiving students,” said DOE Commissioner Miguel Cardona to *New England Public Radio*.

**Amanda Li** may be reached at [ali21@choate.edu](mailto:ali21@choate.edu)



By **Bella Capuano ’21**  
Columnist

Despite its quaint appearance, Pure Alchemy is anything but typical. Offering a wide assortment of unconventional drinks, salads, and wraps, the restaurant stands out in the Wallingford food scene for its focus on health and balance.

Pure Alchemy specializes in its smoothies and juices. Some of the most popular items on the menu are the delicious smoothie bowls, which are a combination of smoothie mixes, berries, seeds, and nuts. The Mermaid Bowl contains a flavorful blend of banana, pineapple, coconut milk, blue marmalade, bee pollen, goji berries, chia seeds, strawberries, coconut, and granola. The Dragon Bowl presents a vibrant pink color through

a combination of mango, dragon fruit, coconut milk, pineapple, strawberry, hemp seeds, granola, and raw honey.

On the beverage menu, short descriptions explain the health benefits of each juice. For exam-

**Pure Alchemy**  
236 North Colony Rd.  
  
Open daily for breakfast, lunch, and dinner

ple, the Afterglow juice, which consists of spinach, celery, apple, lemon, ginger, pear, and turmeric, acts as a detox, while the Carrot Cake, which contains oranges, carrots, ginger, and cinnamon, acts as a blood-sugar balancer. Though the prices for these bev-

erages may seem quite steep at around \$8.00, the fresh flavor of the juices justifies the cost.

Manager Linda Harris started working at Pure Alchemy seven months ago and says that her experiences at the restaurant have pushed her to become a more adventurous eater. Ms. Harris’s favorite thing on the menu is the Tangles, a dish of kelp noodles and mixed greens topped with Thai, pesto, or Alfredo sauce. “I never thought that I would eat — let alone like — cold seaweed,” she said.

With the philosophy that “food can be healthy and still taste good,” Pure Alchemy offers nutrition without sacrificing taste.

**Bella Capuano** may be reached at [bcapuano21@choate.edu](mailto:bcapuano21@choate.edu)



Photo courtesy of Pure Alchemy

Pure Alchemy smoothie bowls combine a variety of ingredients, including fruits and berries.

## GOVERNOR LAMONT APPROVES \$1.1 MILLION TO FIGHT HOMELESSNESS



Photo courtesy of New Haven Register

Governor Ned Lamont approved a grant to combat homelessness in Connecticut on January 14.

By **Stephanie Chen ’23**  
Reporter

Every night, almost four thousand people in Connecticut find themselves without a bed to sleep in or a home to call their own. In an effort to combat homelessness in Connecticut, on January 14, Governor Ned Lamont announced a \$1.1 million grant to the Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness (CCEH), which provides emergency shelters and resources to the homeless.

The grant has already been channeled into the CCEH’s shelter diversion and rapid exit programs. The shelter diversion program aims to help families stay out of shelters, while the rapid exit programs intend to help families leave shelters to find permanent housing solutions as quickly as possible. Ms. Madeline Ravich, the Development Adviser and Campaign Director at the CCEH, said, “The money can be flexible, but it’s mostly for things like first-month rent or security deposits or car repairs.”

Governor Lamont worked with the State Department of Housing, which has close ties to CCEH, before making the decision to provide the grant. “I think he saw a real opportunity to make a difference because he saw that there were families who needed help right now,” said Ms. Ravich. “We’re really grateful.”

Ms. Ravich described the CCEH as “a coalition of over a hundred providers, faith-based communities, individuals, businesses, and municipalities.” Founded in 1982 to address a growing homelessness crisis coupled with cuts to federal funding for the homeless, the organization aims to provide financial relief for families struggling with homelessness.

“For a lot of families, a huge percentage of their wage goes to rent, and that’s just not sustainable,” said Ms. Ravich. “So when there’s a one-time event like a medical crisis or a death in the family or a lost job, that can really send a family spiraling. That’s when people have to make really hard decisions about feeding their children or being able to pay rent.”

The organization works closely with the state government to host a variety of events throughout the year to bring awareness to homelessness in Connecticut and to raise funds to support the homeless. According to Ms. Ravich, raising awareness for homelessness has been one of the most significant achievements of the organization. She said that, when it came to issues like homelessness, “nobody was really having that conversation before. It just wasn’t really part of the system to really explore those alternatives. A lot can be accomplished by training people to be in a position where they can help others.”

Because of the CCEH’s efforts and the governor’s new grant, many families might finally have a hope for a brighter future. Ms. Ravich said, “We know we have a lot of work to do, but we also know that people are really starting to recognize that when we invest smartly in solutions for ending homelessness, we can accomplish a lot together.”

**Stephanie Chen** may be reached at [schen23@choate.edu](mailto:schen23@choate.edu)

Community  
Calendar

**JAN. 25, 9:45 a.m.**

**Saturday Morning with Poetry**  
Meet with local authors to share poetry, discuss literary works, and improve your writing skills.

Wallingford Public Library  
Free admission; no registration required

**JAN. 25, 10:00 a.m.**

**Northeast Recreational Vehicle and Camping Show**  
Explore 140,000 square feet of camping supplies, accessories, products, and vehicles.

Connecticut Convention Center  
\$15 admission; \$30 car ride

**JAN. 26, 11:00 a.m.**

**Family Day**  
Bring the entire family on a journey through the wings of the Yale Art Gallery.

Yale Art Gallery  
Free admission; open to all ages; \$20 car ride

**JAN. 26, 1:00 p.m.**

**Zumbathon**  
Dance your heart out in a two-hour-long Zumba party; proceeds benefit local projects sponsored by Wallingford Community Women, Inc.

Wallingford Parks and Recreation Gym  
\$15 admission; no registration required; \$9 car ride



# The Choate News



113<sup>TH</sup> MASTHEAD

VOL. CXIII  
NO. IX

**Grace Y. Zhang '20**  
*Editor-in-Chief*

**Derek Z. Ng '20**  
*Managing Editor*

**School News**  
Brandon Zhang '20  
Esther An '21

**Local News**  
Will Zhu '20

**Opinions**  
Ariel Kim '20  
Alexandra Alkhayer '20

**Features**  
Victoria Esquibies '20

**Arts & Leisure**  
Deanna Tan '20

**Sports**  
George McCabe '20

**Photography**  
Ryan Kim '20

**Graphics**  
Chandler Littleford '20

**Layout**  
Kiki Kim '20

### Associate Editors

Esther An '21  
Peter DiNatale '21  
Sesame Gaetsaloe '21  
Greer Goergen '21

Niki Gummadi '21  
Laura Jiang '21  
JeeHwan Kim '21  
Tony Lee '21  
Amanda Li '21

Bianca Rosen '21  
Claire Yuan '21  
Rachel Pittman '22  
Henrik Torres '22

**Social Media**  
Sabrina Kim '21  
Rhea Shah '22  
Henrik Torres '22  
Jessica Wu '22

**Layout**  
Andrew Lee '21  
Linda Phan '22  
Rose Shen '22  
Alyssa Jaster '23

**Multimedia**  
Jessie Goodwin '20  
Khushi Tyagi '20  
Gretchen MacLean '22

**Magazine**  
Ami Hoq '21  
Lara Selçuker '21  
Nathan Lang '22

**Online**  
Jerry Wang '20  
Nico Campbell '21

**Business**  
Caroline Rispoli '20  
Bella Capuano '21  
Ho Jin Jang '21  
Amanda Li '21

**Adviser**  
Mr. Mike Peed

### Staff Reporters

Bella Capuano '21  
India Lacey '21  
Christopher Lin '21  
Max O'Connor '21

Calvin Walker '21  
Natarsha Yan '21  
Tony Zhou '21  
Alex Aronov '22  
Harry Chen '22

Richard Chen '22  
Praj Chirathivat '22  
Abby Lu '22  
Nick Visuthikosol '22

[f](#) /choatenews

[t](#) @choatenews

[i](#) @choatenews

Email us: thechoatenews@choate.edu || Call us: (203) 697-2070 || Find us: thechoatenews.choate.edu

## Washing My Clothes, Clearing My Head

By **Adriana Rivera '22**  
*Opinions Writer*

There's a lot to think about at Choate, and lately I've been thinking about the laundry room.

That's right — the laundry room. When I close my eyes, I can clearly visualize that squat white building, a lowly mound separated from the rest of campus life. The unassuming white brick of the laundry room's exterior hints at the simple comforts inside. Constantly heated by its dryers, the warm air of the laundry room envelops all who enter. A black vending machine stands to greet guests, its colorful snacks begging to be consumed. Walking through an interior doorway, those guests see the washing machines on the right. The relentless noise of clothes being washed and dried buzzes in the background. A few people sit in the cold metal-and-plastic chairs, their iPads and textbooks lying on the cream-colored table that lines the one side. A rainbow of socks and lint arcs across the blue-flecked floor. Nobody talks, and the loudest noise is a startling beep signaling the end of one's time there.

The laundry building may be my favorite place on campus. Sure, I need to head there every Friday to do my laundry, but going there also clears my head. The laundry room is nothing but relaxing, especially at the end of yet another frenzied week of school. The experience is

almost meditative, the pace of my inhale and exhale blending with the easy rhythm of the machines' low rumbles. The basic and elegant equation of the laundry room — clothes that enter the room dirty leave fresh and clean — satisfies me in a way that the messier parts of Choate life do not.

I especially love the laundry room in the winter because of its constant warmth. And the truth is, I'm more productive in the laundry room than I am anywhere else. Once inside, I've completely cut myself off from campus. No one else is ever really in the laundry room on Friday nights, so I can slip into my own world, in which I can focus and never be pushed off track.

There's something else, too. I admire the humility of the building, and its homey feeling appeals to me. It believes in itself. It doesn't feel the need to show off, a gentle but firm rebuke to the otherwise often oppressive grandeur of Choate. We're washing clothes, not changing the world. And sometimes that's okay.

No drama in the laundry room. No chaos, either. Here, I am calm, relaxed, and focused on resetting. The laundry room is my locker room during halftime, a place where I can catch my breath and prepare for another demanding week.

**Adriana Rivera** is a fourth-former from Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. She may be reached at [arivera21@choate.edu](mailto:arivera21@choate.edu)

## HOUSING AS IT SHOULD BE: ALL-GENDER

By **Eliza Marovitz '21**  
*Opinions Writer*

I live in Combination House, the only all-gender dorm on campus that has often been frustratingly mislabeled “the gay dorm.” I have been asked a plethora of questions about my dorm, so I thought I'd try to clarify a few things. At the very least, I'll share my experience.

The concept of all-gender housing is not new. In fact, if you think about most dynamics you experience in this world, being surrounded by all genders is normal. It is the boarding-school environment that suddenly restricts our domestic lives. Most of us return to a home of multiple genders, whether you live with your cisgendered, heterosexual parents or something vastly different.

For students who go home to parts of the world where any identifiers beyond heterosexual and cisgendered are deemed unacceptable, all-gender housing may offer them the unique opportunity to explore their identity that may be possible only through this boarding-school environment.

Before coming to Choate, I went to an all-girls school in London for more than a decade. Although my move to Wallingford has provided me with a far more diverse range of opinions, I have struggled with the new obstacles I experienced here. I was not used to having to assert myself in a class full of boys or otherwise feeling uncomfortable



Graphic by Ava Gizzie|The Choate News

due to gender dynamics. When the all-gender dorm showed up as an opportunity last year, I was excited about the option of exploring something that I hoped could truly stimulate positive change for further gender equality and bolster the acceptance and inclusion of members of the LGBTQ+ community on campus.

This is the first year that my fellow guinea pigs and I have tried to learn what all-gendered housing means for us in our community. We've started small — arguably too small — with only seven people currently living together in Combo. And although I think we all have dreams of our little dorm being this incredible catalyst to discussions about housing and campus culture, I recognize that our current impact might be too small to be felt. Don't get me wrong — I have dreams of an all-gendered

Memorial House, of an environment that's entirely comfortable with the exploration of gender and sexuality. But I know we don't live in that world yet.

I've often — and painfully — been asked, “Don't you have to be gay to live in the all-gender dorm?” First, it is necessary to understand that gender and sexuality are separate concepts that should not be considered interchangeable. Moreover, a dorm meant only for those that do not recognize themselves within what is considered the norm is entirely opposite to what we want to achieve. The all-gender dorm, as a concept, represents a place where every single person on this campus can feel comfortable and welcomed.

Yes, the first few weeks of walking out of the shower and seeing a member of the opposite sex was a little jarring, but that

## After Diversity Day, It's Time to Keep Exploring Difference

By **Darcy Rodriguez Ovalles '21** and **Caitlin Whitaker '22**  
*Opinions Writers*

Walking around the Choate campus, an outsider can't help but see an accepting, diverse community brightened by many different backgrounds, identities, and experiences. As Choate students, we have the unique opportunity to learn about and engage with those different from ourselves, whether that be through a common interest, classes, or sports teams. And yet many students find themselves in friend groups filled with people just like them. As we reflect on our conversations from Diversity Day, now is the perfect time to expand friend groups and further explore our differences.

For first-year students adjusting to Choate, many are more comfortable surrounding themselves with those similar to them. Whether united by hometown, ethnicity, or something else, humans have a natural tendency to cling to those who are alike them, especially when they are placed in a new environment.

Despite many on-campus activities, most of the socializing at still Choate happens off-campus. A lot of money is spent on Ubers, shopping, restaurants, and day trips , creating expenses that not everyone can afford. While some individuals do not need



Graphic by Sesame Gaetsaloe|The Choate News

to think twice about money and are unrestricted in their options for fun, others who do not have the money to hang out with the people with whom they would like to connect may have greater difficulty forming connections. Slowly and

unintentionally, kids with more limited funds start being left out of activities, remaining stuck on campus while their friends are out watching a movie or taking a train into New York City. These dynamics lead to friend groups being determined by financial

weekend is a missed opportunity to broaden your perspective and become friends with someone despite the size of their bank account.

The point is that at Choate, we need to actively seek discomfort more often. Continuing to do what feels “comfortable” discourages an ability to empathize with, and understand, those who are different. These skills are essential for developing a more comprehensive and globally aware mindset.

Open-mindedness is developed through unfamiliar interactions and connections. Diversity Day offered all of us an opportunity to take a step toward diversifying our connections. So, take some time to consider the makeup of your friendship circles. How can you broaden your friend groups? Observe. Reflect. Be proactive. Make the most of your time at this uniquely diverse place.

**Darcy Rodriguez Ovalles** is a fifth-former from Bronxville, New York. **Caitlin Whitaker** is a fourth-former from Chicago. They may be reached at [drodriguezovalles21@choate.edu](mailto:drodriguezovalles21@choate.edu) and [cwhitaker22@choate.edu](mailto:cwhitaker22@choate.edu)

## From the City to the Suburbs: Overcoming Regional Biases

By **Jay Zhou '21**  
*Opinions Writer*

Before coming to Choate, I had prejudices against people who came from certain regions. As someone who grew up in Shanghai hearing negative things about people from outside the city, I retained some of these biases when I came to Choate.

For instance, I was told that city people are more productive and efficient, while country people are more lax. I also believed that city people are more social while country people tend to be more introverted and reserved.

Initially, I favored befriending and connecting with people from cities because I felt I would share their perspectives on many issues. Even though I still had some friends who did not grow up in the city, we were never that close, and I could never fully open up to

them. It felt like there was an invisible barrier that prevented me from being genuine with them.

During my time at Choate, however, these prejudices have changed entirely. Now, some of my closest friends aren't from large cities at all. Nonetheless, it took time for me to break down my old biases. While participating in ice-breakers during orientation on the first day of school, the bias I had about personal identity forced me to pay particular attention to where people were from. I frowned when I heard the names of towns that I had never heard of. To me, these places represented a certain backwardness and lack of modernity. So when I was grouped with a girl who was from Xinjiang, a suburban region in China, I naturally didn't really want to talk to her. But to my surprise, we had a lot of common interests

and attended the same clubs, so I gradually started getting to know her better. At the time, I would never have guessed that we both liked the same rapper, TizzyT, or that she would become one of my closest friends.

Sometimes I questioned myself and wondered how I started to befriend people who were not from cities, thus violating my “principle.” I was afraid that I had become the “suburban person” that I had long detested, growing used to a more backward, less modern lifestyle because I had been away from city life for too long. But over time, these paranoid ideas became less and less prevalent in my mind.

Choate helped me discover that personal backgrounds don't define a person. Choate is a diverse community with people of many different backgrounds, and all of our interests are bound

to cross at some point. The idea that one's origins define or separate people is, of course, foolish. The bias that country people are more relaxed and that city people are more productive is likewise silly.

Last summer, I had the opportunity to visit Xinjiang. I discovered that it was a beautiful place. I was astonished by the mesmerizing scenery of rising mountains in the distance and the calmness of air undisturbed by the constant blare of car horns found in the city. The diversity and atmosphere at Choate have led me to embrace the difference between country and city, broadening my perspectives and acceptance of those unlike me.

**Jay Zhou** is a fifth-former from Diamond Bar, California. He may be reached at [jyzhou21@choate.edu](mailto:jyzhou21@choate.edu)

**Cafe Ra**

350 CENTER STREET

SANDWICHES \* SALADS \* WRAPS  
BREAKFAST \* LUNCH \* CATERING  
SMOOTHIES \* FRIES \* EGGS

**Body & Soul** Day Spa

For Men and Women

MEN'S WASH, CUT & STYLE: \$20  
WOMEN'S WASH, CUT & STYLE: \$30

\*first time clients

26 N. Main ST., Wallingford, CT 06492  
[www.thebodyandsouldayspa.com](http://www.thebodyandsouldayspa.com)  
203-269-FACE



# India's Citizenship Amendment Bill Threatens Religious Freedom

By **Niki Gummadi '21**  
*Associate Editor*

India's recently passed Citizenship Amendment Bill (CAB) is a thinly veiled attempt to hide the Indian government's Islamophobia, and it blatantly contradicts the country's secularist values outlined in the Indian Constitution. On December 11 of last year, the CAB passed the upper house of Indian parliament as an amendment to the preexisting Indian citizenship bill that barred unauthorized immigrants from becoming citizens. With the passing of the CAB, India will now allow religious minorities from three neighboring countries — Afghanistan, Bangladesh, and Pakistan — to be eligible for naturalization. While the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the Indian government are trying to disguise the bill as one of religious tolerance and acceptance, it is in fact the opposite.

The CAB states that any person who can prove they belong to either the Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Jain, Parsi, or Christian communities in the three aforementioned countries can now be eligible for naturalization after living in India for six years. While this would undoubtedly help the undocumented immigrants in India, the bill goes against one of the fundamental principles of the Indian constitution. The preamble to the Constitution of India tells of the framers' resolve to "constitute India into a sovereign social-



Photo courtesy of The Washington Post

On December 7, 2019, Indian citizens vehemently protested CAB, arguing that it contradicts India's constitution.

ist secular democratic republic." However, the Indian government is now saying that faith can be a condition of one's citizenship. In passing the CAB, the Indian government has gone directly against a document that is meant to be the supreme law of India.

Some may argue that because the three neighboring countries listed in this bill are

majority Muslim, the Indian government is simply seeking to help refugees escape religious persecution — a noble practice in theory. However, if the Indian government truly cared about the morality of creating a safe space for religious refugees, they would not have limited the bill's coverage to just those six religious communities. The

countries listed in the CAB also have persecuted Muslim religious minorities — the Ahmadis in Pakistan, for example — and yet these communities receive no protection or pathways to citizenship. In addition, Myanmar, which borders India, was excluded, while Afghanistan, sharing no borders with India, was included. This is likely be-

cause a large portion of the refugees that come to India from Myanmar are Rohingya Muslims, a religious group that has faced persecution in India for years. The Indian government recently went to the Supreme Court in seek of the deportation of these refugees. These actions show that the Indian government only cares to help refugees

when they are not Muslim. As Indian historian Mukul Kesavan wrote recently in the *Telegraph*, "Couched in the language of refuge and seemingly directed at foreigners, the CAB's main purpose is the de-legitimization of Muslim citizenship."

This bill and the reactions it elicited from the Indian people are indicative of a rise in Hindu nationalism and Islamophobia spurred on by the BJP. While this mirrors the rise in right wing extremism around the world, India's problems can only be solved internally. External interference from foreign countries — such as economic sanctions — will not have the desired effects. India has been a major player in the World Trade Organization, and it is such a heavy-weight that for years, the country has been able to impose some of the highest sanctions on other countries. If other nations were to enter a trade war with India in an attempt to elicit a change in the citizenship bill, India will likely win.

The only meaningful change to this bill will need to be a result of a shift in the mindset of the Indian people. Indians must vote out the nationalist BJP that has perpetuated an Islamophobic culture and replace them with parties and politicians that more accurately reflect the values enumerated in their constitution.

**Niki Gummadi** is a fifth-former from Ocala, Fla. She may be reached at ngummadi21@choate.edu

# In Representing Weinstein, Donna Rotunno Undermines Women



Photo courtesy of Chicago Tribune

Donna Rotunno feels society is moving toward believing "every allegation is considered rape. It's not."

By **Sydney Alleyne '23**  
*Opinions Writer*

Harvey Weinstein, a figure once known for his successful entertainment company, is now only brought up in conversations about his turbulent history of sexual-assault allegations. Now, Weinstein's lead defense attorney Donna Rotunno is also facing immense scrutiny and criticism from people who believe her involvement in the case goes against women's core values.

Throughout her career, Rotunno has defended men accused of sex crimes. She has been very public with her stance, claiming that followers of the #MeToo movement are too quick to judge men accused of sexual misconduct without due process and trial. Rotunno believes unproven allegations are unjustly ruining the careers of these men.

In 2017, women began to come forward with stories of Harvey Weinstein sexually harassing or assaulting them. In many situations, he was accused of leveraging the power dynamic he benefited from as the woman's boss. These accusations spanned three decades and many of the women who came forward had been paid

off for years through settlements with Weinstein. With the #MeToo movement serving as a major catalyst, the women who came forward with stories of Weinstein's sexual assault have given both the opportunity to be heard and a fair trial.

Rotunno has built a reputation by openly working on cases that contradict the beliefs of most women's rights advocates in America. Many believe that she works on controversial cases solely to build recognition and publicity for herself as opposed to truly believing in Weinstein's innocence. However, Rotunno insists, "What happens with #BelieveAllWomen is that we're just supposed to believe you without any pushback or questioning or cross examination. I think that's dangerous." She claims that she is not feeling misogynistic or anti-feminist but rather believes that these large-scale social media movements take away credibility from these women. In reality, these movements aren't taking away credibility as much as they are bringing awareness to stories that would otherwise go unreported. The #MeToo movement motivates women to speak out and seek the justice that they deserve.

Rotunno's obligation, as a woman, is to believe victims and to shed light and truth on their

stories, but instead, her job as Weinstein's lawyer requires her to undermine women's testimonies in an attempt to allow an accused felon to continue perpetrating crimes. By leveraging her gender to take a harder stance against the accusers with more aggressive interrogations, Rotunno hopes to be seen as a proactive prosecutor as opposed to a bully. But Gloria Allred, a lawyer representing two of Weinstein's accusers, disagreed: "A bully is a bully, regardless of their gender." Allred's statement works to tear down gender roles in law; courthouse men are typically seen as stoic, factual, and emotionless, while women are expected to play a meeker, less professional role. Rotunno should take Allred's example and fight against gender bias in law.

Although Rotunno may be a motivated woman who works hard to help win the case for her client, the immense publicity and influence of her role means that she should also hold the responsibility of representing women in the most accurate light — and that entails validating their claims.

**Sydney Alleyne** is a third-former from West Hartford, Conn. She may be reached at salleyne23@choate.edu

# LACK OF MINORITY REPRESENTATION IN A RACE WITHOUT BOOKER

By **Tyler Kuo '23**  
*Opinions Writer*

When the Democratic Primary Campaign season started at the beginning of last year, there were 26 candidates. This was the most diverse cohort in presidential history, with four candidates of color and six women. But during the debate on January 14, there were five candidates on the debate stage, all of whom were white.

Shortly before the debate, Cory Booker announced he was dropping out of the campaign. Booker's achievements are impressive by any standard: he graduated from Yale Law School in 1997 and Stanford, where he won a Rhodes Scholarship in 1992. In 2013, he won a senate seat in New Jersey. In many respects, Booker's background mirrors Pete Buttigieg's. Buttigieg, an Ivy League educated mayor and a Rhodes Scholar, lacks political experience compared to Booker. Still, Buttigieg is one of the primary Democratic candidates while Booker has now dropped out.

So, why was Booker unable to get traction from voters, and what does that say about the lack of diversity left in the Democratic field? Perhaps one reason could

be that his moderate message to unite Americans was not appealing enough to voters choosing between many other moderate options. Booker's campaign message of inclusion could not effectively attract voters who instead turned to established moderates like Joe Biden or newcomers like Pete Buttigieg. At the same time, Booker was also not liberal enough to appeal to the left wing of the Democratic Party, which has been dominated by Elizabeth Warren and Bernie Sanders. Many of the issues Booker focused on, such as gun control and criminal justice system reform, did not attract attention from Democratic voters focused on healthcare for all, student loan debt forgiveness, and free college.

There are also more worrying reasons that Booker dropped out of the race. Based on Democratic Party rules, candidates must have a certain number of donors and amount of poll support to qualify for debates. Booker was unable to qualify for the last two debates and realized it would be difficult to continue funding such an expensive political operation.

The departure of Booker and other candidates of color, including Kamala Harris, signals a loss of a perspective better empathizing

with the perspectives of minorities and the issues they face. While the remaining Democratic candidates are committed to supporting minority issues, none of them can directly articulate what it is like to be an American of color and how that impacts daily life.

In order to give candidates of color a fighting chance, the rule regarding number of donors required to make it onto the debate stage must be reconsidered. Many candidates of color tend to have a base that includes more people of color than those of their white opponents. On average, people of color in the United States tend to be less wealthy and therefore less able to donate to the candidates they support. According to researchers at Yale University, for every \$100 that a white American family owns, a black American family owns \$5.04. If the Democratic Party wants to do a better job of ensuring that more candidates of color are reflected in the later stages of its presidential nomination process, it must rethink its rules regarding not only which candidates can be included in debates but also the overall primary process.

**Tyler Kuo** is a third-former from Stanley, Hong Kong. He may be reached at tkuo23@choate.edu



Photo courtesy of Politico

Cory Booker dropped out of the presidential race and is seeking reelection to the U.S. Senate.



## PROPOSED CLUBS MAY INDICATE A SHIFT IN CHOATE'S POLITICAL CLIMATE

By **Henrik Torres '22**  
*Associate Editor*

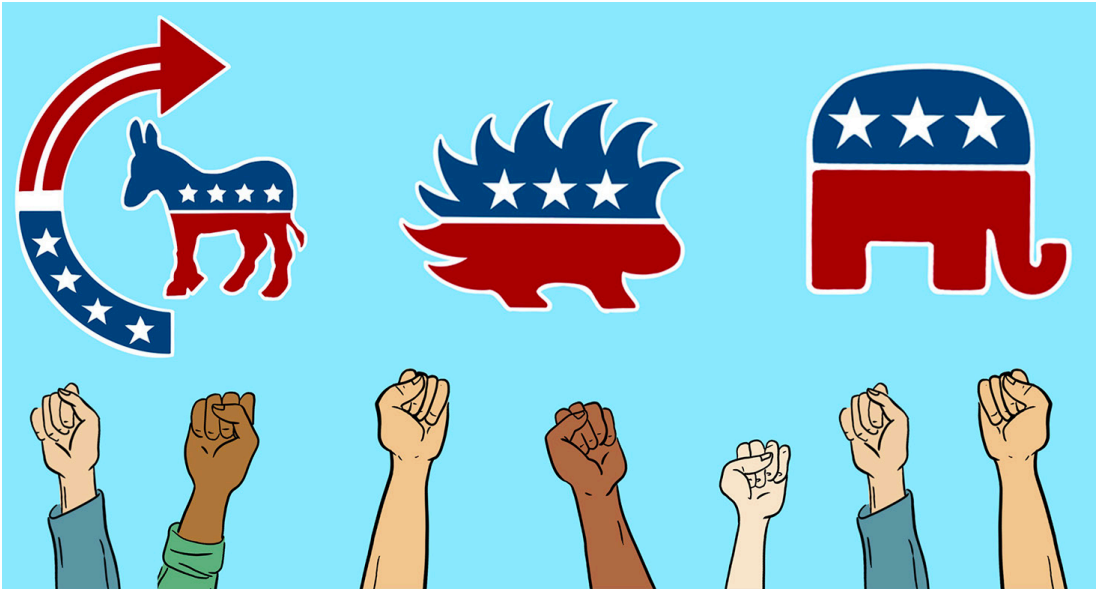
The contention surrounding political discourse spans the nation and often permeates Choate's campus. With the possible introduction of new clubs such as Young Libertarians and, until earlier this week, Turning Point U.S.A., Choate may be experiencing the start of a shift in political climate.

Earlier this week, the Turning Point U.S.A. club leaders decided to discontinue the club proposal process due to criticism from some students and faculty. The initial formation of the club nevertheless reflects the desire of some students to express less-represented political viewpoints.

Conor Brown '22, co-founder of Choate Young Libertarians, explained the libertarian political position as "one [that] is socially liberal but fiscally conservative, providing maximum liberty in both the social and economic fields." Libertarian policies support social policies such as gay marriage, legalization of marijuana, and a woman's right to choose, and they are also in firm affirmation of second amendment rights and lower taxation. Libertarianism "is all about minimizing government intervention in the economy and private sphere," Brown explained.

Brown, along with his libertarian peers, feels that the polarization in politics has gotten too severe and that the two major parties are no longer able to accurately represent the beliefs of the masses. Libertarians, according to Brown, provide an alternative to the Democratic and Republican parties by seeking to maximize personal freedoms.

Spencer Villani '21, one of the students who proposed the Choate chapter of Turning Point U.S.A., explained that his motivation for proposing the club was "to close the political divide on campus." He said, "We wanted to create a new name where students would not be so quick to judge political ideology without identifying with a specific political party."



Graphic by Sesame Gaetsaloe/The Choate News

Proposals to form Young Libertarians and, until earlier this week, a chapter of Turning Point U.S.A. at Choate, may be signalling a shift in Choate's political climate.

Affiliated with the non-profit organization of the same name, Turning Point U.S.A. supports fiscally conservative policies as well as socially conservative policies, despite no explicitly stated partnership with the Republican Party. The organization, however, has had controversies regarding interference in student government elections at colleges.

Villani said that the focus of the group at Choate would have been to discuss economics. "Yes, it comes near conservative beliefs, but it is not a neo-nazi or white supremacist group. The focus of Turning Point U.S.A. debates and values is [to discuss] capitalism and economic freedoms," he explained.

The emergence of these club proposals has not gone unnoticed by the student body and faculty, who were quick to express their opinions. Nate White '20, president of Young Democrats, conveyed his disapproval of the historic policies of the libertarian party and the non-profit Turning Point U.S.A., but supported students' right to express their ideas and opinions.

"I'm curious to see how the perspectives of the Young Libertarians play into the current political dynamic on campus," White said. He also voiced his concerns on the nature of Turning Point U.S.A: "I think there

are better and less controversial conservative groups than Turning Point, but if that's how students on campus wanted to express their political opinion, that's their choice."

White was not alone in his apprehension of the founding principles of Turning Point U.S.A. Eliza Marovitz '21 similarly did not understand the need for the club, saying, "Turning Point U.S.A. was an issue for me because of their affiliation with its nonprofit counterpart, which is an undeniably problematic organization that is racist, homophobic, sexist, anti-semitic, and overall has very hateful ideas."

As an alternative, Marovitz suggested Economics Club as a safe space to discuss issues surrounding capitalism and economic freedoms. "I was confused as to where the relevance of Turning Point U.S.A. came from. I also struggled with the idea of talking about fiscal policies without recognizing the social impacts of those policies," she said.

Young Libertarians, on the other hand, has generally been met with support from the community. Marovitz commented that Young Libertarians posed less of an issue to her because of their standing as a bonafide political party whose beliefs do not fit into any existing club on campus.

The sudden desire for more political affinity groups on campus

begs the questions: Is there a shifting political climate at Choate? Also, is there a need for more political diversity on campus? "There is a political shift happening, but it is not a universal one," Brown explained. Rather, he believed that the issue of political diversity is a gendered one where men more frequently lean to the right.

Villani echoed Brown's sentiments on a shifting political climate: "With the emergence of new political club proposals on campus, it shows that students are interested in learning about other viewpoints."

According to Brown, "All too often, students are shunned for expressing conservative viewpoints or not being 'politically correct' or 'with the times.'" Brown, Marovitz, White, and Villani, while rooted in different political beliefs, all believe that people must be willing to enter political conversations without preconceived notions and reconcile with political views that differ from their own.

Choate is a place of great political, racial, and intellectual diversity. By acknowledging the diversity of political viewpoints on campus, these political activists hope to find common ground, have productive discussions, and begin to bridge the partisan divide on campus and beyond.

**Henrik Torres** may be reached at [htorres22@choate.edu](mailto:htorres22@choate.edu)

## Chinese Club Sells Fusion Art Items

By **Brian Harder '23**  
*Reporter*

With the Lunar New Year fast approaching, Choate's Chinese Club has once again started preparing for celebrations. Since many Choate students take part in the holiday, the club will be hosting a banquet in the Student Activities Center on Friday, January 24. In addition, the Chinese Club has been selling stickers and folders printed with a unique design incorporating both traditional and modern aspects of Chinese art.

Last year, the club sold minimalist white phone cases with the Choate shield below the words "中国会" (Chinese Club). However, stickers and folders seemed to be a more accessible option for this year. While phone cases must be customized to fit different sized phone models, folders and stickers are accessible for everyone without needing any variations. Mass producing items that don't need to be customized will make the fundraising process easier for the club as well.

In the past, Chinese Club sales have been successful, and that trend is predicted to continue. Club President Jayden Khuu '21 said, "We are forecasting to sell around 150 folders and 100 stickers."

Folders will cost \$4 and stickers will sell for \$3. Khuu explained that the cabinet members "emphasize using the money back on the club." Last year's money from the phone cases financed higher quality food for the Lunar Banquet, and the club hopes to cycle profits back into the banquet budget again.

Like a lot of traditional Chinese art, the theme of the design is nature. Chinese Club Vice President Abby Lu '22 said, "The design of the stickers and folders is traditional Chinese art with a twist." The image of mountains, waterfalls, and red sun represents traditional Chinese painting; however, the

more vibrant colors add a modern touch. Lu explained that she feels that this style is underrepresented, so she hopes to bring more of it to the Choate community. Lu "was able to showcase her technique and interpretation of this art form," Khuu said. The club has been planning the logistics for the Lunar Banquet since September, such as figuring out the date and deciding the amount of food that must be ordered based on last year's number of attendees. The banquet, catered by the Formosa Asian Fusion Restaurant in North Haven, will serve a wide variety of traditional Chinese food including dumplings, spicy chicken, glazed lion's head meatballs, mapo tofu, wok-fried string beans, and matcha ice cream. "A large part of Chinese culture is eating as a community," Lu explained.

In addition to culinary offerings, the banquet will also feature student performances, including Joy An '23 with a piece on dizi (笛子), a traditional Chinese flute.

Khuu is grateful for the community and his fellow club members who have made the event and sale a reality: "Thanks has to be given to Ms. Alexandra Long and Dr. Chen-Lin who have worked meticulously and tirelessly to make all of this possible. I also have to thank May Zhao [21], Andrew Mi [20], Lu, and Deanna Tan [20] for putting in the effort with me."

Lunar New Year is an important day of celebration in Chinese culture, and the festivities coordinated by Chinese Club will be a joyous experience open to all students. Although students who celebrate are often away from their families during this holiday, the Lunar Banquet provides a space for the Choate community to celebrate together.

**Brian Harder** may be reached at [bharder23@choate.edu](mailto:bharder23@choate.edu)



Graphic courtesy of Abby Lu

## Playlist of My Life with Ms. Ashley Bairos

By **Begum Gokmen '23**  
*Reporter*

Sure, we could do it the old-fashioned way — sit down and ask her questions about her life — but everybody knows this is a much better technique to get to know Ms. Ashley Bairos, science teacher, dorm adviser, and Girls' Varsity Hockey coach. Here's the "playlist of her life" — the ten songs that are most important to her.

1. **"The Thunder Rolls," by Garth Brooks**

"This song is from back when my father thought he was a cowboy," said Ms. Bairos. She grew up listening to country music, and this song stayed in her memory.

2. **"Crazy," by Gnarl's Barkley**

"It was my mom's ringtone for me when ringtones were cool."

3. **"Numb," by Linkin Park**

4. **"American Idiot," by Green Day**

"Both ['Numb' and 'American Idiot'] were on all the time in high school," explained Ms. Bairos.

6. **"Thunderstruck," by AC/DC**

"We would play it before every hockey game. That was

what we came out to every single time."

7. **"P.Y.T. (Pretty Young Thing)," by Michael Jackson**

"I lived for four years with a classmate of mine and before every hockey game, home or away, we would dance to this song," said Ms. Bairos. "We each had our own little iPods with our own headphones, and we would have to start it at the exact same time so that we could listen to it at the same time and dance to it together."

8. **"The House That Built Me," by Miranda Lambert**

"It has a very interesting story about looking back at your childhood and how that affects your whole life."

9. **"Dancing Through Life," by the cast of Wicked**

"If I could do my life over, it would include participating in musical theater."

10. **"So Good," by B.O.B**

According to Ms. Bairos, this song is "good, fun, and always able to get you in a good mood."

**Begum Gokmen** may be reached at [bgokmen23@choate.edu](mailto:bgokmen23@choate.edu)

## SAGE: BEHIND GOOD FOOD ARE GOOD PEOPLE

By **Bianca Rosen '21**  
*Associate Editor*

Every day, SAGE Dining Services is tasked with organizing, preparing, and serving three meals for the Choate community. This involves significant work and an intricate system to keep things running smoothly.

Behind this daily operation are sixty-five staff members and four managers: Food Service Director Mr. Paul Kikosicki, Production Manager Mr. Jay Goodmaster, Executive Chef Mr. Ryan Citarella, and Catering Manager Ms. Kelly Groth. Each dedicates tremendous amounts of time and energy to ensuring that the dining hall is clean, accessible, and provides a variety of food options that meet students' dietary needs.

Members of the SAGE staff start preparing food at 5:00 a.m. and finish cleaning the dining hall at 9:00 p.m. SAGE is also in charge of coming up with menu cycles, working closely with dietitians and members of the community.

Mr. Citarella, along with other members of the management team, draft a potential menu that is then sent to SAGE's home office for review. The goal is to provide students with balanced meals that also offer a wide selection of choices for people with different dietary restrictions. SAGE's menus adapt according to student preferences as well as various Choate initiatives, such as "Veg-Out Monday" and "Burger Day." Mr. Kikosicki reflected, "Over the past three years, the relationship between SAGE and the community has



Photo by Jenny Guo/The Choate News

SAGE employees work diligently to ensure quality dining-hall experiences for the community.

grown a great deal. Being more visible to the community and being on committees such as the Dining Hall Committee allow us to foster more relationships with people on campus."

The staff works together to coordinate day-to-day operations: "There's a deep sense of teamwork. For example, when our main elevator was broken down, and we needed to get food from the basement to the dining hall, staff members all worked together to transport it. Everyone has each others' backs to make happen what happens every day," said Mr. Kikosicki.

The staff consists of people who have been working at Choate for many years, as well as fairly

new members. The staff enjoys each others' company regardless of seniority, which cultivates a positive atmosphere. "It's always fun saying 'hi' to everyone when we come into work," said Mr. Michael McGloin, who works at the different food stations.

The SAGE staff is just as connected to the Choate student body as they are to their own community. "Since my six years of being here, I've really enjoyed the students' positive attitudes, and I like getting to know their different cultures and personalities. Overall, there's a really friendly and family-like environment that I feel included in," said Mr. Ivan Garcia, who works at the grill.

The staff loves getting to know students and building lasting bonds with them. Ms. Trisha Burnell, who rotates between food stations, said, "The hardest part about my job is saying goodbye to the seniors. I loved seeing them grow up. They started here when I started here, so it's going to be hard when they leave."

Moving forward, SAGE hopes to continue building good relationships with the student body and communicating with students in order to create positive dining hall experiences for everyone.

**Bianca Rosen** may be reached at [brosen21@choate.edu](mailto:brosen21@choate.edu)



## DR. TIFFANY JACKSON SHARES HER STORY: "FROM THE HOOD TO THE IVY LEAGUE"



Photo by Ula Lucas/The Choate News

Dr. Tiffany Jackson connected with Choate's audience through sharing stories from her personal life.

By **Lauren Cussler '22** and  
**Angel Guo '22**  
*Reporters*

Our individual gifts as human beings may be innate, but if we are encouraged to explore them and have the opportunity to nurture them, those gifts can develop into something extraordinary. Dr. Tiffany Jackson — a voice instructor at Choate, classical and jazz singer, bodybuilder, nutrition specialist — shared her story *From the Hood to the Ivy League* with our community last Friday. Dr. Jackson describes her performance as a “celebration of the past as well as a construction of legacy.” The performance was split into three sections — “Gift,” “Passion,” and “Purpose” — each representing a stage of Dr. Jackson’s life.

When Dr. Jackson stepped on stage, the room crackled with her presence and anticipation for the story, emotions, and music she was about to share. Dr. Jackson’s show mesmerized the audience as she effortlessly combined her personal story with intimate music and pictures.

The show began with Dr. Jackson discussing her family and childhood memories, allowing the audience to understand her roots. She shared deeply moving, vulnerable moments from her past, including the loss of loved ones and her connection with God, expressing gratitude for her church and the presence of Jesus in her

life throughout difficult times in her childhood. It was the church and God that taught her how to use her voice as a medium to connect with people.

As Dr. Jackson explained, “You want people to feel you,” Dr. Jackson explained. She hopes that the audience can connect to the performance by finding their own inner voice. One of the most emotional moments from Dr. Jackson’s performance came during her story of a teenage relationship with a friend she lost to drug abuse. Those raw experiences made Dr. Jackson’s performance truly poignant.

Passion is something many students struggle with. Dr. Jackson encouraged audience members to find who they are, and what they loved. “Everybody has a passion,” she said. “You just need to make that first step,” Dr. Jackson stated. She went on to say that we don’t have to initially love whatever path we choose. But if we put in our full effort, we will eventually reap the benefits. “Fuel the desire until the desire fuels you!”

On her journey of self-discovery and passion, Dr. Jackson never tried to define herself in one way. When she sensed a disconnect between her body and her voice, she began to experiment with bodybuilding: “When ‘opera singer’ was the one term that represented me, I always had to explain to other people what I

was doing. However, when I introduce myself as a bodybuilder, people just look at me up and down.” The drive to represent a bodybuilder pushed Dr. Jackson to her physical limits.

In the final act of her show, Dr. Jackson discussed her greatest lessons and our purpose on Earth. Although it was a long and arduous process, Dr. Jackson earned her doctoral degree and continued her pursuit of singing. Dr. Jackson’s mother taught her strength and endurance while experiencing the passing of her father. She shared one of her most memorable journeys: traveling to South Africa with Oprah Winfrey, where she encountered Nelson Mandela and explored the meaning of purpose. “Service to others is the rent you pay for your room on this Earth,” Dr. Jackson told the audience, encouraging members to work together to create a better world.

This year, Dr. Jackson started a nonprofit organization called the “Gift-Passion-Purpose Project,” which raises funds for underprivileged students who wish to pursue the arts. “It was teaching the kids at Choate that made me recognize how much resilience students can have,” she said. “The impact that students have on teachers is way more profound than what the teachers have taught their students.”

**Lauren Cussler and Angel Guo**  
*may be reached at lcussler22  
and aguo22@choate.edu*

## TEACH MUSIC EMBRACES SPANISH COMMUNITY OF WALLINGFORD

By **Angel Guo '22**  
*Reporter*

The 35 Choate students involved in Teach Music, which was founded in 2014, provide free weekly music lessons for children in the Spanish Community of Wallingford, or SCOW. “

It’s really inspiring for me to be able to teach people who are at the very beginning of their music journey. As someone who has been pursuing music for ten years, I hope to dedicate my time to helping others. Teach Music has really taught me patience that I would not have learned otherwise,” William Robertson ’20, president of Teach Music, said.

When Teach Music was first created, Choate students ventured into the local Spanish community and taught music lessons to five to ten students at the Spanish Community of Wallingford. Now, the Spanish children and their families come to PMAC after school throughout the week to study

any instrument of their choice — most students prefer Mariachi instruments.

Teach Music arranges some thirty lessons a week, and the courses are specifically tailored toward the requirements of the Spanish students. In the beginning of the year, Ms. Evangelina Mendoza Bourgeois, the head of SCOW’s music program, provided a list of the students who were interested in taking instrument lessons to Teach Music. The leaders of the club then found students in the Choate community who could teach those instruments and matched them with the Spanish families.

The classes that Teach Music provides are customized to the interests of the Spanish students. Because the Spanish community focuses on Mariachi music to connect to their cultural heritage and many Spanish students participate in Mariachi ensembles, a large portion of Teach Music’s lessons focus on this genre. Courses also explore guitar, vio-

lin, trumpet, drum, and cello.

Not only have the Spanish students benefited from taking music lessons, but Choate students have also been able to develop certain skills from teaching them. Robertson said, “I was not very patient when I first started to teach music. Having to sit down with little kids who have never played violin before and teach them how to play the violin requires me to move at a speed which they are comfortable with.”

But after teaching lessons for the past four years, Robertson said, “It is so fulfilling to meet children who are genuinely passionate about learning instruments.” The experience of teaching a novice musician, he said, was “really refreshing.” Robertson said that he and Ms. Mendoza are currently discussing the possibility of adding dance classes to the group’s offerings.

**Angel Guo may be reached**  
*at aguo22@choate.edu*

## Arts Dept. Works to Change Standards of Male, Female Artists

By **Tony Lee '21**  
*Associate Editor*

If you’re asked to think of famous dancers and thespians, do images of elegant female ballerinas and actresses spring to mind? Maybe the answer is yes, since dance and theater both have long-standing reputations in Western culture as feminine disciplines.

Data from the Registrar’s Office reveals what appears to be a traditional breakdown of gender in Choate art classes. Of the 272 students who took dance classes between 2010 to 2019, 268 identified as female while only four identified as male.

The distribution of gender in the other three major branches of the arts is more balanced in comparison: 57% male to 43% female for all music classes and music ensembles, 49% male to 51% female for theater classes, and 53% male to 47% female for visual arts classes.

The great disparity can partially be attributed to the fact that some ensembles and groups are categorized as classes and counted in the data, such as chorus and orchestra, while others like Dance Company and afternoon dance are not.

Ms. Kalya Yannatos, Head of the Arts Department and dance teacher, said that while dance is notorious for being an almost all-female discipline, it has seen a steady rise in male participation in recent years. “I feel like there’s a trend in the direction of boys feeling safer and more comfortable with trying dance out,” she said. “From two years ago to this year, there have been a lot more guys coming to dance in the afternoons and Dance Company. To me, this shows that we’re making progress in terms of diversity.”

Ms. Yannatos emphasized that the arts faculty focus on creating an inclusive and welcoming environment in not only dance but in all of its programs. Referring to recent Choate graduate

Clay Zachery ’19, Ms. Yannatos said, “Guys’ interest in the arts comes in waves. Clay really initiated the football team coming in to try out theater from sports and that might have been a breakthrough on some level,” she said. “Some people pass the dance studio and theaters a million times and never have a reason to come in, but other students can help draw them in and get a taste of the arts.”

Ethan Luk ’20 offered insight on being actively involved in the dance and theater programs at Choate as someone who identifies as male. Initially wary of joining dance due to the lack of male dancers at Choate, Luk discovered the Catch-22 of male participation in dance and theater: more guys would try the two art forms if there were a greater number of guys already in the programs. Acquiring the number of guys in the first place was more difficult.

“In my freshman year, I definitely didn’t join Dance Company because I was thinking, ‘I would be the only guy, that would be way too scary.’ I had to really push myself to do it,” Luk said. “Sophomore year, I remember showing up to ballet — I was the only guy, and everyone else had significantly more training than I did. Also, that year, there were only two guys in Dance Company out of forty people: just me and Scott Romeyn [’18].”

According to acting teacher Ms. Tracy Ginder-Delventhal, who has directed many Choate productions, there’s an even split between females and males in theater classes. However, involvement from guys in productions varies from term to term due to an overlap between student-actors and student-athletes. Winter often sees the highest number of guys auditioning because fewer sports compete in the winter season.

Ms. Ginder-Delventhal wondered if the connotations of theater posed a possible barrier for

interested students. “The reality is that theater is often seen as being ‘avant-garde,’ and for some people that can be a really distinct personality that gets associated with theater in their minds. For some, that’s something they resonate with and really want to get to know more of, and for some others, it can be a little intimidating or not as encouraging,” she said.

Acting teacher Ms. Deighna DeRiu echoed the idea that dance and theater have established reputations that guys may shy away from. Although dance and theater are traditionally female-dominated art forms, Ms. DeRiu hopes the recent trend in the acceptance toward different gender identities and unconventional gender norms will inspire guys to try out dance and theater.

“We are very in tune with not judging people based on their outside appearance. We’re trying to not make a conscious judgment of someone like, ‘That’s a boy, and they’re going to play a boy role, and they’re going to do boy things in the play,’” Ms. DeRiu said. “Athletics have always been perceived as more ‘male’ and ‘masculine,’ but the community at large is slowly changing in the perception of people doing things that are not traditionally seen as masculine, like theater.”

Ms. Ginder-Delventhal highlighted the freedom of self-expression in theater and encouraged people to participate in theater as a performer or in the audience in spite of possible preconceived notions. “Theater is about embracing differences as well as similarities. We really allow people to think outside of the box and be their true, authentic selves,” she said. “Theater people tend to be really seen in shades of gray as opposed to black and white, so I think you can certainly be non-binary and be a football player, for example.”

**Tony Lee may be reached**  
*at tlee21@choate.edu*

## A Window Into Former Faculty Member Ms. Jane Gustin's Exhibition

By **Jessie Goodwin '20**





# FIELD REPORT

**Choate Winter Record**  
**60 - 64 - 2**

Varsity Saturday Games

**Boys' Basketball** (6-5)  
*falls to Exeter, 50-56*

**Girls' Basketball** (8-3)  
*beats Ethel Walker, 58-47*

**Boys' Hockey** (2-8-2)  
*ties Taft, 3-3 (OT)*

**Girls' Hockey** (6-5)  
*beats Taft, 3-0*

**Girls' Squash** (4-1)  
*beats Squash Haven, 6-1*

**Boys' Swimming** (2-1)  
*beats NMH, 85-77*

**Girls' Swimming** (1-2)  
*beats NMH, 89-71*

J.V. Saturday Games

**Boys' Basketball** (0-7)  
*falls to Exeter, 22-38*

**Boys' Hockey** (5-2)  
*beats Taft, 4-1*

**Girls' Hockey** (1-3)  
*beats Taft, 3-1*

**Boys' Squash** (5-2)  
*beats Hopkins, 6-3*

Varsity Wednesday Games

**Girls' Basketball** (9-3)  
*beats Loomis, 55-39*

**Boys' Hockey** (2-9-2)  
*falls to Berkshire, 1-9*

**Girls' Hockey** (6-6)  
*falls to Deerfield, 1-4*

**Boys' Squash** (4-6)  
*beats KO, 7-0*

**Girls' Squash** (5-1)  
*beats KO, 6-1*

J.V. Wednesday Games

**Boys' Basketball** (0-8)  
*falls to Cheshire, 19-36*

**Girls' Basketball** (4-1)  
*falls to Loomis, 25-35*

**Boys' Hockey** (6-2)  
*beats Pope Francis, 2-1*

**Boys' Squash** (5-3)  
*falls to Deerfield, 4-6*

**Girls' Squash** (3-3)  
*beats KO, 7-0*

# BASKETBALL PLAYERS OF ALL SKILL LEVELS UNITE AT IBL

By **Greer Goergen '21**  
*Associate Editor*

Choate's Intramural Basketball League, or IBL, has always played a large role in Choate's basketball culture. Students in the IBL participate in practices and games and conclude their season in a tournament at the end of the winter — an event that often draws large crowds of Choate students.

This year, the IBL is slightly different from its past self, because there are somewhat fewer kids on the team. There are about 14 or 15 kids consistently at practice, so instead of set teams, as in previous years, the players usually switch up the teams for every practice, or play a best of three series for the week.

Practices consist of a 15-minute warm-up and 45-minute games, with players subbing every five minutes. This season, players typically make four teams of three with subs and play three-on-three, but lately have been playing five on five. As it is an intramural sport, the group doesn't meet every day but plays only on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays.

Players emphasize that there is a broad range of playing ability, as some kids are coming from thirds, JV, or even varsity teams, while others have never played basketball. But for many of the players on the team, that's part of the fun.

"The teams are always changing, which is fun because

you get to play with everyone," said Carter George '20. "Everyone gets involved, which is the biggest thing, as everyone plays the same amount, and everyone is included."

George played JV last year, but due to a nagging ankle injury decided to play in the IBL this year instead. By playing IBL,

George says he can go at his own pace instead of pushing and overusing his ankle every day, while still maintaining a competitive level of basketball. He said, "The feel is pretty relaxed, but if a game ever gets close, the competition ramps up."

Another player, Nahshon Miller '21, said, "There are

playxers of all skill levels, but everyone participates. No matter the skill level, everyone wants to win, so it is a great mix of competition and fun."

Others find that playing IBL takes pressure off the game. Two-year IBL player Charlie Schoninger '20 said, "IBL is great because it's an opportunity to meet

different people and just enjoy the game itself. We don't worry about competition."

IBL is coached by Director of ABM Mr. John Bjorkdahl and economics teacher Mr. Ted Hartsoe. Players say that Mr. Hartsoe often plays with them and is a good player who helps to get everyone involved. Mr. Bjorkdahl typically runs the clock and scoreboard. "I enjoy playing basketball, and most nights I play with them," Mr. Hartsoe said. "I'll jump in if there is an odd number of kids."

This only Mr. Hartsoe's second year with the IBL, although Mr. Bjorkdahl has coached the group well since Mr. Hartsoe took over. He said that most years they organized four teams to participate in a tournament, which was fun, but this year they mostly ended up playing pick-up due to smaller numbers.

Overall, the Intramural Basketball League allows students to take a break from classes and homework, to get moving, unwind, and spend time with each other. "You don't need to worry about winning or losing because someone is winning and someone is losing every night, so it doesn't matter," Mr. Hartsoe said. "For the program as a whole, it doesn't really matter. It's a chance to get out there and have some fun and get some exercise."

**Greer Goergen may be reached at ggoergen21@choate.edu**



Photo by Jessie Goodwin/The Choate News

Economics teacher Mr. Ted Hartsoe (left) typically plays in pick-up games.

## IN FIRST MATCH, GIRLS THIRDS SQUASH DEFEATS WESTOVER

By **Dylan Allen '22**  
*Reporter*

On January 15, Girls' Thirds Squash faced a strong opponent in the Westover School's JV Girls' Squash team. Although most of the Choate team is new to both the team and the sport, their cohesiveness and team spirit was evident at the match as they triumphed over Westover's JV team.

The series of matches started with the girls' at the bottom of the ladder and moved upward as the event progressed. Danielle Storr '23, Sabrina Wang '23, and Annalise Rhodes '23 all demonstrated their dedication to a new sport in their individual matches. Storr put up a great fight but eventually fell to her opponent, 2-3. Wang fell behind early and lost her second game but rallied to return her opponents well-placed shots. She eventually won her match, 3-2. Rhodes continued the momentum for Choate and, beginning with a 2-1 lead, won her match, also 3-2.

Continuing up the ladder, Irene Garcia Gutierrez '22 was able to keep up with her opponent for most of her match, ending the second game tied at 1-1. After a hard fought match, she lost 1-3 by serving her final point out. Sarah Markley '23, an aspiring freshman with a strong shot, fought hard, but eventually lost, 2-3, after pushing her match to the fifth game. Johanna Diaz-Rosales '23 maintained a strong defense, keeping her head up as she scored points to catch up to her opponent. Alyssa Jaster '23, another newcomer to the sport, lost her first game but ended up prevailing in the match, 3-2.

The top of the ladder fought well against Westover, showing the team's promise. Grace Liu '23 began her match with a strong lead and was able to stay ahead of her opponent. Unfortunately, Liu's concentration

was tested when a let was called after a ball from a neighbouring court was flung over into her court, interrupting the point. After this pause, Liu was unable to regain her focus and lost her first game. Heidi Small '23 made a great comeback after losing her first game, applying her tennis experience to the squash court to beat her opponent. With a series of strong shots and serves, Small kept her head in the game, continuing to push herself and focusing on shot placement, winning 3-2. Ava Coletti '22 initially began her match with a comfortable lead, but her opponent was fast on her feet and quickly returned Coletti's shots. Nonetheless, Coletti continued to push herself and was tied by the final point of the first game. She eventually lost the game, 2-3.

Maya Robie '23, the top-ranked player on the ladder, led the Choate team with great sportsmanship despite ultimately losing her match. Robie was an exemplary sport on the court, continuously complementing her opponent with "nice shot." Robie's hustle and determination to return the ball led her to a close 7-11 loss in the first game, followed closely by an 11-7 comeback in the second game. Unfortunately, Robie lost the match 2-3, but her sportsmanship was reflected in the team's positive performances as a whole, nevertheless.

The matches against Westover marked Girls' Thirds Squash's first victory of the season and the first squash match ever for some of the team's players. The girls will try to use the early momentum to have a successful season.

Jaster said that the match was "a learning experience, and the great team support helped me grow as a player."

**Dylan Allen may be reached at dallen22@choate.edu**

## PLAYER PROFILE ON THE ICE WITH LEXINGTON SECRETO '21

By **Sam Anastasio '23**  
*Reporter*

Girls' Varsity Ice Hockey has started the season strong by winning five out of six of team's first games. This success can be attributed, in large part, to the team's starting goalie, Lexington Secreto '21. Now in her third year as a starting player for the team, Secreto has contributed a great deal on the ice with countless impressive saves and two shutouts so far. As the team looks toward a play-off run this season, Secreto sat down with reporter Sam Anastasio '23 to talk about her journey as a hockey player.

**Sam Anastasio:** When did you start playing hockey?

**Lexington Secreto:** I started learning to skate when I learned to walk, so around 18 months, and started playing hockey around age six and have played continuously since then.

**SA:** What was your playing experience before Choate?

**LS:** I played hockey with boys until around age 13 and started playing for a girls' team in New Jersey at 14, where I met Sabrina Kim '21, and we decided to come to Choate together.

**SA:** Was it hard to find women's ice hockey teams?

**LS:** Definitely when I was younger, but now there are many more opportunities, especially in Connecticut. It was a lot harder ten years ago.

**SA:** What made you decide to come to Choate?

**LS:** I found out about Choate through hockey, but I chose Choate because of its academics and the strong environment the girls on the team had already established.

**SA:** What was your experience as a freshman on a varsity team?

**LS:** Being a freshman on Girls' Varsity Hockey was one of the most unique experiences. It's literally like being adopted into a family.

**SA:** How have you developed as a hockey player and leader during your time at Choate?

**LS:** I came into Choate and thought I knew all there was to [know about] playing goalie, but I was so wrong. My coach freshmen year caused me to rethink all of the skills I had learned before.

**SA:** What's your number? Any significance behind it?

**LS:** I chose number one because I used to be number 30, but it was taken. We don't do custom numbers for goalies, so there are only three choices. If I had my choice, I'd choose number 24.

**SA:** What are your plans for playing hockey after high school?

**LS:** I want to play college hockey regardless [of whether] it's Division I or III. I just want to continue playing the sport that I love.

**Sam Anastasio may be reached at sanastasio23@choate.edu**



Photo courtesy of Brooke Wise

On January 18, Secreto led Girls' Varsity Hockey to a win by allowing only one goal in.