



Photo courtesy of Charissa Lin

Choate students protested at the New Haven climate strike on Friday, September 20. See **NEW HAVEN**, Page 3

Missing Dishes, Cutlery Growing Problem for SAGE

By **Praj Chirathivat '22**
Staff Reporter

In the past year, SAGE Dining Services has noticed a sharp rise in the number of silverware, plates, and glasses that have gone missing from Choate's Hill House Dining Hall. "We have had to continually restock what we had available to the students and faculty," said SAGE Onsite Food Service Director Mr. Paul Kikosicki. "We can't fill all the containers we

keep silverware in, and there are many empty racks of glass-

We have had to continually restock what we had available to the students and faculty.

Mr. Paul Kikosicki
SAGE Onsite Food Service Director

es in the back. They were disappearing at a fast rate."

Though the School has made announcements to the Choate community to discourage students and faculty from taking silverware and plates out of the dining hall, the lost items have created a significant financial burden for the School, a figure that Mr. Kikosicki has declined to provide. Last year, the dining service ordered a total of 2880 pieces of silverware. SAGE has already had to order an extra

See **SILVERWARE**, Page 2

New Club Proposal Process Established for Fall

By **Nick Visuthikhosol '22**
Staff Reporter

This school year, the Committee on Student Activities (COSA) has decided to change the new-club proposal process in what it hopes will be an effort to better achieve its mission of being a resource for students to sustain a culture of active club life on campus.

Many students have long seen COSA as a club that does the opposite. "In the past, we

have been viewed as a club that is not there to help the students but to catch the student's mistakes. We do not want to be seen like that because that is not what we are mandated to do by our mission," said Laura Solano Flores '20, vice chair of COSA.

Last year, because many clubs failed to stay active throughout the year, there was a major change in the club proposal process: COSA developed a more selective process for club approval.

If students wanted to start a club last year, they had to email former Assistant Director of Student Activities, Ms. Alex Long, or former Director of Student Activities, Mr. Jim Yanelli. The student would also have to contact a COSA member to initiate the approval process.

COSA would assess the students' goals and learn why they thought this club was important. If all went well, the leaders

See **COSA**, Page 2

CHANGE IN STATEWIDE TOBACCO LAWS WILL AFFECT CHOATE POLICY

By **Chris Lin '21**
Staff Reporter

Last summer, students and their parents received an email from Choate's Dean of Students Mr. Michael Velez detailing revisions to the Student Handbook. One significant change will occur along with the passing of a new Connecticut State Law regarding the sale of tobacco products. On October 1, 2019, Connecticut will become the 16th state to raise the minimum age to purchase tobacco products—including e-cigarettes and vaping paraphernalia—from 18 to 21. Several Connecticut towns, including Wallingford, the fifth town to have passed ordinances through local legislation, raised the minimum age for purchasing tobacco in March 2019, which started the conversation at Choate before passage of the new state law expedited the process.

Vaping has dominated recent headlines, as an onslaught of vape-related illnesses and even deaths, especially those of numerous high-school students, has struck the nation. "I think vaping poses a serious health risk," said Mr. Velez. "In the past decade, so much of the work trying to educate teenagers about the dangers of tobacco use has, in a large way, been undone by the companies

producing these products. It seems clear that the companies specifically target high-school-age students in their marketing. The scary part is that there isn't enough data yet to know how dangerous using these products is to one's health."

While the use of other drugs, including opioids, alcohol, and traditional cigarettes, has decreased in recent years, there has been a significant increase in teen vaping throughout the country.

A recent study by the University of Michigan found that the number of high school vapers in the United States increased by more than 1.3 million from 2017 to 2018.

Much of the controversy has been centered around the e-cigarette company JUUL Labs, Inc. and its product, the JUUL e-cigarette. JUUL, which is owned in part by Altria, the maker of Marlboro cigarettes, accounts for nearly 75% of the U.S. e-cigarette market.

On September 9, 2019, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration issued a warning letter to JUUL Labs Inc. for marketing an unauthorized modified risk tobacco products through false labelling, advertising, and direct marketing towards youth in schools.

Starting this school year, e-cigarettes and other tobacco products have been added

to Choate's Safe Haven policy. Information about the new state law has been included in the Student Handbook so students, parents, and faculty can inform themselves on the changes in state legislation and the corresponding shifts made to Choate's drug policy.

"I believe that this new law will be something that the deans look at very carefully and take feedback from the Student Council. The vaping policy will be reviewed carefully by students and faculty alike," said Ms. Dana Brown, a fifth-form dean.

While amendments to the school's policy have yet to be finalized, Mr. Velez expects stricter regulations and consequences to be implemented at Choate in the future. "Even though I don't expect any immediate changes in the law after October 1, we have the ability in our student handbook to continue changing policy if circumstances require us to reevaluate," he said. "As an office, we will continue to monitor coverage not only of the law but this general issue."

In addition to the rise in the minimum age to purchase tobacco products, there is also a clause in the law criminalizing the act of smoking on a school campus. "While before a student possessing vapes or e-cigs violated Choate's school

rules, now, if they vape on school grounds they are breaking Connecticut state law," said Mr. Velez.

This clause may also have a direct impact on adults at Choate. Faculty and staff who live on campus have been told that smoking, which includes the use of cigarettes, cigars, and vaping products, on the school campus will be prohibited beginning October 1. This rule includes any residence that a faculty member inhabits on school grounds.

"I think that it is an inconvenience in some ways," said Ms. Brown, "but it is the law and we have to abide by it. I believe our faculty and staff are flexible and will abide by the laws of the state and the regulations set down by Choate," said Ms. Dana Brown.

Mr. Velez acknowledged that his office has work to do to reshape the wellness curriculum in certain aspects and educate students about the change in state law. "Groups on campus like Peer Educators that will be well-positioned to have student-to-student conversations," he said. "Beyond that, there will be programs, such as bringing a speaker to campus or having an educational component to school meetings."

Chris Lin may be reached at chlin21@choate.edu

MID-AUTUMN FESTIVAL DRAWS CROWDS



Photo courtesy of Abby Lu

A wide selection of traditional Chinese food was offered at the festival.

By **Joy Bang '22**
Reporter

On Friday, September 13, the Chinese Club hosted its annual Mid-Autumn Festival Dinner. The Mid-Autumn Festival is regarded as one of the most important holidays in Chinese culture.

In hopes to teach students about Chinese culture and for Chinese students who weren't able to go home and celebrate the national holiday with their family, the Chi-

nese Club organized the Mid-Autumn Festival Dinner. Abby Lu '22, a cabinet member of the Chinese Club, said, "We hosted the event because we wanted something that will show people a fun side of Chinese culture."

Chinese Club President Jayden Khuu '21 said, "Because the festival is traditionally a gathering for family, gathering with friends at school may help bring Choate

See **MID-AUTUMN**, Page 2

A Growing Movement
Students protest climate change in Hartford and New Haven.
Local News • P3



More U.S. Foreign Intervention?
Wesley Boatwright '22 examines the U.S.'s role in the Hong Kong protests.
Opinions N/W • P5

A Fresh Experience
26 days into their Choate journey, third-formers reflect on their reception to campus.
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Rampant Silverware Loss Strains Dining Budget

Continued from Page 1

420 utensils this school year. If purchases continue at this pace, the School will eventually exceed its diningware budget.

The loss of silverware and plates has also impacted students and faculty directly, as the busy schedules of members of the Choate community call for efficiency during meal times. “In addition to the long lunch lines, having to sometimes wait for plates and glasses takes my break time away,” Max Zhang ’22 noted. “Especially when taking six classes, any free time at all is essential.” Ms. Katrina

listened, and the number of plates and eating utensils continues to decline. “The amount of time and resources it takes to make these materials and secure the dinnerware are wasted. This is something that has been happening for way to long, and the community needs to take action,” Payne continued.

To lower the risk of losing more dining ware, SAGE has resorted to what many view as unsustainable

methods of serving food. Last Friday,

SAGE set up an ice cream sundae station.

However, instead of using ceramic cereal bowls, they decided to use disposable paper bowls.

Mr. Kikosicki noted, “People want to take desserts to-go. We have found that on dessert days, we would lose a lot more china. Sustainability-wise, it isn’t the best solution, but it is from a cost-effective standpoint.”

Many SAGE workers, as well as students and faculty, want the issue of lost plates and silverware to be resolved as soon as possible. Payne ’20 said, “Even though there are many possible solutions, the most simple solution is to resolve it with other students — for instance, students simply telling their friends, ‘You can’t take that from the dining hall, go put it back!’ That’s the integrity that our school values.”

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CHINESE MID-AUTUMN FESTIVAL ENCOURAGES STUDENTS TO CELEBRATE COMMUNITY



Choate students gather for a communal Chinese meal in Elman Auditorium to celebrate the Mid-Autumn Festival Dinner.

Continued from Page 1

closer to the concept of family for many students. I hope that by this event students gained friendship and a sense of community and belonging, as well as more insight into Chinese culture.” He hopes that this dinner reminded students of family and home, reinforcing the idea that they have a family here at Choate, too.

Although the Mid-Autumn Festival Dinner at Choate is hosted annually by the Chinese Club, the 2019 event showed an unprecedented turnout rate. “I think it went really well; in fact, at the peak, there were no less than 90 people,” said Lu. “It was great to see people show up for food and for each other because it was heartwarming.”



Photos courtesy of Abby Lu

As many people were present at the dinner, organizers aimed to be environmentally friendly. Two weeks prior to the dinner, the club reached out to the Director of Student Activities Ms. Alex Long so that the school’s blue reusable PreserveWare could be ready for use.

“The event ran really smoothly thanks to the teamwork of the Chinese [Club] cabi-

net and the volunteering of other Chinese Club members,” Khuu noted. The event was funded entirely by the Chinese phone case sale from last year. Khuu expressed gratitude for the community, adding that community support “has allowed this event to happen.”

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LIBRARY IMPLEMENTS ACADEMIC SUPPORT

By Sabrina Wang ’23
Reporter

This week, at the Andrew Mellon Library, a range of academic support sessions helped students readjust to Choate’s demanding academic coursework. These sessions included “Academic Integrity and Plagiarism at Choate,” “iPad Tips and Tricks,” “Organizing Academic Life,” and “NY Digital Access and Set Up.”

In “Academic Integrity and Plagiarism at Choate,” students learned about how to properly cite sources, create an annotated bibliography and use footnotes, skills vital to academic success across disciplines.

In “iPad Tips and Tricks,” students became more efficient on the iPad by developing skills such as split screening and learning shortcuts for applications such as Notability and Dropbox.

In “Organizing Academic Life,” students learned how to organize files using Google Drive and Dropbox, sort through files efficiently, and organize their time using calendars, alerts, reminders, and notifications. With different teachers using different virtual classrooms, including Canvas, Google Classroom and Dropbox, it is important for students to be comfortable with as many platforms as possible.

In “NY Times Digital Access and Set Up,” students were able to create a New York Times account

that, according to Ms. Courtney Jaser, Instruction and Digital Services Librarian, is “great for research, keeping up with events going on in the world, and cutting-edge stories.”

Ms. Jaser is only one of many librarians who are willing to help students with their academic difficulties, whether or not the library is hosting a scheduled program. These sessions are held, said Ms. Jaser, “to support students in all academic life. We want to be a great hub for students to help them study.”

Dr. Sherry Newman, Director of the Andrew Mellon Library, pioneered these academic support sessions along with Ms. Sandra Rampertab, Instruction and Out-

reach Librarian. Dr. Newman added, “We’re trying to promote library services. The library is not just about books. Did you know there is only one section of the library where you’re not allowed to talk? In the rest of the library, you’re allowed to eat, drink, and talk, too.”

In the future, the library plans to introduce more academic development sessions to their current programming, including an Intro to Kanopy, a video platform hosting a library of documentaries, and a session about LiquidText, an iOS app that allows students to annotate and engage documents.

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COSA REFORMS CLUB-PROPOSAL PROCESS



Photo courtesy of Laura Solano-Florez

Members of the Committee on Student Activities after club leadership orientation.

Continued from Page 1

would be allowed to have an introductory meeting. Although, since everything was done through email, the process was complicated, and students often misunderstood COSA’s goals. Emails were frequently overlooked, and COSA members could take days to reply.

Meanwhile, students didn’t know what to expect or what to do while they waited for a response. “I think everyone is busy at this school,” Paul Montrone ’22 said, “Teachers and students cannot always get back to you until later, so there must be a more efficient and organized way of doing this.” This year, Solano-Florez hopes that this new process will reconstruct students’ view of COSA’s mission.

There are two major changes in this new club proposal process. First, the process will limit the time students have to submit club proposals to two weeks. Freshmen are not allowed to propose clubs because COSA believes that freshman year is a time to explore activities before students establish their own. Now, seniors are also not allowed to propose clubs because it is very difficult for them to assemble club members, and hand down their leadership positions before they graduate.

COSA hopes that these changes will not only allow it to select only students who are actually passionate about their clubs, but also club leaders to have time to establish their club and make sure that it is active and sustainable.

Second, at school meeting on Tuesday, September

24, COSA announced that the club-proposal form will soon be on Boarcast for two weeks for interested students to fill out. “This addition to the process will simply help us learn more about what students are trying to start and make us more organized,” new Assistant Director for Student Activities Ms. Colleen Kazar said.

Now, COSA will be able to track who is submitting the form and when they are submitting it, which will then allow COSA to schedule meetings with students to discuss their clubs

For sophomores and juniors who are looking to start a club this year, the message from Solano-Florez is that “starting a club is like taking a sixth or seventh class. You have to be willing to do it and have the time and effort to put into the club.”

One major characteristic COSA looks for in club leaders is passion. How much effort and time are new leaders willing to put into the club? “The club not only has to be unique and different from other clubs but also a club that will influence the school in a positive way,” said Solano-Florez.

In recent years, COSA has undergone countless changes, including developing an online form for club proposals, a social media committee to promote club events through the new instagram account “choatstudentactivities,” and a set of publication guidelines. “Now, we will have all of that in one go, so that it is more clear to students what they are doing,” said Solano-Florez.

Nick Visuthikosol may be reached at nvisuthikosol22@choate.edu

Welcoming Ms. Colleen Kazar



By Alyssa Jaster ’23
Reporter

This fall, Ms. Colleen Kazar, who until recently was the Associate Director in the Center for Student Engagement, Leadership, and Orientation at the University of New Haven, joined the Choate community as the School’s new Assistant Director of Student Activities.

Ms. Kazar will work alongside Ms. Alex Long, the Director of Student Activities, to support the Committee on Student Activities (COSA) and its large roster of student clubs.

Ms. Kazar has already taken an active role in pushing for changes in the club proposal process, facilitating Harvest-Fest and working to catalogue all the active clubs on campus.

In her new position, Ms. Kazar will help organize the

distribution of BoarCast, implement on- and off-campus student events, develop the Downtime and WKND publications, and provide support for club leaders.

Working out of past Director of Student Activities Mr. Jim Yanelli’s old office, Ms. Kazar will be looking to replicate and build on the impact he had on Choate’s student body.

“Choate immediately sparked my attention,” she said, of applying for the job last spring. “The students are driven, the campus is beautiful and offers great space for student activities. I was excited for a new work balance!”

Ms. Kazar welcomes any questions on student activities at Choate.

Alyssa Jaster may be reached at ajaster23@choate.edu

STUDENTS PROTEST IN HARTFORD AND NEW HAVEN, DEMANDING ACTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE

By Amanda Li '21
Staff Reporter

Inspired by the work of 16-year-old Swedish climate activist Greta Thunberg, more than four million people assembled in 163 countries across the globe last Friday, September 20, to protest the lack of progress in addressing climate change.

In Connecticut, more than 1000 protesters joined a climate strike at the State Capitol, in Hartford, and more than 600 protesters participated in a strike in New Haven. Students from high schools and colleges across the state, including between 40 and 50 students from Choate, and political figures such as Senator Richard Blumenthal and State Representatives Gregg Haddad and Christine Palm gathered at these demonstrations to pressure the Connecticut state government into taking more aggressive action to combat climate change.

During the three-hour strike, speakers from various organizations delivered speeches about climate-change topics, ranging from the stories of climate refugees to the damaging effects of burning fossil fuels. Between speeches, protesters shouted rhyming chants and participated in group activities, such as chi gong, a Chinese mindfulness exercise, to boost the energy of the crowd.

Protesters also took part in a “die-in” demonstration in which the crowd laid on the ground to represent the looming possibility of humanity’s extinction due to climate change. The protesters remained on the ground for 11 minutes, to symbolize the 11 years most scientists believe humanity has to prevent the earth’s temperature from rising to irreversible levels. The die-



Photo courtesy of Charissa Lin

High-school and college students gathered in Hartford and New Haven to demand climate-change reforms.

in was followed by two minutes of reflection, complemented by peaceful bell sounds playing in the background. “I could not help but hold hands with the people next to me, just to reassure and support each other,” said Sunny Sun ’20, one of the Choate students who attended the Hartford strike.

The event concluded at around 3:00 p.m., on the steps of the Capitol, where the leaders of the protest, Sena Wazer, a freshman at the University of Connecticut, and Mitchel Kveder, a sophomore at Eastern Connecticut State University, presented a formal resolution addressed to Governor Ned Lamont.

The resolution demanded that the state government declare an official climate emergency and enact emergency legislation to confront the climate crisis. It also called for the elimination of all pollution that contributes to climate change in Connecticut by 2030 and for the government to stop approving

permits which allow corporations to build fossil-fuel-related infrastructure. “This will force [the governor] to really say, ‘Yes, we are in a state of emergency, and we need to take this seriously,’ which is something that politicians don’t do a lot of the time,” said Wazer.

In New Haven, the New Haven Climate Movement (NHCM), an organization that advocates for New Haven to transition to 100% renewable energy, organized a rally that began at 4:00 p.m. at the corner of Church and Chapel Streets. Participants were encouraged to wear black and carry cardboard tombstones to mourn the accelerating death of the planet. Across the New Haven Green, speakers discussed the major causes of climate change, including the burning of fossil fuels, deforestation, and livestock farming.

The NHCM also used the rally to gather support for their Safe Climate Emergency Resolu-

tion, which has yet to be signed by New Haven Mayor Toni Harp. The resolution calls for the establishment of a climate emergency task force, government support for environmental advocacy groups in New Haven, and the allocation of funds in New Haven’s budget toward the reduction of greenhouse-gas emissions.

At the end of the rally, as the protesters left the Green and marched toward City Hall, the number of protestors grew so large that the police had to block off streets to ensure the safety of the participants. “When we blocked off the street, I realized how much support we had gotten, how big this rally was, and how many people cared about it,” said Catalina Homann, a NHCM youth organizer and a junior at Wilbur Cross High School.

On the steps leading up to City Hall, posters marked “greed,” “denial,” and “silence” were placed into a coffin to il-

lustrate the actions that need to “die” in order to successfully combat climate change.

The New Haven rally also participated in a two-minute die-in, to symbolize the NHMC resolution’s demand that the New Haven government begin to reduce greenhouse-gas emissions within the next two years. The protesters rose and sang “More Waters Rising,” by Saro Lynch-Thomason, which catalogues the effects of climate change.

At the end of the rally Adrian Huq, another NHMC youth organizer and a senior at the Metropolitan Business Academy in New Haven, called on the crowd to take immediate action to fight climate change. “We need to commit to fight for a safe future,” Huq said. “It is a necessity to have a livable climate for generations to come, and everyone deserves a safe place to live.”

Amanda Li may be reached at ali21@choate.edu

Community Calendar

SEP. 28, 9:00 a.m.

Fall Festival at the First United Methodist Church
Come celebrate the turn of the season with local crafters and vendors.

First United Methodist Church of Wallingford
Free admission

SEP. 28, 10:00 a.m.

Lyman Orchards Corn Maze
Navigate two miles of winding paths flanked by towering stalks of corn.

Lyman Orchards, Middlefield
\$10 admission
\$13 car ride

SEP. 28, 5:30 p.m.

Trail of Terror
Prepare for a night of fright on Wallingford’s haunted path.

60 North Plains Hwy.
\$15 admission, online registration recommended

SEP. 29, 7:00 p.m.

Rosh Hashanah Service
Join the Beth Israel Synagogue to celebrate the Jewish New Year.

Beth Israel Synagogue of Wallingford
Free admission, donation recommended

Cyclists Mount Their Bikes to Fight Cystic Fibrosis

By Stephanie Chen '23
Reporter

Last Saturday, September 21, around 150 cyclists gathered in Middletown, Conn., to take on the daunting task of biking either 25 miles or, for bikers who wanted even more of a challenge, 50 miles.

The longer path took riders on a loop from Middletown, down to North Branford, right above the Long Island Sound, and back up through Wallingford to the starting point. The shorter path stopped at Wallingford before returning riders back to Middletown.

No matter the route, cyclists passed themed rest stops, loudly cheering spectators and volunteers, beautiful scenery, and the Choate Rosemary Hall campus. But this event wasn’t just a gathering for hardcore fitness enthusiasts. It was part of the nationwide Cycle for Life event organized by the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to helping the 30,000 Americans who suffer from cystic fibrosis.

Cystic fibrosis is a hereditary disease that attacks the patient’s lungs and digestive system. It impairs the body’s ability to properly produce mucus, so the mucus produced by someone with cystic fibrosis is much stickier and thicker than normal. Patients have a harder time coughing mucus out of their lungs, which often leads to lung infections and breathing impairment. Even after decades of research, a cure for cystic fibrosis remains elusive, and most people suffering from the disease do not live beyond their early 40s.

To combat this disease, the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation has been helping scientists and doctors increase our knowledge of the condition. According to Ms. Melanie DiNicola, Senior Development Director for the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation Connecticut Chapter, “Almost all of the medications that are on the market right now for cystic fibrosis have been brought to fruition through the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation. So, what we’re doing is really important to help people live longer and healthier lives with CF.”

When the foundation was created 50 years ago, people with [cystic fibrosis] weren’t expected to live to grade school.

Ms. Melanie DiNicola
Senior Director for the
Cystic Fibrosis Foundation
Connecticut Chapter

The cycling event, which has been held annually for the past 20 years, contributes significantly to funding the foundation’s activities. Cyclists who sign up for the event are required to donate a minimum of \$175 to the foundation, but most cyclists pay much more. The average donation hovers around \$600. The event raised \$57,739 in total this year.

Much of the event’s success can be attributed to a group of dedicated volunteers working behind the scenes. Ms. DiNico-

la explained, “The cycle event has a lot of moving parts to it, and it’s very complicated because we need to get the routes approved by the state and then by the towns that they go through. And then, we need to get the police support that’s necessary, and then we need to have about 100 volunteers to help us with all the different rest stops, and then the set-up, the breakdown. There’s a lot to the cycle event. It takes about a year of planning.”

The people who helped organize this event come from many backgrounds, but they share a determination to make a difference in the fight against cystic fibrosis. Ms. DiNicola herself has a daughter who suffers from cystic fibrosis. “She will be 24 next week,” said Ms. DiNicola, “and she’s been fighting the disease all her life.” A personal connection to the disease drives Ms. DiNicola and other volunteers at the organization.

The organization was founded in 1955 by a group of parents with children suffering from cystic fibrosis. “When the foundation was created 50 years ago, people with CF weren’t expected to live to grade school,” Ms. DiNicola said.

Using an innovative business model called venture philanthropy, the organization was able to raise millions of dollars in funds to pay for pharmaceutical research to extend the lifespan of patients with cystic fibrosis. In 2017 alone, the foundation raised \$3.5 million toward the cause.

Stephanie Chen may be reached at schen23@choate.edu



By Bella Capuano '21
Columnist

Though Chuck Wagon opened only two months ago, it has already established itself as one of Wallingford’s most popular restaurants for American comfort food. Located on Ives Road, the restaurant offers a variety of American dishes from fresh baked beans to mouthwatering bourbon chicken burgers. Old Westerns play on TV screens and country music serenades customers from speakers above.

Chuck Wagon is known for its enormous, juicy burgers. The Mac, a burger topped with rich, creamy mac and cheese, combines two of the most popular dishes on the menu into one spectacular treat. The Campfire burger blends the flavors of cheddar, fried onions, and Chuck Wagon’s signature chili into a savory bite. A single patty of any of their signature burgers is only \$5.95, and



Photo by Bella Capuano/The Choate News

Chuck Wagon serves burgers, fries, wings, and other comfort food.

customers can add extra meat at only \$2.00 per patty.

For appetizers, Chuck Wagon offers sweet and spicy bourbon-glazed longhorn wings and El Paso Poppers, spicy jalapenos breaded and stuffed with melted cheddar cheese. If customers can manage room for dessert, the “I Don’t Care” Warm Skillet, which consists of a brownie topped with custard, chocolate sauce, and cheesecake crumbles, is sure to satisfy anyone’s sweet tooth. The warmth of the brownie delightfully contrasts the cool of the custard.

Chuck Wagon

201-B Ives Rd.

Open daily, 11 a.m. to 8 p.m.

The founder of Chuck Wagon, Mr. Chris Nakis, is not a newcomer to the Wallingford food scene. Mr.

Nakis also owns The Greek Guy, an authentic Greek restaurant opened in Wallingford in 2016.

Two years ago, Mr. Nakis decided to start a new restaurant that would allow him to share his passion for grilling. He and his cousin Derek Amodio opened The Dog House Grill, which serves sandwiches, barbecue chicken, ribs, hot dogs, and burgers. The grill was founded in Wallingford, but in late 2017, the cousins moved it to North Haven where Mr. Amodio continues to run the business.

Many of the grill’s Wallingford customers still craved Mr. Nakis’s comfort food. “Every day I would get texts: ‘Are you going to do hot dogs and burgers again?’” Mr. Nakis said recently. Enter Chuck Wagon.

Mr. Nakis was more than happy to once again serve the community that had supported both of the first two restaurants he opened. “Everyone here is my family now, and I just love it,” said Mr. Nakis, who moved to Wallingford from Bridgeport. “I have made friends here, and they have been supporters of mine since day one. On Thanksgiving, I’ll go to one customer’s house and Christmas at another one’s. They are like, ‘No, no, no, you do enough cooking, you come to my house, I cook for you.’”

Available for catering and delivery through Uber Eats, Chuck Wagon offers classic American food at an affordable price.

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What I've Learned Navigating Club Life

By Claire Yuan '21

Copy Editor

In a community in which members strive to be the best version of themselves, there is always pressure to do more, be more involved, and spring from one commitment to the next. While extracurriculars indeed make up a large part of the Choate experience, it is important to maintain balance and to understand one's limits. Over my years at Choate and through my experiences as a member of various clubs, I have come to better understand how to effectively manage club participation.

If you went to ClubFair three weeks ago, you might have found yourself signing up for almost half the clubs there, and now your inbox is being swarmed by emails. During my freshman year, the same thing happened to me. My email exploded with dozens of messages about meeting times and event plans, and though I tried to weed through the masses of unread emails, I ended up losing track and not being able to decide between clubs that met at conflicting times.

Here's my advice: If you, too, find yourself in this situation, don't drop all the clubs you signed up for like I did. Instead, try to

attend as many club meetings as possible in the first few weeks — and try to switch it up. If two of the clubs you're interested in meet at the same time each week, go to one club this week and the other one next week. The first few club meetings are all about getting a feel for what the club is

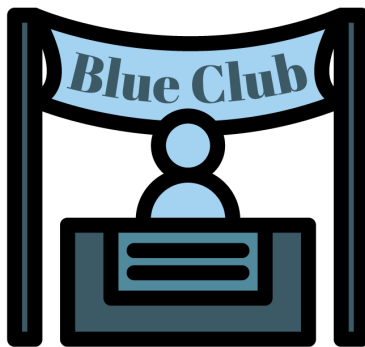
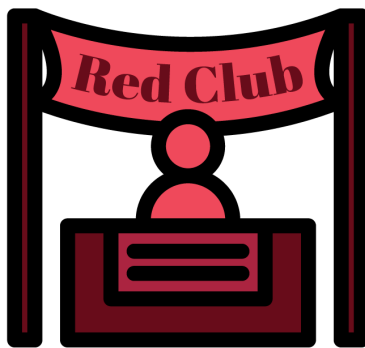
indeed a rewarding experience, but it's also important to leave enough time for schoolwork, athletic or musical commitments, and your personal life. That way, your responsibilities in the club will never feel burdensome but rather become something you look forward to each week.

signed up for, or talk to a club leader to find out more about what their club does. You can also always reach out to the Student Activities Center (SAC) or members of the Committee on Student Activities (COSA) to find out who leads a certain club or even whether a certain club exists. Clubs are always looking for more members and will certainly welcome you to attend, even if it's just to test the waters.

Or maybe your problem is having commitments that conflict with meeting times. When I first started joining clubs, many of my clubs overlapped with music rehearsals or sports practices. But don't worry — if clubs' afternoon meeting times don't fit into your schedule, there are other options. For example, I turned to publications, many of which will allow you to participate and submit work even if you can't make it to regular meetings.

No matter what stage of the club-searching process you're in, remember that balance is key. Clubs are a great experience, but be sure that your participation in them doesn't come at the expense of sleep, well-being, or schoolwork.

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Graphic by Chandler Littleford/The Choate News

dedicated to doing and how you might fit into that rhythm.

After the first few weeks, though, consider which clubs truly call to you and gradually, but decisively, drop the rest. Being a member of a variety of clubs is

Maybe you missed ClubFair — how do you get involved now? The first step is to find out which clubs are actively meeting and think about which ones might interest you. Go with a friend to a club they

MAKE SAFE HAVEN TRULY SAFE FOR ALL

By Elton Zheng '22

Opinions Writer

Although Choate's drug and alcohol policy is relevant and keeps students' wellbeing in mind, there is ample potential for improvement. When students reach out to a faculty member regarding a peer's use of drugs or alcohol, they can either invoke Safe Haven or choose to impose a path of discipline.

The Student Handbook states, "Students who initiate conversations about substance use by peers will be asked if they wish to invoke Safe Haven. Students may choose to invoke Safe Haven for their peers or they may share information as part of a disciplinary investigation." If Safe Haven is invoked, reported students will receive no punishment but will work closely with a network of faculty and Health Center staff to achieve a healthier lifestyle.

This policy has two main flaws: One, it assumes that students possess the maturity to be involved in a disciplinary investigation of any type; two, it gives students a choice in the disciplinary future of their peers.

The latter piece of the rule is particularly disturbing; in what way is voluntarily helping a classmate be disciplined advantageous to any student — and to our insti-

tution — except perhaps those with the most malicious intents? Both choices are likely to place a student on no-use. The question remains: Why would a student ever want their peers to be investigated instead of receiving medical help?

The goal of Safe Haven is described in the Handbook: "In situations involving illegal substances, students may take a truly constructive action by requesting Safe Haven to seek help without a disciplinary response." Safe Haven allows students to get the help they likely need. And if we, as a school, believe in the efficacy of that intervention, why would a disciplinary response ever be the better option?

Safe Haven should be invoked for all students on this campus, whenever their names are associated with drug or alcohol use, even if a reporting student requests a disciplinary response. No student should ever have the ability to decide whether or not to discipline another student.

You tell me if such power reflects the spirit of fidelity and integrity that is so fundamental to Choate Rosemary Hall's values.

Elton Zheng is a fourth-former from Westport, Conn. He may be reached at ezheng22@choate.edu



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Welcoming John Legend to Choate: In Assigned Seats?



Graphic by Elaine Zhang/The Choate News

By Jay Zhou '21

Opinions Writer

Just three weeks ago, the doors to Colony Hall swung open. The greatly anticipated opening of the building was welcomed with a ribbon-cutting ceremony, the 130th Convocation, and the announcement of an upcoming carnival and a private John Legend concert. Although students are buzzing with excitement over the fast-approaching concert, many are concerned about the seating arrangements.

During school meeting, Dean of Students Mr. Mike Velez announced that students will be divided by form, with seniors and juniors taking priority over underclassmen. Most heavily disputed however, was the announcement that within each form section, the seats will be assigned randomly.

Albeit, this policy does promote fairness by ensuring that no one will, due to monetary advantages, guarantee them-

selves better seats. Besides, random seating eliminates the need for the School to accommodate everyone's seating preferences. Now, the School can put more effort into securing the logistics of the concert.

A first-come, first-served ticketing system would transfer the control from the School to the students themselves.

Yet, there are significant flaws to the plan. First, assigned seating by form enforces a hierarchy within the student body. This concept goes against Choate's core belief in equity, that we are all important members of the

Choate community despite the demographics we may fall into.

For most, attending a concert is a fun experience shared with friends. People attend concerts not only because they are fans of the artist but also because concerts are an exhilarating way to share music with their peers. The School may believe that assigned seating at this concert will foster new relationships between students that do not yet know one another, but without friends hyping up the next song beside you, the concert may not be as enjoyable.

It is understandable that the School wants to prevent a potentially chaotic first-come, first-served situation. However, I believe that first-come, first-served seating may be the only fair option because it takes the individual degree of desire into account. If someone greatly values an event, they will reserve the best tickets early, instead of lucky students who are mildly excited about the event receiving the best seats. A first-come, first-served ticketing

system would transfer the control from the School to the students themselves.

I propose that the School send a link that is different from the one that was emailed last week. The link that was previously sent out only asked students whether they were interested in attending the concert or carnival. The new link would allow students who register first to choose and reserve their seats. Because students would be in charge of reserving their own seats, the administration can still prioritize ensuring the quality of the concert over arranging student seating.

While many express disappointment with the concert seating, it is ultimately important to recognize that we as a community are extremely privileged — really, how many other schools can afford to invite a top-class celebrity like John Legend?

Jay Zhou is a fifth-former from Shanghai. He may be reached at jyzhou21@choate.edu

ANDREW YANG'S VALUE-ADDED TAX WILL REDUCE INCOME INEQUALITY



Democratic presidential candidate Andrew Yang's campaign slogan is "Humanity First," reflecting his dedication to fighting inequality in America.

Photo courtesy of Forbes

By **Calvin Walker '21**
Opinions Staff Writer

A common critique of presidential candidate Andrew Yang's proposed universal basic income, also known as the Freedom Dividend, is his use of a value-added tax to fund the proposal. Critics call the tax regressive, arguing that it is a Trojan horse — a toxin to America's poorest citizens disguised as a socioeconomic equalizer. However, I believe that Mr. Yang's universal basic income is, in fact, progressive and will work to raise the floor in America's economy, lessening socioeconomic inequality.

A value-added tax, or VAT, is commonly defined as a consumption tax levied at every point in the supply chain where the value of a product increases. However, the

consumer is commonly the one who pays the VAT on a product, as buyers and sellers in the earlier production stages are reimbursed for the VAT they previously paid.

Companies at each point in the supply chain of a product are encouraged to collect the VAT, as it is the only way to ensure that they are credited for paying it. This discourages tax evasion, eliminating the opportunity for large corporations to avoid paying taxes.

Critics of a VAT point out that unlike a progressive income tax, in which wealthier people pay more than those who are less wealthy, a VAT would fall more heavily on poorer Americans, as they tend to spend larger percentages of their income. This is why Yang's proposal is sometimes viewed as a Trojan horse. It promises the poor free

cash, before hitting them with the regressive nature of a VAT.

The key problem with this argument is that it fails to acknowledge that the VAT doesn't exist in a vacuum. By itself, a VAT is regressive, but when a \$1,000 a month universal basic income comes with it, it's not. Even if the consumer bears the full cost of the VAT, he or she would have to spend \$10,000 or more every month to not see a net benefit, which is nearly impossible for the Americans whom the universal basic income will benefit the most. Additionally, Yang's VAT excludes necessities: clothes, food, and other items that less wealthy Americans spend the most on.

Another common criticism of the Freedom Dividend is that it doesn't stack up with most welfare, forcing the poorest Ameri-

cans to choose between the universal basic income and their current welfare. Those already receiving more than \$12,000 a year in welfare would be at a net loss, right? Well, yes, but welfare is a system with many institutional flaws, and the reality is that the vast majority of those on welfare do not actually receive \$12,000 a year in benefits. In fact, the welfare programs that one would have to opt out of to receive welfare benefits, on average, combine to provide less than \$1,000.

The Freedom Dividend wouldn't discourage poorer people from getting better paying jobs or accumulating assets, as it's permanent and doesn't discriminate by income, unlike welfare. For instance, if I receive \$500 a month in welfare and find a job that pays me \$2,000

a month, thus losing my welfare benefits, my net income increases by \$1,500. However, if I receive the Freedom Dividend of \$1,000 a month and find the same job, my net income would increase by \$2,000, giving me a greater incentive to work.

Additionally, Yang's universal basic income is unconditional, as opposed to the highly conditional welfare programs in America, which come with numerous strings attached. For instance, many welfare programs block recipients from buying certain food products. Many of the poorest Americans struggle to navigate the bureaucracy of welfare — more than a quarter of people living under the poverty line, or thirteen million Americans, are completely disconnected from the federal government's social safety net.

While Yang's universal basic income isn't flawless, and I myself question some of his assertions about the macroeconomic effects of his proposal, it is undeniable that it would decrease inequality in America by unprecedented amounts, giving more Americans a fighting chance in our competitive economy. The universal basic income would diminish the need for conditional and often dehumanizing welfare programs, and increase the incentive to work. With the potential to fix many of our nation's economic problems, I hope that Yang's proposal will be discussed more in the mainstream.

Calvin Walker is a fifth-former from Rhinebeck, NY. He may be reached at cwalker21@choate.edu

In the Name of Democracy, Trump Must Support Hong Kong Protesters

By **Wesley Boatwright '22**
Opinions Writer

On Sunday, September 8, thousands of protesters in Hong Kong stood outside the United States embassy seeking help, singing "The Star-Spangled Banner" while waving American flags. It's clear that the people in Hong Kong look to the United States as a shining ideal of democracy. President Donald J. Trump P'oo should support the citizens of Hong Kong and show the world that the United States stands for democracy everywhere.

The protests began in March, prompted by opposition to an extradition bill that would allow citizens of Hong Kong to be extradited to mainland China. The protests grew to the scale of millions in June. Even though the bill was withdrawn on September 4, protesters have now expanded their goal to five major demands, including universal suffrage and police accountability.

When the bill was introduced in February, Hong Kong citizens saw it as little more than a power grab from China. They feared it would erode their legal system, and with good reason. A statement of support from President Trump directed to President Xi Jinping of China and the entire Chinese gov-

ernment would afford the protesters some international legitimacy and dissuade China from using violence to forcibly end the protests.

President Trump's comments have so far been underwhelming. In a tweet, he said, "I know President Xi of China very well. He is a great leader who very much has the respect of his people. He is also a good man in a tough business. I have ZERO doubt that if President Xi wants to quickly and humanely solve the Hong Kong problem, he can do it. Personal meeting?"

President Trump must make a forceful declaration that the trade war currently being waged between the U.S. and China will not cease until Hong Kong is guaranteed its rights. If he wants to be more than a punchline of a joke he doesn't understand, President Trump should speak directly to President Xi and display the United States' continued resolve to support democracy wherever it may be.

The U.S. is involved in a trade war with China in order to challenge China's rapidly increasing global influence. What better opportunity to strike a major blow against China than to have it concede to protests for democracy? The ideological victory that a free Hong Kong would provide should be all the motivation

President Trump needs to make this issue a priority.

And if that isn't enough, how about the ideals that this nation was founded upon? The American Revolution began with people fighting to secure their freedoms from an authoritarian global superpower, a situation eerily similar to what is happening now in Hong Kong. The United States, in its infancy, fought for democracy and the many freedoms outlined in the Bill of Rights. Throughout our history, we have fought so that other countries could enjoy those same freedoms. We should continue to do so for Hong Kong.

Thirty years ago, reporters and other witnesses watched as protesters were massacred in Tiananmen Square. China has removed record of the atrocity from its history. Twenty-eight years from now, in the year 2047, Hong Kong is supposed to be completely under mainland China's control. The United States must ensure that in three decades, these protests are celebrated as the start of a fully democratic Hong Kong, not as events erased from the record books.

Wesley Boatwright is a fourth-former from San Francisco. He may be reached at wboatwright22@choate.edu

U.S. GOVERNMENT'S FAILURE TO ADDRESS CLIMATE CHANGE IS UNCONSTITUTIONAL



Photo courtesy of Charissa Lin

Choate students joined the New Haven Climate Movement on September 20.

By **Niki Gummadri '21**
Copy Editor

On Friday, September 20, people around the world flooded the streets, demanding that their governments take action against climate change. The movement was led by youth activists that have been planning the strikes for more than a year. In the United States, the organization U.S. Youth Climate Strike, a self-described "grassroots movement of youth who demand bold action to put an end to the climate crisis," organized strikes in each of the 50 states. The huge turnout at each of these events shows that Americans are ready for change. The United States government must take a leading role in combating climate change, not only to save the planet but also to uphold American values.

An often-overlooked aspect of climate change is how it disproportionately affects people of color in the United States. According to the National Congress of American Indians, "Indigenous peoples of North America are disproportionately vulnerable to climate change" because nearly all tribes are located in areas that are sensitive to extreme weather or have economies that are dependent on climate-sensitive resources. This means that whatever difficulties most Americans face when dealing with the effects of climate change are ten-

fold for indigenous peoples. According to the *Huffington Post*, "more than 80 percent of Latinos live in counties that violate at least one federal air-pollution law and Latino children are two and a half times more likely to develop asthma than non-Latinos." This is just one example of how people of color in the United States are facing the effects of climate change more than others. If people are to be treated equally in the United States, why are some forced to live in communities where simply breathing the air makes them sick?

The unconstitutionality of government inaction on issues of climate change is made clear in the case of *Juliana v. United States*. According to the lawsuit, the United States government is taking away the 21 young plaintiffs' "rights to life, liberty, property, and public trust resources [through] federal government acts that knowingly destroy, endanger, and impair the inalienable climate system that nature endows." By allowing climate change to continue making our planet uninhabitable, the United States government is in direct violation of our right to live. The fight against climate change is, quite literally, the fight for our lives.

Many say that the cost of implementing environmental programs is too much for the United States to be paying for something that will end up benefiting countries that do not contribute as

much. However, this logic does not take into account the long-term effects of inaction. It will cost governments around the world, including the United States, less in the long-term to start investing in the environment now and prevent further damage than it will to wait and then be on damage control forever. The MIT Technological Review says that although "[s]witching from fossil fuels to low-carbon sources of energy will cost \$44 trillion between now and 2050...the world actually comes out slightly ahead: the costs of switching will be paid for in fuel savings between now and 2050." In fact, the United States should be paying more than most other countries because, according to the Union of Concerned Scientists, the United States is the country with the second highest emissions of carbon dioxide in the world.

The United States cannot be considered a global leader if it is not willing to take initiative on something as dire as climate change, a problem that it has played a big part in creating. The effects of climate change are no longer faraway problems. My generation is feeling the effects right now. We cannot afford to be complacent anymore — our existence depends on our action.

Niki Gummadri is a fifth-former from Ocala, Fla. She may be reached at ngummadri21@choate.edu



Photo courtesy of National Review

Protesters in Hong Kong carry American flags, seeking the U.S.'s help in securing their rights from China.

FEATURES

JOHN F. KENNEDY PROGRAM OFFERS SUMMER OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS

By **Henrik Torres '22**
Reporter

As one of Choate's signature programs, the John F. Kennedy '35 Program in Government and Public Service symbolizes one of the cornerstones of the HPRSS curriculum. This program was designed for students with a passion for politics, economics, and philosophy. With the ability to tailor to each student's unique interests, the J.F.K. signature program is the ideal medium to explore this area of study. This past summer, students from the program participated in summer internships. Now, for the first time since the program's debut in 2018, the Choate community has the opportunity to see how students went out into the world to pursue their passions while representing the School.

The J.F.K. program is relatively new on campus, but the interest and positive feedback from students have driven it to expand. Mr. Ned Gallagher, the program director and an HPRSS teacher, explained, "It's only the second year we've done the program. In the first year, we had 12 students. Because we had so many applicants last year and the quality of the field is so strong, we actually got permission to expand to 18 this year."

In planning their summer experiences, students independently research opportunities and discuss their interests with Mr. Gallagher. "Most of the kids who are rising seniors now spent the summer doing something that they lined up and perfecting their own interests. Sometimes it was through family connections or people they knew. There are a couple of cases where I got involved and helped make connections as I needed to, and that worked out pretty well. What's nice is that



Photo courtesy of Serena Levin

Last summer, Serena Levin '20 interned at the nonprofit organization Corporate Accountability.

we have a network of alumni that are eager to help out," Mr. Gallagher explained.

Lily Ball '20, a J.F.K. program student, completed her internship at the National Security Archive, a combination of a public-interest law firm and research organization. Ball said, "What I was doing was mostly foreign policy research, specifically U.S. policy in Iran and the nuclear history in Iran. I was also filing Freedom of Information Act requests and something called mandatory declassification reviews." Through the J.F.K. program, Ball was able to complete an internship usually reserved for students starting graduate school. She said, "Overall, this was an amazing learning experience. At Choate, you usually get into a cycle of doing work for a class, so it was really nice to learn things just for the sake of learning."

Working under Mayor Jonathan Busch of Metuchen, N.J., Nate White '20 was the only in-

tern in the office and was able to take on a variety of different tasks. White helped make lists of past members of the borough council, worked with political consulting firms, and updated the borough's asset sheet. He also got an inside look at the Middlesex County Democratic Organization — the group in charge of promoting the election of as many Democrats into office as possible. "I really got to see firsthand what local government and party politics are like in a way that I never would have been able to by taking a class," White said. "Through the required classes, my internship, and my fellow J.F.K. program students, I have really been able to learn a lot about government and politics, and I have been able to hone my skills as a politician and debater."

Serena Levin '20 spent the summer working for a nonprofit organization in Boston called Corporate Accountability, which works to fight against

large corporations that are abusing and neglecting human rights. "I loved the experience," Levin said. "I was only there for about two weeks, but I was able to get the entire orientation and work experience anyone else would get. I also did a lot of donor retention in which I would have to research donor retention methods, and I would have to call them and thank them for their donations. It made me realize how hard and involved it is to run a non-profit effectively."

Mr. Gallagher hopes that the students who participate in the program will develop an appreciation for public service, striving to give back to society. "That doesn't necessarily have to be in elected politics," Mr. Gallagher said. "The goal is that they appreciate the tradition for which the program is named — our most famous alumnus, John F. Kennedy."

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Quick Q&A with... Mr. Jim Davidson

By **Kate Bailey '21**
Copy Editor

Mr. Jim Davidson — known simply as "JD" to his students — is one of the longest-serving and most influential teachers on campus. Teaching in the HPRSS department, he's known as an expert on all things philosophical and will often teach students throughout their entire Choate careers, in World Religions as freshmen and in Honors Philosophy as seniors. Last week, I had the chance to sit down with JD to ask a few questions about his fascinating life.

What's the craziest thing you've ever seen or heard on campus?

The senior prank where folks put the names of all the seniors on rubber ducks and floated them in the pond. I thought that was positively crazy.

What is your favorite book?

One that I read that had an early impact was *The Empty Mirror*, by Janwillem van de Wetering. The author reflects on his travels in Japan and his time spent at a Japanese monastery.

What's one thing or person you always make sure to follow in the news?

The Dalai Lama.

How did you get the nickname "JD"?

There was a cross country runner in '77, and she said, "Oh, Mr. Davidson is too formal in cross country. We have to call you 'JD.'" And that's how it has stayed.

What's your favorite classroom in the Humanities Building?

Room 320. I like the size; I like the table; I like the light.

What's your pop culture hot take?

My pop culture hot take? I don't know that I have one.

If you could live abroad for one year, where would you want to go?

Kyoto, Japan.

What's the most underrated spot on campus?

The cross-country course.

You're known for telling jokes in class. What's your ultimate joke?

The most common is the one about knowing that someone isn't too tired because they're not a bicycle. But otherwise, most of my jokes are spontaneous, and I don't remember them.

What's your catchphrase?

I think it would be "Do your best to give a focused effort."

If you could teach any class about anything, what would you teach?

I would probably do something with the philosophy of Buddhism. I'd have it be a bit more experiential-based than we sometimes do, so it could include some hands-on experiences with meditation and other aspects of Buddhism.

What if that class was in a different department?

Maybe Intro to Physics.

What is your favorite lunch in the dining hall?

I like it when they do breakfast at lunch, which they don't do very often anymore.

What's one thing you always have in your backpack?

I want to be sure to have something to write with, even though I have a cell phone.

What's something you wish people would do more of here?

I'd love to see people take a more active effort to get to know people who are new to them, to reach out beyond their friendship groups, to just spend time sitting and talking with more people.

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Bennett Funk '22 Brings His Bots to Battle

By **Sophie Vulpe '22**
Reporter

Turn on the Discovery Channel on a Friday night, and chances are that you'll see something almost equivalent to a gladiator match — one whose fighters are robots, not people. *BattleBots*, a competition in which robots clash with each other for a trophy and thousands of dollars in prize money, premiered its ninth season on June 7. This year, Choate's own Bennett Funk '22 participated in the tournament. In April, 69 teams traveled to Lakewood, California, for the competition. Over the course of two weeks, robots of various shapes and sizes attempted to defeat each other in a series of three-minute matches. The bots navigated a 48" by 48" arena while attempting to damage their opponents by destroying them or by forcing them to interact with dangerous arena obstacles. If a robot could not move for ten or more seconds, it was considered knocked out.

The remote-controlled robots, which weighed up to 250 pounds, were protected by metal armor. They utilized a variety of combative tools such as hammers, saws, scoops, and blades to force their opponents into compromising situations. Funk's team, Offbeat Robotics, used a rotating saw on their robot, Skorpions, to dismember opponents. "We had a 3/8-inch steel front plate. Our main idea [was] that anything you could throw at the robot, it could take that hit," Funk explained. "Then we scooped [the other robots] up. We had a saw on top, so we had a spinning blade, along with the force of the arm coming down. Hopefully that broke through whatever armor our opponent had on top, because top armor is usually thinner than side armor."

Funk was invited by his mentor, Mr. Zachary Lytle, the founder of the robotics entertainment company Bot Bash, to participate

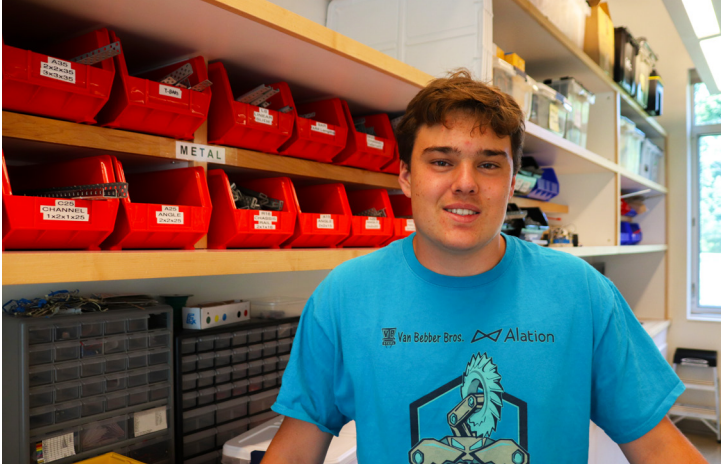


Photo by Renee Jiang/The Choate News

Bennett Funk '22 recently appeared on the TV show *BattleBots*.

in *BattleBots*. Offbeat Robotics has fared well at the competition, with a 60% win rate under their belt. "I've been a fan of [*BattleBots*] for a very long time, so it was quite interesting going in and seeing everyone that I've seen on TV for years," Funk remarked. He was well-prepared going into the game. "I've gone to smaller robotics competitions for a while now, so it wasn't anything too different. There were just a lot more TV cameras."

Although Funk was only able to participate in the competition for a weekend, he benefited greatly from the advanced environment. Many of the participants were professional engineers who had been doing competitions like *BattleBots* for years. "They know a lot more about the topic, so I was just learning what I could from them," he said.

Funk, a member of Choate's Advanced Robotics Concentration (ARC), has been passionate about robotics for years. His first encounter with robots occurred when his family hired Mr. Lytle to bring some small bots to compete at his 10th birthday party. That party was when Funk fell in love with robotics.

"A couple months later, I built my first [robot], and I competed at a competition called RoboGames. It's considered to be the Olympics of robotics because they have so many different competitions and

weight classes, and teams from all over the world," he recalled. "I competed with a one-pound robot, and it actually ended up winning the junior one-pound weight class, which I was thrilled about."

With the increasing demand for technical skills like programming, design, and building in the workplace, competitions like *BattleBots* prepare their younger participants for STEM careers. "There's a need for engineers, so I definitely see myself being able to enter some sort of engineering field," Funk said. He also emphasized the need for resilience when working with robotics. "The biggest thing is not getting frustrated when something doesn't work, because it's not going to work a lot of the time."

Funk's final episode recently aired, and he said, "We did very well to start, winning our first three fights, two by knockout. For our last regular season fight we lost due to some quick driver mistakes. We then entered a post season wild card where if you won you entered the final bracket." Unfortunately, Funk's team lost the post season battle to a more experienced bot. He said, "This was a step up from how the team did last year, though, and I hope next year we will do even better."

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Hey, Freshmen, Are You Surviving?

By **Henrik Torres '22**
Reporter

With brand-new faces roaming around campus, Choate's returning students are itching to learn more about the School's latest recruits: the freshmen. I caught up with a few of these new students to see how the start of their Choate careers are going so far.

First impressions are important, and Choate's beautiful campus and welcoming community didn't fail to leave indelible ones on its students. "Very large, lots of people, very welcoming," said Joy An '23 of her first impressions of the School. A key trait that most freshmen shared about their first impressions of Choate was its tight-knit community. Lex Njomin '23 commented, "My first impression was that Choate was a great community. Just a lot of really nice people."

One cannot speak of opening days without discussing the organized chaos of Playfair, in which students are placed into groups to facilitate new relationships. It's a staple of every Choate kid's first experiences, and the freshmen had a lot to say about it.

Alex Hearn '23 said, "It was tiring going through [Playfair], but at the end of the day it was totally worth it because of all of the new people I met." Maya Rose Chiravuri '23 added that

the event helped her and her classmates to "get to know the campus and facilitate a smoother transition into the start of the year."

An regrettably disagreed. Playfair "was very loud and chaotic," she said. "I didn't get a chance to actually meet anybody, just get a bunch of names and faces thrown at me. I feel like activities such as the new student dinner [were] much more effective at getting to know other new people."

As expected, the transition to dorm life can be tough, but many freshmen have already adapted and taken advantage of the benefits that come with being a boarding student. From small dorms like Squire Stanley to massive dorms like Memorial House, there is something to be said about how a dorm community can influence our Choate experiences. Speaking of Memorial House, Njomin said, "I think it's really cool that all the freshmen boys live together. I know everybody. Everybody knows me. It really enhances the point of the community and establishes strong connections with dorm-mates." Hearn has been enjoying the family-like community on the third floor of Memorial House and everyone's willingness to help each other out.

Choate's residential life program works to strengthen the community. Already in the first few weeks, the freshmen are finding that the School fosters

an environment in which it is very easy to make new friends.

The Choate experience is a multifaceted one with the confluence of academics, sports, music, social lives, and so much more. Navigation of such a labyrinthine culture can be bewildering, but it can also provide fantastic opportunities for students to choose their paths and make the experience their own. Many freshmen said that they came to Choate from schools with a less robust extracurricular program, so the new environment is a nice change. Austin Zhao '23 greatly appreciates the opportunity to delve into the crew team and orchestra. "Every day I'm really excited to go to crew. In Houston, it doesn't exist." He added, "At my old school, I wasn't able to do orchestra, so I'm really happy that I have more opportunities here. Choate gives everyone [the freedom] to do new things and excel at what you do. That's just not something I would've had at home."

Everyone appreciates different aspects of Choate more than others. An greatly appreciates the acceptance that the community has, explaining, "People [here] are very comfortable with diversity, and no one feels the need to exclude." However, An noted that, to her, much of the community seems to "revolve a lot around sports, which is awkward if you don't play a team sport."

Arin Tongdee '23 has been enjoying "all of the freedom I have to choose my activities and clubs. It gives me a sense of independence."

Despite having called Choate their home for just 26 days, the School's newest members are quickly weaving themselves into the community's fabric. Looking ahead to their next four years in Wallingford, the freshmen are excited to further explore all that Choate has to offer.



Photo courtesy of Choate Flickr

Freshmen have been adjusting to life at Choate.

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For Annual Artist-In-Residence Program, Visual Arts Concentration Collaborates with New Haven Print Maker

By **Tony Lee '21**
Staff Reporter

When someone mentions the words “visual arts”, what do you think of? For many students, including Choate’s Visual Arts Concentration (VAC) program members, the first art mediums they think of are graphite pencils, charcoal sticks, or paint palettes. In this term’s VAC field trip, the arts department has arranged visits to a local artist’s shop in New Haven to introduce the students to what seems a lesser-known art form: printmaking.

Printmaker Mr. Jeff Mueller owns and operates Dexterity Press print shop. Working alongside his wife, Ms. Kerri Sancomb, Mr. Mueller presses and sells a wide variety of prints: cards, posters, banners, and even customizable skateboard decks.

VAC students took part in designing wooden stamps used in the printing press.

Before the first visit of the trip, the students sketched black-and-white images that served as stencils for the stamps, which the students carved using wood-dissolving chemicals.

On the second visit, last Friday, the finished stamps were placed into Mr. Mueller’s 1905 printing press, which uses rollers to pick up ink and press it onto the paper, to print a small book with each student’s designs.



Photo by Derek Ng/The Choate News

Visual Arts Concentration students participate in a workshop led by Dexterity Press, a letterpress studio.

While traditional art forms allow artists to freely change the design at any point, printmaking uses meticulously carved stamps that are difficult to alter once created. For VAC student Stella Dubin ’21, the lack of flexibility in printmaking was a new experience.

“I think printmaking is very formulaic and very controlled — once you make the stamp,

the design’s pretty much set, which doesn’t leave much room for error,” Dubin said. “It’s not something I’m super familiar with. I’m not a super loose artist, but if I make a mistake I can fix it if it’s just graphite or any other medium. But I can’t with printmaking.”

HP Park ’21 is a Visual Arts Concentration student who specializes in computer-generated

imagery, 3-D graphics modeling, and virtual reality. Park related the printmaking process to his work with generating graphics using image templates.

“I sometimes use AI [artificial intelligence] to generate landscapes. If I want to make a lot of trees, and I have one tree, I can generate a terrain from a template of that one tree. It’s like an algorithm; all the

branches and leaves are randomized with each generated tree,” Park said.

“It’s similar to how the printing works mechanically, with one layer of color, then another layer, then a third after, each a little bit different from the other layers,” he explained.

Park raised the possibility of implementing a special texture-defining plane used in

modern 3-D graphics software in physical print pressing.

“In 3-D, there’s a thing called the normal plane, which defines how a texture may look on a 3-D plane surface. If we could make normal maps for printing, we could change bumpiness on a paper print not just color or opacity, but unique textures, which would be pretty cool,” Park said.

“I like going to artists’ studios because you get to see an in-depth view of their artistic process,” Dubin said. “I like museums — they’re great — but the idea of going into a studio is interesting because it shows a bit about the artist and how they do things. You get to know them, versus just looking at a painting on a wall.”

Yuting Wang ’20 and Vladislava Sirychenko ’20 found the experience both relaxing and inventive.

“Printmaking was something I had never experienced before, so it was really innovative for me to visit this studio,” Wang said.

“I have always viewed making art as something that takes up a lot of your energy. After visiting this studio and printmaking, I realized that art can be a meditative experience. It was super relaxing,” said Sirychenko.

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AIDED BY OIL PAINT, DENHART ’20 DIVES DEEP INTO VULNERABILITY

By **Bianca Rosen ’21**
Staff Reporter

Every day after school, Alex Denhart ’20 is in the Visual Arts Concentration studio, on the second floor of the PMAC, for two hours. While working on her pieces, Denhart listens to music, the world around her becomes a hazy blur, and her sole focus becomes the art.

Denhart finds inspiration for her pieces in all corners of the world.

“Right now, I’m really interested in praying mantises,” she said. “I had a recent experience with a praying mantis that had only one wing. I think one of them was bitten off, but it was super friendly and was climbing on my head. It’s little moments like that one that I find the most inspiration.”

Denhart likes to celebrate more intimate moments in life — time spent with a friend, nature, or alone. She takes inspiration from her own life experiences. Her pieces exude vulnerability.

Denhart’s artwork has its signature style, characterized by its combination of representational concepts and abstraction. For instance, Denhart creates portraits, mediums, and shapes that are interacting within the piece, blurring the line between concrete and abstract elements.

There was a long period of time when Denhart defaulted to



Photo by Jenny Guo/The Choate News

Visual Arts Concentration student Alex Denhart ’20 is particularly inspired by artist Catherine Kehoe.

monochromatic pieces, not adding color because of its infinite, and slightly daunting, possibility. For her, color makes a piece more vulnerable because it’s personal and conveys strong emotion. It gives people a greater grasp of the piece’s general mood and can allude to some of the artist’s decisions in creating the piece.

Denhart said, “I was pretty vulnerable everytime I added color because I wasn’t sure of how it would be perceived by the public, but that’s something I want to explore more. It makes it more of an extended conversation with the viewer.”

Denhart likes to explore different styles, and she takes inspiration from other artists. One artist she’s particularly interested in is Ms. Catherine

Kehoe. Ms. Kehoe is known for her oil paintings, most notably her paintings of still life. Her focus is on the interaction of color, shapes, and light. “An apple will have these interlocking planes, so it looks like it was cut out like a wood block and wasn’t completely finished,” said Denhart. Ms. Kehoe’s style is very abstract; it uses many shapes and lines, making it geometric.

Mimicking Ms. Kehoe’s style is a challenge for Denhart because it’s a very technical process that involves a great deal of precision. Denhart welcomes the challenge, though, treating it as an ongoing exploration of a new type of artwork.

Denhart’s connection with art has been steady since she

was a child taking her first drawing class. It’s something that’s been influential throughout her time at Choate, and a passion that doubtlessly will extend beyond high school.

“The beauty of art is that it’s one of those things that you can always have for yourself,” said Denhart. “Art cultivates many different relationships: between the artist and the piece, the piece and the viewer, and the artist and the viewer. It’s a form of expression which is unrestrained.”

Denhart hopes to continue sketching her whole life, both as a hobby and an ode to her inner thoughts.

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COMPETITION FOR ORCHESTRA SPOTS AT ALL-TIME HIGH

By **Lara Selçuker ’21**
Reporter

Students nervously chat in front of the new Recital Hall in Colony Hall, their heartbeats high, as though they just ran up a hill. They are about to audition for one of Choate’s selective music ensembles, and whether new or returning, they are all incredibly apprehensive. Are they ready for this?

The Symphony and String Orchestras’, Jazz and Wind Ensembles’ auditions took place on September 8, 9, and 10, and the signup lists were nearly full for each day. The demand for participation in these musical ensembles was so high this year that although September 8 and 9 were initially reserved for string auditions only, and the 10th for winds, brass, and percussion, all musicians had to audition on each day. The slots for September 10 filled completely two days before, and those on September 8 and 9 remained nearly full.

One major shift returning musicians noticed is that the Orchestra has an unprecedentedly large number of cellos this year.

According to Claire Yuan ’21, who plays the flute and piccolo in the Choate Rosemary Hall Symphony Orchestra (CRHO), there are 18 cellos this year. This number stands in stark contrast to the Orchestra’s four violas. This is typically considered unequal instrumental distribution, and Mr. Phil Ventre, the conductor of the Symphony Orchestra, reflected on the disparity as well. He admitted that there were an unusually high number of cello auditions this year, and even after a large portion was accepted into Orchestra, the String Orchestra was still joined by five new cellists.

CRHO now has 70 musicians in contrast to last year’s 56.

However, CRHO isn’t the only musical ensemble on campus whose distribution of musicians among instruments isn’t equal.

Although for some, ensemble auditions are a nerve-racking test for which students practice for years, for others, like Mai Ly Hagan ’21, they are an opportunity to try something new. New to Choate last year, Hagan describes her experience in the vast, acoustically engineered Recital Hall, where many feel small and shy, as “wild.” She really wanted to be in the String Orchestra, even though she had basically taught herself how to play the cello. “I told them I didn’t have anything to play for them. When they insisted, I played them *Hot Cross Buns*. It was really out of tune. They

asked me to play it again, but more in tune. So I played it again.” This year, she has become the first chair cellist of the String Orchestra.

As a clarinet player currently in my second year in CRHO, I can attest to the fact that the competition has only intensified. Although 18 cellos is a striking number, no new clarinets and barely any other new students were admitted to the woodwinds section of the orchestra. Nonetheless, with newly motivated musicians and returners, CRHO is looking at a rewarding year.

The first pieces envisioned by Mr. Ventre, Johannes Brahms’s *Academic Festival Overture* and Felix Mendelssohn’s *Violin Concerto in E minor*, are scheduled to be played for the Choate community during Parents’ Weekend. With a concert so near, both new students and returners have an incentive to practice their instruments with passion.

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Photo by Jenny Guo/The Choate News

Alex Denhart ’20 incorporates materials and shapes that blur lines between the actual and abstract.

FIELD REPORT

Varsity Saturday Games

Boys' Cross Country (0-1)
falls to Lawrenceville, 15-47

Girls' Cross Country (0-1)
falls to Lawrenceville, 18-41

Field Hockey (0-4)
falls to Lawrenceville, 0-6

Football (1-1)
beats Lawrenceville, 43-6

Boys' Soccer (2-1-2)
beats Lawrenceville, 2-0

Girls' Soccer (2-0-1)
beats Lawrenceville, 2-0

Girls' Volleyball (3-2)
falls to Lawrenceville, 1-3

Water Polo (1-3)
falls to Lawrenceville, 7-18

J.V. Saturday Games

Field Hockey (0-2)
falls to Lawrenceville, 0-3

Boys' Soccer (2-1)
falls to Lawrenceville, 0-1

Girls' Soccer (2-0-1)
beats Exeter, 5-1

Girls' Volleyball (2-0)
beats Miss Porter's, 3-0

Thirds Saturday Games

Boys' Soccer (2-1)
beats Cheshire, 5-0

Girls' Volleyball (2-1)
beats Miss Porter's, 3-1

Varsity Wednesday Games

Boys' Soccer (3-1-2)
beats Westy, 3-1

Girls' Soccer (2-1-1)
falls to Loomis, 1-2

Volleyball (3-3)
falls to Hopkins, 0-3

JV Wednesday Games

Football (0-1)
falls to Loomis, 0-24

Boys' Soccer (2-1-1)
ties Westy, 1-1

Volleyball (3-0)
beats Hopkins, 3-0

From Thirds to Varsity, Girls' Volleyball Makes It Possible

By **Naomi Fleisch '22**
and **Renee Jiang '22**
Reporters

Unique among sports programs at Choate, the Girls' Volleyball program regularly cultivates thirds athletes, developing them, in a handful of years, into varsity athletes. Julia Mackenzie '19, who graduated just last year, was a thirds athlete her freshman year. But she made it to varsity her junior year, and, a year later, became the captain and starting outside hitter.

Each year in the past decade, there has been at least one varsity player who started out on the thirds team. Players accomplish this achievement not only through years of dedication and perseverance, but also from the constant support of the thirds and JV coaches, encouragement from teammates, and the versatility and intensity of the volleyball program as a whole.

The typical rise from thirds to varsity starts with the Head Coach of Girls' Varsity Volleyball, Mr. David Loeb. His mission for the program is to support and improve athletes at every level, including those who have not played volleyball until arriving at Choate.

"Volleyball is different from many sports because there are many people who don't pick up the game until high school," said Mr. Loeb. "Players in other sports are typically more polished by the time they reach freshman year, because there are more opportunities to start at a younger age with youth programs."



Lily Ding '20 and Brooke Popadich '20 both began on Thirds and now play on Varsity. Photo courtesy of Jake Nadzam

The girls' volleyball program only has about 36 players in total across its three teams. This small number elevates the talent of the teams. "Another thing about the volleyball team that makes it easy for kids to rise to varsity is that so many people try out and each team only takes twelve people," said Brooke Popadich '20. "Since so few players part of the program in total, there will obviously be 36 good players within the School, so it will be easy for people to move up in the program."

Although some players do reach varsity by their senior year, commitment and dedication to the sport are necessary

for a player to improve. "Here, we sit right now in this interview in the gym, and practice has ended, but there are still players on the court improving their skills," said Mr. Loeb. "There have been countless thirds players, new to the sport, who have simply fallen in love with the game, staying after practice, playing in the offseason, and going to camps over the summer. Athletics after classes are supposed to be the fun part of the day, and kids who recognize that and have a passion for the sport are the ones who grow and improve."

Lily Ding '20, a member of this year's varsity squad,

climbed the ranks of the Choate volleyball program, though she originally wasn't going to play volleyball during her freshman year. "I was actually going to switch to field hockey coming into Choate, so Loeb didn't even know about me. I ended up going to volleyball practice randomly." Suddenly, she realized she'd forgotten how fun the sport could be.

Even though she'd played volleyball in middle school, Ding never considered playing volleyball at Choate, or ever playing at the varsity level in any sport. She believed that "only athletes who have been playing their entire life would make varsity."

Ding made varsity her junior year. She attributed her success to the players and coaches that form the program. "Ms. [Julie] Oxborough really helped me improve as a player on thirds my freshman year. All the girls on my teams have also helped me stay level-headed and together throughout each season."

Popadich is the other senior on this year's team who started her volleyball career at Choate on the thirds team. Like Ding, she didn't have much volleyball experience before Choate. "I played for three years at my old school, but it was not a super intense volleyball program. I also played a lot of other sports, so I never just did volleyball," said Popadich.

She attributed the volleyball coaches' ability to communicate and coach the fundamentals of volleyball to her success. "All of the coaches have a close relationships with each other, so they talk about the positions that they will need on the varsity team," said Popadich. "For me, I played a lot of different volleyball positions at Choate. Coming in I had only played one position. But now, I have played a different position on thirds, JV, and varsity."

This season, all three girls' volleyball teams enjoy winning records, possibly because dedication and improvement that leads to players eventually making the varsity team.

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Girls' Varsity Soccer Defeats Lawrenceville, 2-0

By **Greer Goergen '21**
Staff Reporter

Girls' Varsity Soccer, now with a record of 2-0-1, looked to continue its strong start to the season last Saturday against the Lawrenceville School.

Lawrenceville went into the game searching for its first win of the season. The warm temperatures during the game, reaching as high as 83 degrees, caused the referees to call two water breaks midway through each half. Despite the heat, Girls' Varsity Soccer overcame a slow first half to eventually top Lawrenceville, 2-0.

Lexi Taylor '23, who joined the squad this year, scored two breakaway goals, with assists from Sam Brown '20 and Erin Martin '20.

The game began with both sides exercising caution and playing without intensity. Neither team had many opportunities to score at the opening of the game.

"We lost our composure in the first half but came out strong in the second half and capitalized on our opportunities," said midfielder Julianne Sekula '20.

Martin agreed. "We really struggled in the first half to keep the ball and connect passes. We were all frustrated but completely changed our game in the second half after a strong halftime talk," said Martin.

With the game tied at zero at halftime, Choate started the second half much stronger than the first and picked apart Lawrenceville's defensive line with numerous crosses into the goalie box. With more determination and composure, Choate was able to get into a groove and dominated play in the game's final twenty minutes.

Taylor's two goals, which came during the 51st and 63rd minutes, are the first of her Choate career.

Taylor Vecchione '20, Choate's new postgraduate goalkeeper,

posted her second shutout in three games. She made a remarkable breakaway save during the second half, during what could have been a decisive moment in the game.

After Taylor scored her second goal, Lawrenceville seemed to come out with renewed energy, and fought hard for the match's final five minutes, with a free-kick that almost landed them a goal. Head Coach Mr. Rick Kozack countered Lawrenceville's intensity with a series of reinforcements from the team's bench. Each time a player entered or reentered the match, Choate's intensity appeared to rise.

Grace Stapelberg '20 and Jenna Rempel '20 maintained a strong defensive line, despite the absence of defensive stalwart Cici Curran '20.

"They had two fast girls up top who were kind of a handful and gave us a few scares," Stapelberg said, "but we were able to handle it. Our keeper also had a couple of amazing saves that really helped us." She added that Lawrenceville's strikers were quick on the ball, and Choate's backs worked hard to deny them opportunities on goal.

Two additions to the team this year, Sophia Zhang '23 and Ava Parker '23, took the advantage of forward Abbi Addler '20 and Curran's absences to debut their skills against a quality team. Stapelberg added, "Without Cici there, it was a tough adjustment at first, but we all got the hang of it. Sophia Zhang really stepped up at left-back and played a great game."

Girls' Varsity Soccer is 2-1-1 on the season after falling to the Loomis Chaffee School on Wednesday. The team travels to Westminster School this Saturday.

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PLAYER PROFILE ON THE FIELD WITH GINA DRISCOLL



Photo by Amitra Hoq/The Choate News

Driscoll is the starting goalie and co-captain of Varsity Field Hockey.

By **Dylan Allen '22**
Reporter

This fall, co-captain Gina Driscoll '20 begins her final Girls' Varsity Field Hockey season despite only starting field hockey at Choate. Driscoll does not limit herself to just a fall varsity sport, also playing on Girls' Varsity Hockey and Lacrosse teams in the winter and spring. Recently, reporter Dylan Allen '22 sat down with Driscoll to learn more about life as a three-sport varsity athlete at Choate.

Dylan Allen: How did you start playing field hockey?

Gina Driscoll: I started playing field hockey in my sophomore year because a bunch of the girls were asking me to play. I switched from Girls' JV Soccer, and the first time I picked up a stick was sophomore tryouts.

DA: What is field hockey like at Choate?

GD: At Choate, I'd say field hockey is definitely fun. We have our hardships, but we work through them because we're diligent and committed to the team.

DA: How does this season compare to previous ones?

GD: We got off to a rocky start

because we lost a lot of our really strong seniors, like Tracey Stafford ['19], but we're trying to keep our heads up. We're doing our best, especially with our new head coach, Grace McGee, and we're hopefully looking to progress this season.

DA: What is it like playing three varsity sports?

GD: I'm not going to lie, it's pretty tough. It's obviously a big-time commitment to be on three varsity sports, especially with bus trips and everything. But participating in sports at Choate is what I like to do. I love playing sports, and it's not a burden at all for me.

DA: Which season would be your favorite?

GD: Probably hockey, because we're very close-knit, and we spend a lot of time together. It's a great group of girls, but that doesn't mean that field hockey and lacrosse aren't as close-knit.

DA: What is it like switching from goalie in lacrosse and field hockey to skater in hockey?

GD: It's definitely tough going from goalie to field — it's two very different mindsets. I'd say I mostly prefer goal-
ie. When I was younger, my

parents wouldn't actually let me play goalie during hockey, so I said I could play goalie in every other sport. Going from cleats to skates is definitely one of the harder aspects compared to going from field player to goalie. But I do like to score goals when I'm able to.

DA: Are you going to continue to play field hockey after high school?

GD: Probably not, since I plan to play hockey and lacrosse in college. The hockey season actually starts when I get to college and runs to the beginning of lacrosse season, so I actually wouldn't be able to play field hockey. However, if I could, I would.

DA: What are your plans for life after Choate?

GD: After Choate, I plan on studying sports medicine so that I can become an athletic trainer and stay in the sports field. Also, I want to get as much playing time as I can in college. I would love to see if I could go on to the National Women's Hockey League or the Women's Professional Lacrosse League.

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