The Choate News

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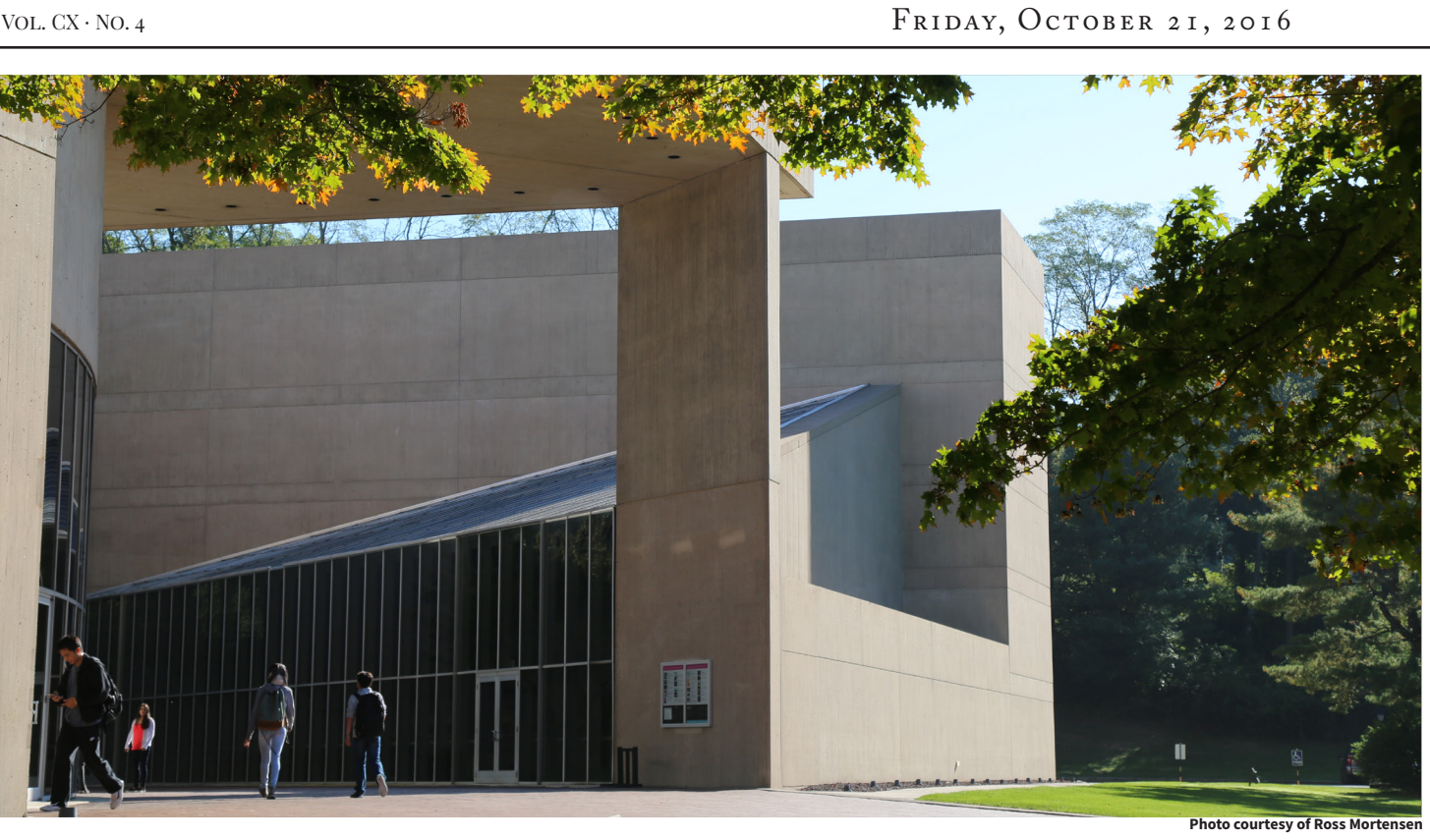

Photo courtesy of Ross Mortensen

Students have enjoyed an unusually warm week in October, even as trees across campus continue to change.

Choate Responds to *Boston Globe* Investigation

By **Nathan Chang '17**
Staff Reporter

On October 1, *The Boston Globe* reported an incident of adult sexual misconduct against a Choate student in 1992. The article, titled "Educators accused of sexual misconduct often find new posts," detailed how Mr. Bjorn Runquist, a former French teacher at Choate, had a sexual relationship with Cheyenne Hawk '92, when Ms. Hawk was a senior and one of Mr. Runquist's dorm advisees. The online version of the article included links to two letters that Mr. Runquist wrote to Ms. Hawk in October 1992.

Administrators at Choate had been aware of the relationship, though they learned of it after Ms. Hawk graduated. The School went on to prohibit Mr. Runquist from working alone with female students. At the end of the 1992-1993 school year, it forced Mr. Runquist to resign. He later went to work at Kent School.

"We apologize on behalf of Choate Rosemary Hall that such misconduct has occurred at our school," Headmaster Dr. Alex Curtis and Chairman of the Board of Trustees Mr. Michael J. Carr '76 wrote in a letter to the Choate community. "Choate Rosemary Hall is deeply saddened that this former teacher not only failed in his responsibility to guide, nurture, and protect but also caused harm to a student in his care."

In a recent interview, Dr. Curtis said that the Board of Trustees could not be taking the matter more seriously. "It has been handled at the highest level of the School," he said. He added that the Board understood its responsibility to recognize the significance of this case and all cases of sexual misconduct. Choate's Trustees are actively ensuring that the School is a community in

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Carr and Curtis Seek Continued Progress on Strategic Plan

Written by J. Bryce Wachtell '17, Editor-in-Chief and Truelian Lee '17, News Editor; Reporting contributed by Varshini Kumar '17, News Editor

With a limited number of school days, special programs, and trustee meetings, Choate faces an ongoing issue of priority; the community constantly grapples with what topic, action, or event is most relevant each year. Often, the answer is dictated by the actions of the administration, led by Dr. Alex Curtis, Headmaster, and Mr. Michael J. Carr, Chairman of the Board of Trustees.

Choate's 2013 Strategic Plan, a five-year initiative to improve the School, contains a variety of actions items under four categories: cohesion and culture, teaching and learning, enrollment and student outcomes, and communication and outreach. Many of these action items have been successfully implemented over the past three years. Looking toward the next two years of the Strategic Plan, both Dr. Curtis and Mr. Carr are hopeful that the success of previous years will continue. Dr. Curtis remarked, "Every one of the 26 action items had a starting date, a benchmark, and a person responsible." He continued, "80% of them have reached at least their primary benchmark."

According to both Mr. Carr and Dr. Curtis, the 2013 initiative was successful in that it was neither too general nor too specific, which often is a problem associated with strategic plans. Mr. Carr commented, "Sometimes you can get too small in your strategic thinking and you focus on smaller, more contained issues. Or you can be 'galactic,' and then you end up with a bunch of platitudes. What has surprised me about this plan is that the board and the administration came up with goals that gave Dr. Curtis and his team the ability to adapt if necessary."

As part of the Strategic Plan, which states, "we will ensure that the School's programming, size, facilities, and resources remain pre-eminent and foster a cohesive, vibrant campus community," the layout of Choate's campus is undergoing drastic shifts. The School is currently building the St. John Hall Student Center and continuing preparations for construction of a new auditorium adjacent to the Paul Mellon Arts Center.

See **CURTIS AND CARR,** *Page 3*

SAGÉ Committee Proposes Gender, Sexuality Initiatives

By **Grayce Gibbs '18**
Staff Reporter

Students Advocating for Gender Equality (SAGÉ) has recently created a ten-student subcommittee aiming to foster a community more informed about consent and sexual intimacy on campus. The committee plans to collaborate with the administration to write official policies and procedures with more positive language. Over the past two weeks, the committee has drafted a formal proposal with four main sections – handbook language, health care, consent education, and visitation. Each section identifies an issue with current school policy and offers a potential solution.

The SAGÉ subcommittee consists of nine students representing different facets of the community. SAGÉ President Antigone Ntagkounakis '17 and Vice-President Blair Cox '17 are leaders of the committee; Pascale Huntsinger '17, Lily James '17, Amira Nazer '17, Jack O'Donnell '17, Zach Mothner '18, Libby Wilson '18, and Angie Zhao '19 are the other members.

The subcommittee started by articulating its goals and values with a Constitution. According to Ntagkounakis, "When we ideally create a joint task force with the administration, if an individual committee member goes to an administrative meeting or to meet with a specific teacher or dean, they are representing the values of the SAGÉ constitution instead of their own individual thought. This will avoid bringing biased opinions into the administration's policy changes."

In addition, members would also like to revise the visitation policy. The committee has proposed a graduated visitation system with different visitation rules per grade. A pilot run of some of the proposed visitation changes may run during the spring for the senior class. Students also hope to change the language on sexual intimacy in the handbook to reflect a more neutral stance on the issue.

We want to take away some of the intimidation and judgment many students feel as of right now.

Antigone Ntagkounakis '17

SAGÉ created the subcommittee in response to the mandatory meeting regarding consent earlier this fall. SAGÉ had held a meeting afterwards to reflect, and many students had strong opinions about how the school approached consent and sex education. Ntagkounakis noted, "Some people felt patronized, some felt uninformed, and others felt like they weren't getting enough real life examples. We

See **SAGÉ COMMITTEE,** *Page 3*

Advisers to Students of Color Provide Guidance, Refine Outreach

By **Grace Zhang '20**
Staff Reporter

Illustration by Mckynzie Romer

Hundreds of phones across campus buzzed two weeks ago when Ms. Judi Williams, one of Choate's three new advisers to Students of Color, sent out an introductory email to the group. In this email, Ms. Williams, Mr. Charlie Fuentes, and Mr. Edward McCatty – all three of whom are official advisers to students of color – mentioned some of their goals, articulating a plan to hold individual five-minute meetings with each student of color at Choate.

The advisers hoped that the meetings would let students know about the existence of the Students of Color Advisory. "Mr. McCatty, Mr. Fuentes, and I — we love students. That's why we teach," explained Ms. Williams. "So it's important to us that we're not just an email. We want to actually know who these students are, get to know them, and at least develop some kind of working relationship, if not a personal, close relationships where they feel safe communicating with us on a regular basis." Ms. Williams also hopes that the first five-minute meetings won't be all the interaction the advisers get with the students. She said, "Hopefully, over time, they'll feel comfortable enough to come and meet us. I really just want the kids to know that they have adults on campus who are here to listen and help in any way possible."

Director of Equity and Inclusion, Dr. Keith Hinderlie, said, "The role has always been to support students of color here on campus, to have an understanding of experiences for students, and to support, based on the needs of students." He described that when he previously worked at Milton Academy he "reached out to all students and kept track of all that happened and was available for support. The intent was to make contact with students, let them know that there are more adults that students can come to, and to get a pulse for what the experience is like on campus now." He is hopeful that in the capable hands of Ms. William, Mr. McCatty, and Mr. Fuentes, this role will be replicated at Choate.

Ms. Kathleen Wallace, Associate Headmaster, said that the goal of the group was to "provide our students of color with a forum where they and their friends can get together with those with shared experiences, desires, and aspirations; where all can express concerns, hopes, fears, trepidations, desires and more without fear of judgment or reprisal of any sort; where all grow to understand themselves and others better, more deeply."

Students seem to understand the importance of these meetings. Laila Hawkins '19, after receiving the email, said, "I think that the meetings are important to have to just talk about your experience. You talk about how you feel the School supports you, or how you feel the School doesn't support you; some things that are going on in town, at school, in the world; etc. I think it's just nice to have a conversation and talk about that."

Hopefully, over time, they'll feel comfortable enough to come and meet us.

Ms. Judi Williams
Adviser to Students of Color

However, some students have a few doubts regarding the brevity of these meetings. "Honestly, I don't think the meetings are going to be useful," expressed Josephine Mah '18. "I don't think you can accomplish much in five minutes, especially since they the email to over three hundred people. I doubt that whoever we're talking to is going to remember our names by the end of five minutes."

Matt Lee '20 agreed, "I don't think the five-minute meetings are going to be useful. Five minutes isn't long enough to get your thoughts out. I think they need to be a lot longer."

However, Dr. Hinderlie believes that the "five-minute meetings" referred to in the email was intended to simply be the start of an ongoing conversation. "I don't think there was any attempt to out anybody or offend anybody. It was really a respectful approach to make sure there were no students left behind that we missed that needed support. And the experiences of students of color at schools like Choate is unique, and students have unique needs. We want to make sure we are addressing them."

Other students were inquisitive about the email they received. "It's strange because I don't feel like I identify as someone of color," remarked Sukriti Kalra '18. "Normally I'll just say I'm Singaporean, so I don't know what we're supposed to talk about in these meetings." Kalra, and others, are sure to flesh out their experiances in the five minute meetings, which may help illuminate pieces of students' identities.

The Students of Color group has played a significant

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Read it then recycle it

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Visuals (from left to right) by CDev, Press Assocociation, Lucas Ferrer, and Brown Athletics.

Deemed Ineffective, Nasal Flu Sprays No Longer Offered

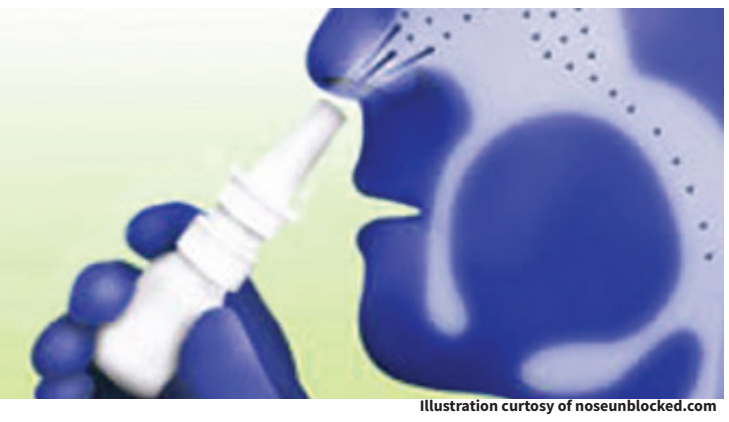

Illustration curtosy of noseunblocked.com

Until this year, nasal spray flu vaccines were an alternative to flu shots.

By **Pinn Chirathivat '19**
Staff Reporter

The Choate Health Center is solely offering flu shots this year, and not offering the nasal spray as it has done in previous years. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) voted in June to disallow use of the nasal spray flu vaccine, or the live attenuated influenza vaccine (LAIV), for the 2016-2017 year. The CDC recommends getting an annual flu shot with either the inactivated influenza vaccine (IIV) or recombinant influenza vaccine (RIV). In accordance with these recommendations, health center staff have begun visiting each dorm to administer flu shots; they visited dorms such as Bernhard House, Tenney House, and Nichols House.

Dr. Christopher Diamond, Director of Health Services, expressed his hopes, "My goal is still to get 100 percent of, or at least close to 100 percent of, the students protected."

He explained the CDC's decision, "The nasal spray had about 86% effectiveness rate per year, and it was considered to be the better vaccine. However, when the CDC looked at the information again for the last two years, its protection rate had plummeted to only 6%. No one really understands why." He added, "Maybe the reason why LAIV was getting such low rates was because people just didn't know how to use it."

He recounted his eldest child's experience with getting the nasal spray. Dr. Diamond said, "The vaccine had a little syringe and a little bracket on it. You are supposed to squeeze it till the bracket hits one nostril. Then you have to take the bracket off and squeeze the rest into the other. I watched him do it; he squeezed a little into one nostril, and squeezed a little into the other and was done. And I got his attention, and said 'you know that there is half the dose in there.' And he said, 'no I gave half in one, and half in the other.' And I said no let me show you, and I clipped it off, and I said 'now you have more.'"

This year, Dr. Diamond and Associate Director of the Health Center Ms. Karen Klein decided to make vaccinations more convenient for students by bringing the flu clinics to the dorms. Ms. Klein said, "We are going to every dorm with one or two nurses who will bring the flu vaccine and all the supplies with them as well as fun band aids and Blow Pops to create a more fun and festive atmosphere for flu clinic." The band aids will feature emojis and minions, she added.

The flu kills 20 to 40 thousand people per year, usually the elderly and weak. Dr. Diamond remarked, "There are two main reasons why we take the flu shot. First, students won't have to miss seven to ten days of school for being ill. Second, it is really a potentially deadly disease. The fewer of us who have it, the better off we are as a community."

Ms. Klein echoed the same sentiment, "It is good for individuals to get vaccinated for their own health, and it is also good for the whole community. This is a way that everyone can participate in creating a healthier environment."

Every year, different strains of the flu are more prevalent. Scientists try to predict which strains will be the most common when they create flu vaccines. Although they try their best to produce the most effective vaccines, scientists cannot always achieve this.

"No immunization is 100% perfect. It takes about two weeks to get a full effect from the vaccination." Dr. Diamond clarified, "The flu shot cannot give you the flu. If you get sick the day after you get the flu shot, it means you were exposed to someone with the flu in the past week."

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Students of Color Invited to Five-Minute Adviser Meetings

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role historically in supporting minority students. In previous years, Mr. McCatty and Mr. Tyren Bynum '07 served as advisers to students of colors. However, this year, Ms. Williams and Mr. Fuentes are new additions, as Mr. Bynum is no longer at Choate. Ms. Williams commented, "Historically, independent schools were not created with students of color in mind, but rather, with a certain echelon of white society." She added, "Students come in from different situations and aren't necessarily accustomed to certain cultural differences, teaching styles, and conditions. The cultural gap can really impact students in ways that teachers aren't aware of."

I come into Choate with the understanding that people of color represent many groups.

Dr. Keith Hinderlie
Director Equity and Inclusion

The Students of Color Advisory exists as a resource where students can feel comfortable going to and explaining their potential issues to people who are also of different cultures and can understand their struggles. Ms. Williams shared a recent incident concerning an Asian student of color. "A student explained to me that teachers would accuse her of being sleepy because she had monolids. She didn't look sleepy, but she said she would have teachers tell her that she looked like she wasn't paying attention."

For years, advisers to students of color have been wrestling with the issue of who exactly should be included in the term "students of color." Ms. Williams noted that many students only associated "students of color" with Black and Hispanic people. Meanwhile, some international students had never even heard the phrase before. In past years, faculty advisers would invite those who they knew for certain identified as students of color.

Ms. Williams was uncomfortable with that system, and Choate now goes by the standards of the National Association of Independent Schools. She said, "We agreed, once Dr. Hinderlie, our new Director of Equity and Inclusion, got here, that we would use the NAIS standard, which is that all people who are not white are students of color." Dr. Hinderlie commented, "I come into Choate with an understanding that people of color represent many groups." He continued, "Pretty much any non-white student would be included in that. Multi-racial, South Asian, Middle Eastern, Pacific Islander, etc. are all included in that."

However, advisers commented that the Students of Color Advisory is not trying in any way to force the label "student of color" onto any person. "All we're working with is what they put on their application," said Ms. Williams. "We're not here to tell people how they should identify. But we do want people to be thinking about their identity and whether or not it may be something they need assistance with."

She added, "I do worry that students that are not students of color are going to feel like this is a way we're trying to divide the school. We're actually trying to do quite the opposite."

I would hope that the take-away message is a message of outreach.

Dr. Keith Hinderlie
Director Equity and Inclusion

Kate Spencer '20, a one-fourth Brazilian student, appreciates that the Students of Color Advisory is there as a resource. She said, "I personally don't identify with the struggle that most students of color go through, but I think that for people that are students of color, it's a great help to them."

Students who are not of color seem to understand the need for an advisory for students of color. Lucy Carpenter '20 believes the group is valuable. "I think it's great for students of color. They go through different struggles than people not of color." Dr. Hinderlie said, "I would hope that the take away message is a message of outreach"

Dr. Hinderlie concluded, "I want students of color to feel incorporated into community and feel like all aspects of their background is something that we want to recognize, celebrate, and support."

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Boston Globe

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which its members are "looking out for each other, being held to the highest standards and doing the right thing."

The Board recently hired an attorney with Covington & Burling LLP, Ms. Nancy Kestenbaum, to independently investigate all reports of adult sexual misconduct against Choate students, past or present. The School is also offering crisis counseling to alumni and training in sexual-assault prevention to faculty, through the country's largest anti-sexual violence organization, the Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network.

In an e-mail to the *Boston Globe*, Mr. Runquist said that his sexual relationship with Ms. Hawk "was an extremely painful, utterly isolated event in my life."

As the *Globe* reported, Choate has acknowledged that an administrator wrote a letter recommending Mr. Runquist to Kent. Speaking to the *Globe,* Ms. Hawk called the letter "educational malpractice" and said that "Choate chose to protect the perpetrator instead of the victim — and set up the potential for there to be future victims."

The Choate community, particularly the Class of '92 and the Board of Trustees, has taken action to ensure the School addresses this painful history and moves to prevent similar incidents in the future. The first action came from the Class of '92. Its members had conversations among themselves, and sent their ideas and requests for action in a letter to the School.

Mr. Carr said that the School had already been working on what the Class of '92 requested. As he and Dr. Curtis wrote in a letter to the Choate community in response to the *Globe's* article, these actions were "designed to investigate reports of sexual misconduct, support this alumna and any others that may have been affected, and ensure that the School's policies and practices related to both preventing and addressing misconduct are clear, strong, and effective."

In late August, in a letter to the Class of '92, Mr. Carr wrote that the Board's main priority was Ms. Hawk, her privacy, and her protection. The School already was working closely with Ms. Hawk's counsel, he wrote. Mr. Carr also wrote that "Alex Curtis and his team, together with the Trustees, are currently in the process of developing a comprehensive plan to address any incidents of possible abuse at our School and to ensure the ongoing safety of our students. Given the importance of these matters, we are absolutely committed to thoroughness and compassion as we develop the School's plan." The letter promised that the School would release its plan for action to the "broader Choate community."

In their letter, Mr. Carr and Dr. Curtis announced that the School's actions will expand on work that the School has been doing over the past three years in conjunction with the Board of Trustees, faculty, and students on "the topic of healthy boundaries in both student-student and adult-student relationships, reaffirming a zero tolerance policy for improper conduct by adult members of our community." More specifically, they cited Choate's Statement of Expectations and the "Cohesion and Culture" section of the 2013 Strategic Plan. These documents underscore "a culture defined by integrity, honor, ethical behavior, and good decision-making."

In the recent interview, Dr. Curtis said that the School will continue to set the highest standards for appropriate behavior by members of its community. "We want to make sure we're doing not just the minimum that's okay or required by law," he said, "but that we follow best practices." He added, "I can't say it enough times: student safety is paramount."

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IN INCREASINGLY DIGITAL WORLD, LIBRARY PONDERS HOW TO MODERNIZE

By **Siri Palreddy '20**
Reporter

Ms. Jennifer Tuleja, Director of the Andrew Mellon Library, hopes to modernize the way the library offers educational resources, in order for the library to come closer to becoming an academic and social hub at Choate.

Recently, some librarians have begun to teach a few World History classes, as the course incorporates a more project-based curriculum with a large emphasis on research. Librarian Ms. Courtney Jaser commented on the value of the classes she teaches. "For most students, the World History classes are the first time they have to do that kind of substantial research, so these classes are very helpful," she said. Ms. Jaser collaborates with World History teachers to help students find better sources, a skill that she hopes will help them throughout high school and beyond. Specifically, Ms. Jaser teaches students about primary sources, secondary sources, concept mapping, and citing sources. In addition, the library has recently expanded its repertoire of scientific journals so that students can more easily find the sources they need, including journals such as *Nature*.

Ms. Jaser takes great care not to have her classes be dominated by lectures. "In the past, with similar classes," Ms. Tuleja said, "students would read a little reference article from a book that was a page long, and then highlight the terms, and we'd talk about it, and it was all sitting in a seat and boring." Now, students are in activities that make them look for books and investigate as a group the outcome of their exercise. Mrs. Tuleja noted the difference in how the teaching method changes how effectively a student understands a concept, saying, "So instead of talking about narrowing a topic and asking a research question, students could visually see it when they write on the whiteboard."

Photo by Elle Rinaldi/ *The Choate News*

After a summer overhaul, the Reading Room now has modern, less anitquated books on display.

Addison Lee '19, a World History student, said, "Last year I never actually even came to the library, so having a world history class that requires the use of the library is really important." He added, "The library has taught me how to research properly, and actually find primary sources, because I'd never used a library site before. So now that I know how to use it, I'm able to find any book I pretty much want now, instead of having to ask the librarian for help."

By clearing out what was outdated, the space was already somewhat modernized.

Ms. Jennifer Tuleja
Director of the Andrew Mellon Library

Ms. Tuleja believes that the library can seem more of a welcoming space if word gets out to others of how the library is modernizing this year. Ms. Jaser is looking to expand the reading room areas for larger classroom sizes.

Ms. Tuleja has worked in the past as the Executive Director of Newport's Redwood Library, and as the Directo of of Library Services and Archives at St. George's School library. The first thing she did after starting her new job was to dispose of anything that had simply been lying around in the library since the 1970s. She explained, "By clearing out what was outdated, the space was already somewhat modernized."

Ms. Tuleja then replaced some older displays and featured books with pieces that better reflected peoples' tastes in the modern era. She decided to display the latest young adult books, such as the Throne of Glass series by Sarah Maas, in the British and American Literature Reading Room. She also was determined to change the book displays every month, cycling in more recent and exciting pieces of literature. Ms. Tuleja hopes that this will help encourage students and faculty families to come to the library for enjoyment, and not only for learning.

Ms. Tuleja also reorganized the DVD section of the library. Before this fall, the library had used call numbers to organize the DVDs in the bookstacks, which was confusing to some. As a result, Ms. Tuleja brought the DVDs up to the browsing section, and now has them alphabetically organized. Additionally, Mrs. Tuleja purchased several pairs of Beats to take the place of what she described as "bad airplane headphones" that the library had owned before.

The library hopes to incorporate more modern technology and make it easier for furniture to be moved to encourage students to collaborate in small groups. Ms. Tuleja remarked, "A lot of what appeals to students is that coffee-café culture, where you can be elbow to elbow with your friend and study together, even though you're not doing the same thing. You can talk, you can have coffee, food. And that can be this place. So the variety of seating for students has to be amplified, and once we have that variety, I think we'll have more kids here."

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Say Hello to Your New Adjunct Faculty!

Photo by Helena Yang/*The Choate News*

Ms. Emily Brenner
Fall, Spring

Ms. Emily Brenner has returned to Choate an adjunct faculty member this fall term. In 2001, she came to Choate as a teacher and later served as an admissions interviewer until 2013, when she left to become a full-time parent. Previously, she taught World History, U.S. History, AP U.S. History, and American Studies. She lived in Pratt dorm, an extinct senior dorm, and then moved to West Wing until 2006, when she moved off campus. Outside of the classroom and the dorm, she coached junior varsity field hockey, squash, and lacrosse.

Before teaching at Choate, Ms. Brenner taught as a teaching fellow at Deerfield Academy for a year before returning to her alma mater, the Kingswood Oxford School in West Hartford, to teach history from 1998 to 2000. Originally from Glastonbury, Connecticut, Ms. Brenner graduated from Wellesley College, where she majored in American Studies and Art History. She went on to earn her MA in American History at Yale

This year, Ms. Brenner will be covering two sections of AP U.S. History for Ms. Amy Salot while she is on sabbatical and one section for Ms. Leigh Dingwall while she is on medical leave. Although Ms. Brenner will not be on campus winter term, she will return in the spring to cover two AP U.S. History sections for Ms. Dingwall while she is on sabbatical.

In her free time, Ms. Brenner loves to walk her dog, garden, hike, and sail. While she misses being a full time faculty member, she loves being back at Choate and being able to pursue her passions for teaching and history.

-Arjun Katechia '19

Ms. Clara Duan
Fall

Originally hailing from China, new Chinese teacher Ms. Clara Duan first heard of Choate through an ac-cepted student. Ms. Duan said, "He told me he got an offer from a number one high school in America, so I got excited, too." Afterwards, Ms. Duan met Chinese teacher Ms. Carol Chen-Lin and moved forward with the application process to become a teacher.

While in China, Ms. Duan earned a B.A. from Hefei Normal University in Hefei, Anhui and an M.A. from Minzu Uniersity in Beijing. Her first experience as a teacher was in Thailand for eight months as a teach-er's assistant. Before Choate, Ms. Duan taught Chinese 1 through 3 at Brandeis University in Boston, Mas-sachusetts, while also earning a degree in Chinese Literature. Ms. Duan said, "At Brandeis, I could learn the same topics, but from different perspective."

However, Ms. Duan was not always confident that teaching was the right path. Initially interested in researching Chinese language, culture, and literature, she quickly realized her passion was in teaching others. "I enjoy the pleasure of teaching more than researching. The more that I communicate with for-eigners, the more I can know the language of Chinese better, and that is lifelong learning for me," reflected Ms. Duan.

Photo by Andrew Garver/*The Choate News*

Ms. Duan explained, "I am a new teacher, and I use a relatively new teaching perspective, so students need some time to get used to it. I hope I can grow with them, so we can find a perfect pace in the Chi-nese class." Ms. Duan lives in New Haven, Conn. with her cat, Xiao Bai.

-Kate Spencer '20

Photo by Michael Li/*The Choate News*

Ms. Lena Nicolai
Fall, Winter, Spring

Although Ms. Lena Nicolai is teaching science classes at Choate for the first time, she is not a stranger to campus. She began working the Kohler Environmental Center (KEC) as a greenhouse manager four years ago and came to Choate in August of 1999 with her husband, Director of KEC Mr. Joseph Scanio, and her son, Zev Nicolai-Scanio '18.

One of the many things Ms. Nicolai loves is biology. She is extensively trained as an ecologist, but has devoted her life to many different pursuits. Until his ninth grade year, she homeschooled her son. She has also spent time living in her home state of New Jersey, Michigan, and Arizona. She has also travelled to Colombia and Mexico.

Although she is well-travelled, living at the KEC never fails to amaze her. "The KEC is the perfect place because I can roam, and I can have a home. And that's really nice," she said, gesturing to the expansive woods outside her window. "You get a sense of being part of something much larger than yourself," she continued.

Ms. Nicolai loves to camp, backpack, hike, and work outside for the KEC. When she is not teaching, she records nature for KEC studies, detailing the patterns for everything from trees to water to frogs. She said she appreciates the thrill of discovery associated with biology. "It's definitely fulfilling to be amazed. I like to be amazed by the things that I see."

-Chandler Littleford '20

Dr. Nickie Paul
Fall, Winter, Spring

After traveling the world, spending a semester at sea, and completing a doctorate, Dr. Nicholas Paul came to Choate. This term, she is teaching two introductory psychology classes as well as AP Psychology. After completing her undergraduate degree in Psychology at the University of Miami at Oxford, Ohio, she later earned a PhD. in neuroscience at the University of Connecticut. She brings many years of researching and teaching at university to her classes. She said, "I've done neurosurgery to rats and intensely studied sections of the brain." She also worked on alternative treatments for neurodegenerative diseases. In her doctorate program she looked at a part of the brain called the hippocampus.

Hailing from West Hartford, Conn., she is familiar with the Wallingford area. Though she taught several years at a university during her doctorate program, but Choate is the first high school at which she has taught. She decided to come to a boarding school for several reasons. She said, "My focus shifted to teaching, and I really love mentoring students, working on projects, and being in the lab with students." Another factor was the class sizes at boarding schools compared to those at universities. "I was teaching classes of 70 or so students, but I really loved the small class which were rare," she said. "I get really excited by teaching it all. It allows me to look back all those years ago and see why I was so fascinated with psychology," she said.

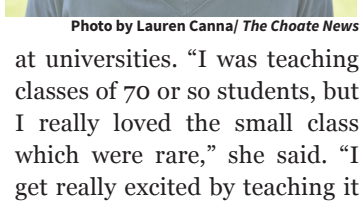

Photo by Lauren Canna/ *The Choate News*

-Aidan Marzeotti '20

Photo by Andrew Garver/*The Choate News*

Mr. Jose Rodriquez
Fall, Winter

From architect to intermediate Spanish teacher, Mr. Jose Rodriguez grew up near the Andes Mountains in Santiago, Chile.

Although he doesn't coach any sports, the former mountain guide said that climbing summits, whether physical mountains or intellectual challenges, is a core piece of his life. He compared his time as a guide for international hikers on the Andes Mountains to being a Spanish educator today. He said, "It's a kind of teaching. It's the same idea that you need to effectively communicate information in order to pursue an activity, and you can teach things and they are ready to absorb." He added, "Information is a process of receiving information and doing." He employs this philosophy while teaching his Spanish 250 classes.

He grew up and lived in Chile for approximately thirty-three years, during which he received an undergraduate degree in architecture at Pontificia Universidad Catolica in Santiago, Chile. He later moved to the states to attend Iowa State University to earn his Master's degree in architecture. While at Iowa State, he discovered an opportunity to teach Spanish. "It turned into a new passion, and I've been teaching for six or seven years now."

Before applying to teach at Choate, he lived in Wallingford for three years. "I knew Choate was around where I lived. I saw Choate from the outside, and it was attractive to me professionally. He has said his favorite part about Choate is "the permanent environment for learning. Smart people, students, staff, and faculty surround you with interesting stories behind everyone, and you are constantly learning and absorbing all this information. You can also find support for your own interests."

-Lauren Dorsey '18

SAGÉ Committee

Continued from Page 1

had a wide array of opinions, and it was really interesting to hear all of them in a student-only space."

I'm very excited about the work the students are doing because it reflects a good understanding of the school.

Mr.Will Morris
Director of Residential Life

Ms. Aliya Cox, the faculty adviser to SAGÉ, suggested that the organization make a subcommittee to start acting on many of the opinions shared at that discussion. At the next meeting, Ntagkounakis and Cox proposed the creation of a subcommittee and later sent out an email calling for interested students. They received an overwhelming response, then narrowed down the students to a group of nine that would represent different grades, experiences, and genders.

Once the committee had been fully formed, members formally met three times over the course of two weeks to work on the proposal. Different sections of the proposal were delegated to different committee members, and the groups were responsible for doing their own research, reaching out to administration members if they had questions, and drafting realistic solutions to the problems they brought up. Afterward, the whole subcommittee met to review and edit the proposal together.

Ntagkounakis also met with Mr. Will Morris, Director of Residential Life, to discuss the proposal and understand the administration's stance. Following the meeting, Ntagkounakis remarked, "He provided some insight on the faculty perspective and what he thought was realistic in terms of how to implement our ideal goals."

Mr. Morris commented, "In large part, what I was doing was just offering the school's perspective and insight into some of the thinking that went into the creation of some of the policies."

He continued, "I'm very excited about the work the students are doing because it reflects both a good understanding of the school, of the students' experience, and of how things could be structured better to create a more successful, positive, and better supported experience."

On whether she thinks the subcommittee will be able to accomplish its goals eventually, Ntagkounakis said, "I hope so. Maybe not in the immediate future, but I think in the upcoming years with the School's progress right now, and the administration's bravery in bringing a lot of these issues to campus, they will be. If the school maintains such an outlook, I think it's definitely possible we can see some of these goals incorporated in the near future."

Grayce Gibbs *may be reached at ggibbs18@choate.edu.*

RESPECT, COMMUNITY-BUILDING TOP PRIORITIES FOR HEADMASTER AND CHAIRMAN

Continued from Page 1

Dr. Curtis noted that all of the money funding these buildings came from capital fundraising rather than the endowment. He said, "The School used money raised specifically for construction because people saw the need and were ready to support it." He also mentioned that the projects have not increased tuition payments. "We have been trying to be a leader in tuition suppression, but that is only sustainable with long-term growth of the endowment," he said.

I think we are a community that talks to each other, but I have said we need to listen as well.

Dr. Alex Curtis
Headmaster

The plans for these new buildings have been developed over the past few years. Regarding the auditorium, Mr. Carr remarked, "When we were putting the Strategic Plan together, we got the community together, and we asked, 'What do you want? What are you missing?' The one thing everyone said was, 'We want to be able to be in the same room to have a conversation, whether it's for special programs or school meetings.' A part of culture and cohesion is the ability to gather in one place."

Mr. Carr continued, "If we want to be innovative, we need a facility where all the students can learn and be with each other. One motivation was to make sure the student body had resources that were designed to enable the students to be as good as they could possibly be, and to chase whatever dream they have, whether it's to learn how to code, whether it's to be with friends in the student center, or whether it's to become an environmental scientist."

Continuing with the mission of cohesion and culture, the School hired Dr. Keith Hinderlie last spring to become Choate's first Director of Equity and Inclusion.

Dr. Hinderlie's roles will include spearheading the annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Diversity Day and acting as a resource for students dealing with issues related to identity. His arrival to the School comes at a time when disputes, especially regarding political issues, are at the forefront of campus discussion. Dr. Curtis said, "I think we are a community that talks to each other, but I have said we need to listen as well. And I want to make sure that we don't lose the passion that I just find so energizing, exciting, and important." He continued, "I am encouraged by seeing that people are willing to get up and speak their mind; that says something about the health of the community."

Mr. Carr held that same sentiment as well, saying, "The hallmark of any school is how people treat each other." He continued, "The bedrock of any community is the respect that we give each other. In Choate's case, this is about students respecting each other and being able to speak their mind. There is going to be disagreement; that is life, and disagreement is a healthy form of learning, but it has to start with respect for others' points of view."

In recent year, this student disagreement and discussion has been the catalyst for change on campus. Dr. Curtis, citing the recent amnesty policy and dress code changes, notes that, often, students are the ones who start initiatives and deem certain topics "relevant." Most often, those policies are crafted by Mr. James Stanley, Dean of Students, and other members of the faculty who field student needs and concerns. Dr. Curtis said, "I am struck by the amount of consultation the Deans' Office does with students." He added, "We may not always agree, but I would feel distressed if students felt there was no interest in student opinion. Student voices have made a huge difference in this School."

We may not always agree, but I would feel distressed if students felt there was no interest in student opinion.

Dr. Alex Curtis
Headmaster

With a student body that is effectively turned over every four years and a rush of new changes that comes with each class, the tradition and maintenance of Choate Rosemary Hall's 125 year legacy is often uncertain. But the Board of Trustees serves as a bedrock or backbone of the School, ensuring that Choate is headed in the right direction while maintaining its broader focus. Though the Board meets fewer than five time per year, the slightly removed, more objective perspective of its members, Mr. Carr believes, can actually be to the benefit of the School. He remarked, "Would I love to have more time with you all and faculty and administration? Absolutely. But I'll also say there is a fine line between the trustee group – who is charged with fiduciary responsibility and the long-term strategy of the School – and the administration – who is charged with running the School on a day-to-day basis." He continued, "Well-run schools observe a healthy boundary between the two, and that is just good governance."

Looking forward, the School has high hopes for continued change. Following the ethos of the Strategic Plan and the School's mission, the focus of the near future will be on becoming more accessible to prospective students. Dr. Curtis remarked, "When we think about what the next campaign is going to be around, I think it will be the endowment, and particularly the endowment for financial aid. The biggest challenge for us is making sure we are as accessible to prospective students from all over the country – and world – as we can possibly be."

Everything the School is doing today – from the Strategic Plan to endowment growth – is done in an effort to maintain the world-class education Choate provides. Mr. Carr said, "The boarding school experience, for me, was one of the most amazing and relevant experiences in my life; that is one of the reasons why I have the pleasure of being on this Board. But we see many schools that are on the precipice of irrelevance right now, though thankfully not us. The leadership of this school needs to be very keenly attuned to what is going on in the world, what's going on society, and what's going on in education. I want to make sure the School has the resources to be able to do that." He added, "Education is changing all the time. For a school to be successful in educating their students in the best possible way, it needs to be extremely relevant."

J. Bryce Wachtell '17 *and* ***Truelian Lee '17*** *may be reached at thechoatenews@choate.edu.*

The Choate News

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What Changed My Life? Anime

By **Chiazam Nzeako '17**
Opinions Writer

Why is anime cool to me? Because it makes me feel emotions and think thoughts that I never would have otherwise.

I love how the images move on top of each other to create motion. I love how the music in each scene can flip my mood like a switch. I love the variety of voices and sounds actors make to give characters life.

But I don't just enjoy anime for its aesthetics. Anime is special because it's made me a more empathetic person. In a world where we are constantly bombarded by reports of atrocious events by news sources and social media, becoming desensitized to tragedy is common. As I finished my seventh grade year, I felt myself becoming less and less empathetic; it's not as if I didn't care about those who were suffering, sad, or in pain, but rather like I couldn't quite connect with such people on an emotional level. It was difficult for me to relate my own experiences to those of others, and although I always experienced sympathy, empathy became an ungraspable concept for me.

I could see snippets of my reality reflected in the show's fictional elements.

Then, I discovered anime.

In 2012, I attended a programming camp for a week. This was the first time I'd ever slept away from home by myself, so I often sought the guidance of my camp counselors, who were students at the university I was visiting. One evening, as I was sitting around in my room, one of my counselors came in and asked if I wanted to watch a show with my dorm mates. I hesitantly agreed. I followed my counselor into our common room where scenes of the anime *Angel Beats!* were flashing across the TV screen. As cliché and insane as it might sound, it was love at first sight.

As far as I'm concerned, *Angel Beats!* is one of the greatest shows in the modern world. That night, my eyes became fixed on an unrealistically blue ocean and my ears were soothed by the sounds of beautiful and flowing piano music. The show depicts the experiences of several characters that are in "limbo" after death. In this limbo, the characters can experience pain and even die, only to awaken again with no injuries. Only after they have learned how to let go of their lingering attachments can they pass on into the next life. The message behind *Angel Beats!* is that living life to the fullest while you are alive is incredibly important, but so is letting go of the unchangeable past. The show is able to tell this simple message through a heart-wrenching, engaging story and beautiful visuals.

Perhaps what had the greatest impact on me was that I could see snippets of my reality reflected in the show's fictional elements. Through *Angel Beats!*, I gained a deeper understanding of human emotions and how people could be truly scarred by past experiences. I also realized how perfect anime and other forms of animated arts are for clearly conveying a meaningful message to viewers.

Since watching *Angel Beats!*, I've watched a variety of different kinds of anime series and other animated art forms, such as Pixar shorts and Cartoon Network cartoons. While not all forms of animated arts have a thought-provoking message, the reason I continue to watch these shows, shorts, cartoons, and movies is simply because, no matter what, they make me happy. Stupidly, stupendously, and incalculably happy.

Chiazam Nzeako *is a sixth former from Lakeland, Fla. He may be reached at cnzeako17@choate.edu.*

No Honors World History, No Problem

By **Anjali Mangla '20**
Opinions Writer

It's a known fact that Choate students constantly strive to get the best grades in all of the best classes. Showing off is our forte. We are constantly trying to get into all the honors classes we can, even if doing so means taking classes that are harder than we can handle.

But after experiencing the difficulty of Choate classes and the workload that honors classes actually entail, I realized how hard high school actually is. I often hear upperclassmen say that Honors World History was possibly the toughest course they had ever encountered. They say that it was an intensive course that involved writing fact-filled essays, studying all night for tests, and memorizing loads of dense content. No one thought Honors World History was easy, or at least that's what I've heard.

Knowing the perfectionist nature of many Choate students, this probably meant that many students went out of their way to be in Honors World History just to prove that they could succeed in a difficult course. Taking that course away, like Choate did last year, means that students no longer feel the need to overexert themselves as a matter of pride. A student can take regular World History and not think, "Oh, that other guy is in Honors. He's so smart! I must be stupid."

At the end of the day, there's no need for an extra opportunity for competition and division on a campus that is achievement-oriented. It's a good thing that Honors World History got removed because now we can all learn history in peace without comparing ourselves to one another and possibly irrationally doubting our intelligence.

In addition, the removal of the "honors" label makes taking World History inherently less stressful for a lot of students. I do not claim to be a history geek, but I still love learning about the important events of the past that have shaped our world into what it is today. The thing is, it's easy for me to forget this and focus solely on getting good grades if I'm convinced that I must succeed in an "honors" course.

I am the kind of person who pushes herself to the edge, even when I know it may be an impossible feat. I have realized that I am in many classes that are out of my comfort zone because I want to be in "honors," and that's been a struggle. So you see, even though world history is awesome, Honors World History just adds another insignificant label to a course that doesn't need it in order to be meaningful. In the end, the fact that Honors World History is not a course in the Choate curriculum anymore is a good thing, so gather up all those hours of lost sleep and tears and take a chill pill. Sit back, relax, and enjoy the fun-filled journey through regular World History.

Anjali Mangla *is a third former from Cheshire, Conn. She may be reached at amangla20@choate.edu.*

LETTERS

To the Editor:

As the members of Boar Pen, we would like to respond to an opinion piece published two weeks ago titled "Yes, Your Hawaiian-Themed Event is Appropriative." The article attempted to align our club with racist and appropriative behaviors, suggesting malicious intent and insensitivity of the club leaders. We would like to amicably clarify our intentions.

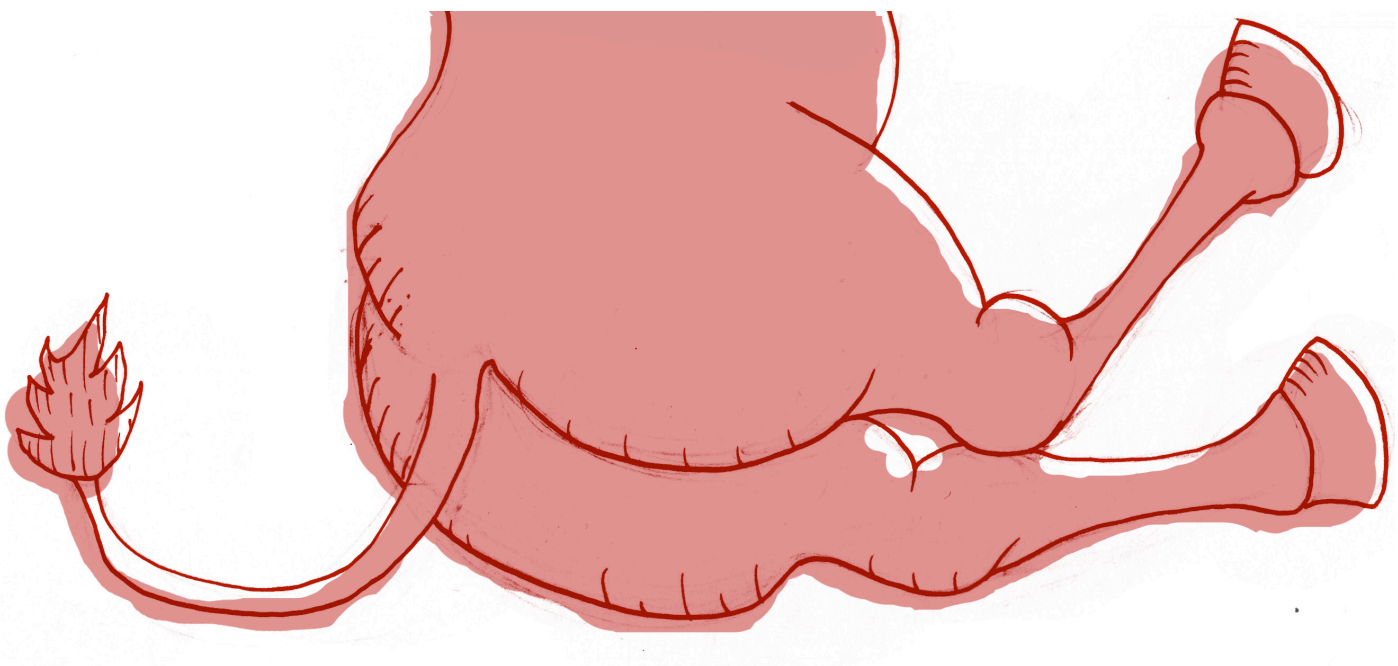
First, Boar Pen intended to hold a beach-themed, not Hawaiian-themed, event. We understand that a Boar Pen representative misspoke at school meeting, thus we clarified the misunderstanding via social media accounts and in-person interactions later. We hoped that people would be willing to look past the misuse of a single adjective and focus on the idea of coming together as a community instead.

We would like to sincerely apologize to the Girls' Varsity Field Hockey team, for this miscommunication directly tore fans away from their competition.

Though the aforementioned opinion piece surrounding this confusion asserts a valid point, that we need to be aware of borrowing others' customs and using them for our own purposes, we hope that all understand that our words and actions are aimed at fostering the spirit and identity of a community that we care about a great deal. Boar Pen is about togetherness, connectedness, and school spirit, not separation, division, or tension. We hope our student body is able to put this misunderstanding behind us and embrace the true mission of Boar Pen: to celebrate one another in our respective fields of excellence. Whether it be on the field, on the stage, or in the stands, Boar Pen wants to be there to support you in all endeavors.

Sincerely,
Will Field '17, Emilia Furlo '17,
Jack Hutchinson '17, Alex Jarvis '17
Boar Pen Leaders

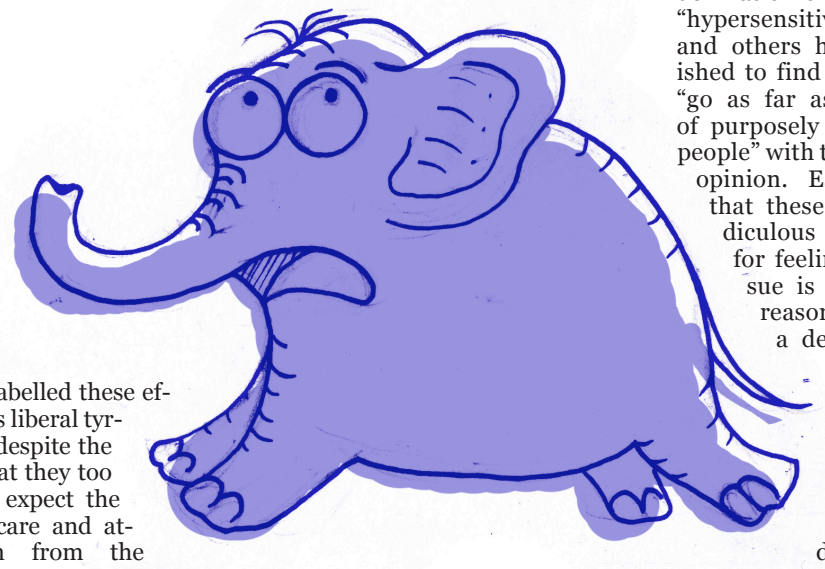
The Truth About Choate's "Oppression" of Conservatives



By **Anselm Kizza-Besigye '17**
Opinions Writer

In last week's edition of *The Choate News,* I wrote an article that advocated for better public speaking on campus. I lamented that Choate students prefer unhealthy discord to meaningful conversation. Two days before the publication of my article, Andrea Espinosa '17 gave a thought-provoking Choate Talk in which she contended that our campus's issue lies in an alleged "oppression" of conservatives and their viewpoints that is symptomatic of a "liberal revolution." I agree with Espinosa in that Choate could benefit from increased communication between liberals and conservatives; however, Espinosa's explanation of the issue centered around several appealing but unfounded assumptions.

In describing the hostility conservatives face at Choate, Espinosa claimed that Choate was "losing its values" through a "liberal revolution." The way in which Espinosa and other conservatives have pushed this narrative might seem convincing to a passive observer; however, the description of a radical progressive movement at Choate is a case in point of the straw-man logic fallacy. Espinosa and others have created a false, convenient narrative in which conservatives can claim to be "oppressed." In actuality, these "liberal" topics of discussion — such as sexual assault, hookup culture, gender, and identity, around which many school events have centered — are not liberal topics at all. They are bipartisan issues that must be openly discussed to foster a safe, understanding, and compassionate community. Our school prioritizes discussion about marginalized identities like women, people of color, and LGBTQ people not to achieve an agenda, but to ensure the well-being of Choate students with these identities. Conversations like those about consent have grown out of legitimate concerns over unhealthy, dangerous sexual interactions among students. If the administration ignores these serious threats to students' mental and physical wellbeing, the school would be failing to live up to its commitment to create a safe environment for all of its students. Yet Espinosa and others have essentially labelled these efforts as liberal tyranny, despite the fact that they too would expect the same care and attention from the administration if an issue affected their safety. The notion that our school should attempt to address "taboo" and prevalent issues like racism or sexual assault is neither conservative nor liberal — it's simply the right thing to do.



Espinosa's explanation of the issue centered on several appealing but unfounded assumptions.

After claiming the existence of a liberal revolution, Espinosa describes a "culture of hypocrisy" at Choate that also contributes to conservative "oppression": that liberals will always tout the benefits of open-mindedness but will never be open-minded to conservative opinions themselves. Her argument mirrors the speeches and writings of many conservatives on campuses at Choate and beyond. Despite its recurrence, this argument rests on shoddy foundations. First, this reasoning relies on the assumption that people deserve recognition or applause for their opinions, no matter what those opinions are. Espinosa cites an instance of "liberal hypocrisy" where some Choate students refused to give a standing ovation to a speaker who claimed the culture on campus suppressed conservatism. Examples like these, in which conservatives don't receive commendation, do not illustrate oppression. While conservatives reserve the right to express their opinions however they wish, including at school meetings, applause must be earned. That conservatives have felt compelled to give ovations for performances that they disagreed with only reflects on themselves.

Furthermore, I would assume that if conservatives truly intend to create discussion, they would be glad that people react to their opinions honestly, rather than force empty appreciation.

Another flaw in the "hypocrisy" argument is its assertion that only conservative opinions receive harsh feedback on campus. My recent article about cultural appropriation resulted in backlash ranging from unprovoked taunting to physical desecration of the piece. I'm sure this treatment resembles, if not exceeds, the response to certain conservative opinions, which Espinosa claims are "not only disregarded, but completely unaccepted." The unfortunate truth is that regardless of political orientation, one incurs personal attacks when one voices an opinion that others disagree with. This is why those who have struggled personally with their identity react viscerally when conservatives voice opinions about issues like gender, sexuality, and race. Similarly, liberals who touch on issues such as problematic sports events will receive the same sort of response from those who are avid sports fans.

Another issue I found with Espinosa's speech was her condemnation of liberals for their "hypersensitivity." Espinosa and others have been astonished to find that liberals will "go as far as [accusing one] of purposely trying to offend people" with their conservative opinion. Espinosa's claims that these liberals are "ridiculous and immature" for feeling upset. The issue is that this line of reasoning advocates a decrease in meaningful conversation, not an increase. If students opted to remain silent after feeling genuinely disrespected or marginalized, unspoken resentment would pervade our campus. By lamenting that conservatives cannot "eat a meal in peace" without someone being offended by their words, Espinosa seems to idealize a world where fewer discussions occur and more awkward lunch tables exist. She also seems to forget that finding it's not okay to offend someone can be a learning experience through which one becomes a more respectful member of a community. At Choate, we learn to interact with students from diverse backgrounds by becoming aware of our offensive and exclusive actions. I suggest that conservatives take note of the reactions they receive around campus and think carefully about what it could mean about their behaviors.

Most members of our community and I agree that we all should contend with one another in a healthier and more productive fashion. However, splitting this issue along ideological lines creates more division and impedes the good dialogue for which we all hope. We all should reflect on our recent conversations and determine whether they have been as fruitful as we would have hoped. I suspect that very few of us could claim to be perfect.

Anselm Kizza-Besigye *is a sixth former from Oxford, England. He may be reached at akizzabesigye17@choate.edu.*

BREXIT IS KILLING THE UK'S ECONOMY

Financial Literacy

By **Andrew Kim '17**
Columnist

This past June, the United Kingdom voted to leave the European Union, resulting in immense political and economic changes across the world. With 51.9 percent of votes in favor of the referendum, the majority of U.K. citizens dim-wittingly overlooked the immediate consequences of separating themselves from the rest of the European continent. However, during these last few months, more disastrous "long-term" repercussions have begun to surface.

The U.K. must do all it can to reverse its decision and remain in the European Union.

According to the finance industry group TheCityUK, the United Kingdom's finance sector may be facing losses upwards of $48.34 billion in revenue. This economic blow, dubbed a "hard Brexit," could prevent finance firms from freely bartering their services to neighboring nations. Although a seemingly-obvious outcome of leaving the Union, both British MPs and citizens were blinded by false statistics and inflated pride, ultimately failing to consider future alternatives from the European Union's single market.

Withal, the question remains "who exactly is to blame for such a catastrophe?"

The answer to this is simple: the Tories.

Take Boris Johnson, who paraded around in a bus with the words "We send the EU £350 million a week." In reality, that number is closer to £190 million. This granted the U.K. a plethora of benefits, including unrestrained citizenry to work and travel across borders. Now the British government may have to pay just that — if not more — to access the common market.

The majority of parliament still remains stoic on its stance on leaving. Their irrational stubbornness anchors solely on the belief that exiting will allow the British people to have more control over their own fate — a gratuitous excuse to justify a blatant mistake. London-based businesses are, however, heeding to the quarter-by-quarter drops, moving operations to places elsewhere in Europe.

And rightfully so.

Innocent companies have no reason to intertwine their futures with the U.K.'s downfall. If anything, it is their fundamental right to separate themselves from the nation's toxic uncertainty, prolonged low interest rates, and volume losses.

The fallout of Britain's stupidity is evident today, as more than 75,000 jobs are at risk of being lost. Furthermore, in a report by consultancy firm Oliver Wyman, the British government is on track to losing over $12 billion in tax revenues.

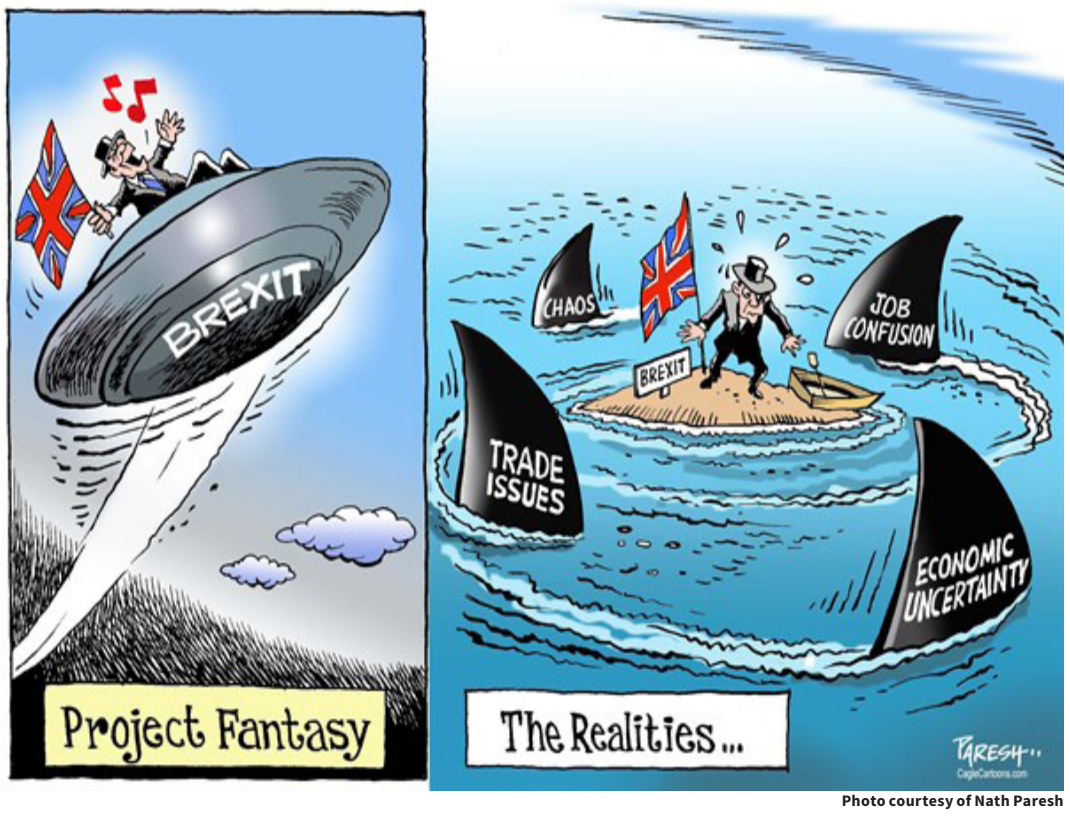


Photo courtesy of Nath Paresh

Yet still, a handful of ministers are desperately trying to clean up the mess by negotiating a deal with Brussels that will outline future relations with Europe. Unfortunately, because of new Prime Minister Theresa May's initiation of Article 50, triggering the official beginning of Brexit, the entire arbitration process may not be completed until at the very least 2019.

In addition, the EU leadership's unprofessional animosity towards the U.K. decision to leave will most certainly force the nation to follow World Trade Organization regulations.

"The feeling among the EuropBut besides the 31-year low value of the pound, the effects of Brexit may hint at a more ominous consequence: the collapse of the British economy. As selling services, financial and otherwise, accounts for roughly 78 percent of the British GDP, WTO restrictions on these suppliers will significantly downsize the economy. Before foreign investors could freely rely on a British firm for financial consultancy, they now face a glut of regulations — which will further scare away the sector's European customer base.

This loss of such concentrated fiscal activity will not only knock the U.K. from being an international hub for financial services but also permanently cripple London.

Britain must find a new "financial passport" system if it hopes to continue trading with the rest of the continent. And unless the British public discards its sentiment towards the European Union, the entirety of the UK economy will be decimated.

Andrew Kim *is a sixth former from Seoul, Korea. He may be reached at akim17@choate.edu.*

ELECTION 2016

Election Countdown:
18 Days

Donald J. Trump
@realDonaldTrump

Animals representing Hillary Clinton and Dems in North Carolina just firebombed our office in Orange County because we are winning @NCGOP

Hillary Clinton
@HillaryClinton

The attack on the Orange County HQ @NCGOP office is horrific and unacceptable. Very grateful that everyone is safe.

President Obama
@POTUS

For a century, Planned Parenthood has made it possible for women to determine their own lives. Here's to another #100YearsStrong.

The Next Step In Saving Our Planet: Reinvesting in Nuclear Power

By **Reade Ben '18**
Opinions Writer

Choate's recent student-led divestment movement has advocated for shifting part of Choate's endowment from fossil fuel to renewable energy investments. The term "fossil fuels" can be vague, and, for the sake of clarification, I'll say term refers to coal, natural gas, and oil. The use of coal-based power generates 40%, natural gas 26%, and oil 1% of America's electricity needs. All these methods release dangerous carbon emissions into the air, polluting the atmosphere and causing temperatures to rise.

While many may know this, and divesting from dangerous fossil fuels is certainly a good idea, the benefits of renewable energy sources such as wind, solar, and hydro power are not all they are claimed to be. Instead, Choate and the world at large should focus on investing in nuclear power, a cleaner and much more productive energy source that is overly-stigmatized and, frankly, better.

Nuclear energy avoids the emission of over two billion tons of carbon dioxide each year.

The renewable energy fad is one that has taken America by storm; many believe that by wielding the power of nature, we can create an unlimited amount of energy. This belief however, has some fallacies to it. Currently, renewable energy only meets about 13% of America's energy needs. Solar, wind, and hyrdro plants are only operated 93, 118, and 141 days out of the year, respectively. Being "opened for business" less than half of a year limits job opportunities and their efficiency to produce power. This shows that clean energy plants are often poorly managed and not efficient.

Even when operating 24/7, these plants can only generate electricity at a 33.9% capacity factor, meaning that for every 100 megawatts being used to power renewable energy plants, these plants are only producing 33.9 megawatts in return. Renewable energy is thus classified as a secondary power resource: it is not efficient enough to meet America's energy needs alone.

There is certainly a better place for Choate to procure its funds: nuclear power. Currently, nuclear power provides the U.S. with 20% of electricity. However, a single nuclear plant produces the same amount of electricity to meet the yearly needs of one million households (about the size of Chicago). To match this power, one would need 40 wind farms or 550 Solar Photovoltaics. Nuclear power plants also operate at a 92% capacity factor, which makes aforementioned 34% factor of renewable sources pale in comparison. For these reasons, nuclear power is classified as a "peak power" resource, it creates enough energy to be a single electricity producer with no other supplementation.

In addition to solely being able to meet American electricity needs, nuclear plants create vast amount of employment opportunities. Operating 24/7, a nuclear plant can create 400 to 700 permanent jobs, which on average pay 36% more than average salaries in surrounding local areas. Construction of a nuclear power plant creates up to 3,500 jobs alone.

A single power plant generates approximately $470 million yearly, and pays $16 million in local taxes and $67 million in state taxes annually. These taxes would allow for the creation schools, roads, and other infrastructures.

Currently, the U.S. nuclear industry employs close to 100,000 people, and generates approximately $50 billion per year. In just two years this could "out-revenue" the wind industry, which has represented a total investment of $100 billion.

Additionally, nuclear energy is low-carbon production, and avoids the emission of over two billion tons of carbon dioxide each year. While one might be concerned with meltdowns, the chance of one is unlikely. The infamous Chernobyl and Three Mile Island meltdowns occurred because of faulty technology decades ago. The more recent Fukushima disaster was a result of poor placement of the power plant: on a fault line. With updated nuclear reactors and careful planning, accidents can be avoided. In terms of waste, new developments in nuclear technology, such as molten salt reactors, can make use of hazardous uranium from traditional nuclear plants for further energy use, and reduce its radioactivity.

Further investments in nuclear power can progress the development of nuclear fusion, an even more efficient variation of nuclear power to create energy. To put this in perspective, one kilogram of fusion fuel can provide the same amount of energy as ten million kilograms of fossil fuel. There's no long-lived radioactive waste. The small amounts of fuel used in fusion devices (about the weight of a postage stamp) means that a large-scale nuclear accident is not possible.

As a forward-looking school, Choate Rosemary Hall is right to pull its head out of the fossil beds, but it needn't get caught up in falsely-promoted renewable energy sources. Let's look instead to the many advantages of a nuclear future.

Reade Ben *is a fifth former from Albany, NY. He may be reached at rben18@choate.edu.*

US and Saudi Alliance: An Immoral Marriage

By **Imad Rizvi '18**
Opinions Staff Writer

Saudi Arabia and the United States may have a strategic diplomatic marriage, but it's time for a separation. The regime in Saudi Arabia is sexist and homophobic. It blatantly disregards human rights.

A recent airstrike from a Saudi Arabia-led coalition crashed down on a funeral home, killing and injuring hundreds of civilians in Sanaa, the capital of Yemen. Throughout the past year, Saudi Arabia has been strongly supporting a side of a brutal civil war in Yemen that is displacing millions of civilians and destroying an already-weak economy. As one of Saudi Arabia's allies, the U.S. is finding itself being dragged into the conflict, evident by a recent arms sale of over $1 billion to Saudi Arabia. Tt is time to demand a change in some of the practices of a nation where many leaders practice Wahhabi ideology and are complicating many conflicts in the Middle East.

The Wahhabi ideology is built upon a fundamentalist and extremely conservative form of Islam that promotes bigotry and limits basic freedoms. Many current practices of Saudi Arabia demonstrate the extreme values that oppose the ideals that America tries to represent. Women are not allowed to complete many tasks without the presence of a male relative, are expected to be veiled at all times, and are generally not allowed to drive. Additionally, barbaric practices such as beheading and stoning are used for punishments for crimes. Not only has Saudi Arabia been practicing some of these extremely traditional values within the country, but they also have been spreading them throughout the Middle East.

Saudi Arabia has been funding madrassas, or religious schools, across the Muslim world that preach more extreme forms of Islam. Madrassas in countries like Pakistan have educated many men who later became members of terrorist groups like the Taliban, according to PBS.

The values preached by many of the top religious leaders in Saudi Arabia are in complete conflict with ideals promoted by America. While a rethinking of its relationship with Saudi Arabia may clash with U.S. strategic interests, the United States cannot continue with this alliance until the nation supports freedom of religion and basic women's rights, and agrees to human rights ideals accepted by the United Nations.

The conflicts that Saudi Arabia are involved is another reason that America's unconditional support of the Saudis is not in America's best interests. Over the last few years, Saudi Arabia and Iran have competed in proxy conflicts in Bahrain, Syria, and Yemen. Saudi Arabia's involvement in Yemen has led to airstrikes on civilians in markets, hospitals, and funeral homes. While the conflict started as a political fight for power, Saudi and Iranian involvement is fueling sectarianism in the region and turning it into a religious war — further complicating any potential goals of restoration of a government with both sides in Yemen represented. Human rights groups have noted many instances of Saudi-led bombings that violate war law, and thousands of civilians have been killed since Saudi Arabia has gotten involved. As its major ally, the U.S. has sold arms to Saudi Arabia, and is trying to underplay its role.

While Saudi Arabia may be one of the largest and most powerful Middle Eastern nations. The only strategic interests that Saudi Arabia offers is its power and location, since the country is rich from oil and allows the United States to keep an influence in the region. However, Saudi Arabia should be warned that the United States will not tolerate abuses of basic human rights. Civilian deaths in Yemen offer a basic example of the damaging influences that Saudi Arabia has had in the Middle East, and citizens — especially women — deserve more freedoms without fear of punishment. The United States has the power to function without this relationship and should be able to stand up to Saudi Arabia until they offer some signs of change.

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

Republican Leaders: Put Country, Morality Over Party Loyalty

By **Liza Mackeen-Shapiro '18**
Opinions Staff Writer

The election between Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump is more than a competition between Democrats and Republicans — it is between order and chaos, democracy and tyranny, and decency and bigotry.

Trump's candidacy poses a unique threat to American society. His campaign is based on racism, sexism, and woeful inexperience, and represents one of the most shameful moments in the political history of the United States. His hateful, dangerous platform should be condemned by politicians on both sides of the aisle.

Trump's candidacy represents a unique threat to American society.

However, many prominent Republicans still endorse and defend Trump even amid his ever-increasing catalogue of scandals. Supporting such an unhinged and bigoted politician is a cowardly and reckless act. Republicans who continue to support Trump should be ashamed of themselves for enabling the actions of a bigoted, unhinged man.

In a GOP increasingly dominated by Trumpism, many Republicans feel pressured to endorse Donald Trump in order to retain their political influence. Although endorsing Trump might help win these Republicans reelection, something more serious is at stake: their integrity. Supporting Trump sends the message that his racist, sexist, and xenophobic behavior is completely acceptable. Trump has done everything from proposing a plan to prevent an entire religion from entering the country to boasting about grabbing a woman by her genitals. Those endorsing Trump condone these abhorrent acts.

If Republicans believe that religious persecution and sexual assault are okay, then they should by all means endorse Trump. However, my sense is that most of Trump's establishment advocates (especially the fervent proponents of "family values") do not exactly approve of this behavior. In order to convey the repugnance of Trump's actions, all Republicans must revoke their endorsements of him. Otherwise, they are advocating for unadulterated bigotry and misogyny.

Republicans such as Paul Ryan have attempted to get away with condemning Trump's individual scandals while still supporting his candidacy — this is not only spineless but also illogical. Whenever a scandal arises, Republicans respond that although Trump's value system may go against theirs they nonetheless endorse him for president. The theory behind endorsing a candidate is that you believe he or she has the proper values to hold office. Republicans are awkwardly condemning and promoting a dreadful value system. If they truly believe that Trump's actions are wrong, they need to stop sitting on the fence and fully revoke their support.

If Republicans believe that sexual assault is ok, then they should vote for Trump.

All major GOP politicians and figures should follow Representative John Mccain's example and condemn Trump's actions and his bid for the office of the presidency.

This election is not the time to cling to party lines — it is the time to do what's right. Donald Trump is a deplorable scourge on American politics, and in order to condemn him as the disgrace that he is, Republican leaders must withdraw their support for Trump immediately.

Liza Mackeen-Shapiro *is a fifth former from New York, NY. She may be reached at lmackeenshapiro18@choate.edu.*

FEATURES

LOCAL FOOD: EAT GOOD TO DO GOOD

By **Caroline Donatelli '18**
Reporter

Environmental clubs and the SAGE Dining Service often advertise the use of fresh, local food. But what do we really mean when we call food "local"? And how local is local enough?

On Friday, October 15, as part of Choate's annual Fall Community Weekend, Students Against Climate Change (SACC) hosted a dinner of locally-grown food in the Rutz-Rees common room. Most dishes were either vegan or vegetarian, and included butternut squash soup, spaghetti squash, pasta with homemade tomato sauce, and apple crisp.

According to Riley Choi '18, SACC's treasurer, the purpose of the dinner was to educate people about the dangers of carbon emissions and fossil fuel use.

After the dinner, Mr. Jason Goodmaster, SAGE's Purchasing Manager, explained that while "local food" does not have a government-mandated definition, it commonly refers to food obtained from the same geographical region in which it is served.

Approximately 15% of Choate's food is locally sourced, which SAGE generally defines as a 100-mile radius of campus. During autumn, which is rich produce season in the Northeast, that number rises to some 30%.

There are plenty of benefits to using local foods. For one, shorter transportation routes require less gas, which results in a smaller carbon footprint.

Sourcing locally also helps develop the local economy, by supporting local farmers and food suppliers. Since commercial mega-corporations tend to dominate the food industry, local farms often need support.

SAGE purchases from Sardilli Produce and Dairy, a family-owned company that operates out of Hartford and sources much of their products from a network of local Connecticut and Massachusetts farms.

Mr. Goodmaster said, "By purchasing food as locally as possible, you help to ensure the freshest and most seasonally appropriate foods are being prepared for your guests."

There are also downsides to using local produce. Ms. Katrina Linthorst Homan, the Director of Sustainability at Choate, noted that finding the necessary volume of local foods can be challenging.

The Northeastern climate, as well as the lack of open space for grazing, makes it especially difficult to source locally year-round. For example, tomatoes in Connecticut, and thus near Choate, are in season for a only a small window of time.

Mr. Goodman acknowledged that a lack of diversity in local food options proves to be challenging. "Connecticut is great for dairy production, certain fruits and vegetables, fish, and baked goods," he said, "but it lacks in other areas, such as meat production, citrus fruits, and grains."

Mr. Goodman continued, "While there may be select windows for growing in Connecticut, our local farmers are able to produce an excellent product with a large array of options within the narrow food families that are supported in this location."

And, in the end, students can attest that fresh food just tastes good — that butternut squash soup at the local foods dinner was a popular choice for seconds.

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Illustration by Ariel Zhang/*The Choate News*

TWO STRANGERS, TEN MINUTES, ONE QUESTION

Leland Ben '17, a two-year senior from Loudonville, N.Y., and Katrina Gonzalez '17, a four-year senior from Greenwood, S.C., crossed paths for the first time when they met last Saturday in a Lanphier Center classroom. They were given one topic to discuss.

Here is an abridged transcript of their conversation.

Compile, collectively, a list of the three greatest inventions of all time.

LB: Capitalism? It's the framework for providing the incentive for people to invent.

KG: I think capitalism has done a lot in terms of advancing society, but it's like a prototype for what an economic system should be. It's good, but it's not done. We need to provide more support, especially for people who are at the bottom of the economic classes.

LB: But I think all advancement — like the iPad that we're using to record this — wouldn't exist if there were no incentive to make it and make money, which is rooted in capitalism.

KG: I get that, in that money works. Money can get people to do things that are really good for society; it can get people to do things that are really bad for society.

But there's also a whole host of people who weren't given enough opportunities. And that's through no fault of their own.

LB: That's probably the result of bad government, too.

(Long pause.)

KG: Okay, so I guess we should get on to the second one.

LB: The wheel?

KG: *(Laughs.)* That's such a boring answer.

LB: I know.

KG: I guess one of the classic ones is modern-day sewage.

LB: That's true. Sewer systems, the concept of sloped roofs.

KG: Paper?

LB: Paper is up there.

(Another long pause.)

LB: Hmm. Steel!

KG: Steel, sure.

LB: Steel production — the Bessemer process.

KG: Oh, what is it called? Ford assembly lines.

LB: I mean, we can take a really easy route and just say, 'Car, computer.'

KG: That includes so many things that were invented beforehand, so you're covering a huge swath of things.

(Yet another pause.)

KG: This is a hard thing to fight about. Because with mechanical things, usually you can objectively say this is good, this is not good.

LB: I think... car, computer, capitalism?

KG: Let's just say democracy instead of capitalism.

LB: Okay.

PREPPED FOR SUCCESS: PREP 9 STUDENTS EXCEL AT CHOATE

By **Riley Choi '18**
Staff Reporter

On Thursday, October 13, Choate welcomed a group of students and families from Prep 9, an academic program that prepares promising students of color for boarding high schools, for its annual "Prep 9 Day."

Mr. Tim Bradley, the Associate Director of Admission, started the day's proceedings by welcoming the prospective students and families in the Humanities Rotunda. The guests were divided into three groups, and Choate student hosts were paired up with them throughout the day. The guests fully engaged in the experience of being Choate students by visiting their tour guides' classrooms and walking around campus.

The parents attended a School Life Panel in the Library Reading Room. They met Mr. Matt McDonald, the Director of Financial Aid; Mr. Amin Gonzalez, the Director of Admission; and individual deans and admission officers as well.

The Prep 9 program is designed for students of color in New York City from modest backgrounds, specifically eighth graders who might excel in boarding schools. The program asks middle schools to recommend students. Those students then complete a multi-tiered application that includes interviewing, testing, and writing personal essays. Only 30 to 50 students are admitted to the program.

Prep 9 introduced me to Choate and helped me to mature emotionally, socially, and academically.

Di'Anna Bonomolo '20

Younger students participate in similar programs, such as Prep for Prep, which is designed for fifth through eighth graders.

Prep 9 prepares students for boarding-school curricula through rigorous academic programs that focus on math, English, science, and history. The workload is intensive.

Ms. Judi Williams, a former Prep 9 teacher and current Choate HPRSS teacher, said, "For history classes, Prep 9 students read *Epic of Gilgamesh* and *Death of Socrates*, and for English, they read *Great Expectations*. They go to classes every weekday during the summer and write a bunch of papers about those challenging books." She added, "You have to realize that we are talking about 12- or 13-year-old kids."

Jalah Scott '20, a former Prep 9 student, recalled her experience in the program as "mentally and physically straining." She said, "It was especially hard during the school year because I had schoolwork on top of Prep 9 homework."

Photo courtesy of Lucas Ferrer

Prep 9 students finished their day with a photo and ice cream at the SAC.

Prep 9 Day has been held at Choate for 26 years. Ms. Williams said, "Affirmative action is a controversial and sensitive topic, but the biggest and most important piece of it is opportunity. Working at Prep 9 and with inner-city students helped me to realize that they do not get to explore a bigger network of independent schools. The program opens the door and lets them know about prestigious schools."

And the Prep 9 graduates who come to Choate bring important perspectives and experiences. Mr. Gordon Armour, a third form dean who participated in the panel, said, "I am glad that the Prep 9 program exists. Having kids from Prep 9 justifies our existence in a way. We need more of them, and it is important for Choate to host these intelligent and industrious students."

Di'Anna Bonomolo '20 said, "Prep 9 introduced me to Choate and helped me to mature emotionally, socially, and academically. It provided encouragement and saw the potential in me, and I am proud that I survived the process of Prep 9. The journey was tough, but the outcome was more than rewarding."

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The View from my Bedroom Window

Wednesday, 6:41 a.m.
Upon returning to my humble, little dorm room, I stumbled into the hard metal poles and St. John Hall banners that now completely enclose and separate me from the rest of Choate. Great. Now, I am a fencer by day and fenced in by night.

Camila Borjesson '17
Bungalow 204

¿Conoces la Cultura Hispana y Latina de Choate?

By **Kristen Andonie '17**
Staff Reporter

El Sábado por la noche, el club Hispanic Latinx Forum (HLF) organizó una cena para toda la escuela celebrando la conclusión de Hispanic Heritage Month, que duró desde el 15 de Septiembre hasta el 15 de Octubre. La idea detrás del evento era aumentar la conciencia en la comunidad de Choate sobre las culturas Hispanas y Latinas a través de comida, música, y baile.

Probablemente el aspecto dominante del evento fue la comida. Sage sirvió una variedad de platos típicos de España, Perú, Cuba, y otros países Hispanos y Latinos. Aunque muchos alumnos estaban contentos con la calidad de la comida, algunos, como Richard López '18, un alumno de descendencia Mejicana, no estaban completamente satisfechos: "siento que no le hacemos justicia a lo que verdaderamente es el patrimonio Hispano, porque la comida está buena, pero es lo que ya comemos en el dining hall. No es comida auténtica." Aun así, López está contento con el hecho que el evento tomó lugar: "Es un buen paso adelante porque estamos ayudando a exponer la gente a este tipo de patrimonio cultural."

La música también jugó un papel en celebrar Hispanic Heritage Month. Mirialie De Jesús '18, que es parte Colombiana y parte Puerto Riqueña, y es la presidenta de HLF y una de las organizadoras del evento, ayudó a crear una lista de reproducción para acompañar la cena. Se aseguró de incluir canciones que los miembros de HLF escuchan regularmente y que forman una parte integral de sus culturas.

Varios alumnos se pusieron a bailar durante el evento. "Un grupo de niños les estaban enseñando a bailar a los que no sabían como. Fue algo bien espontáneo," dijo De Jesús.

Dentro la cultura Hispana y Latina, hay una gran variedad de subculturas. Sarah Gelbach '17, que se identifica con la cultura de Panamá, dijo que la cultura Hispana y Latina "es muy vibrante y muy diversa. Hay gente Hispana de todos los colores y todos los tamaños."

Como consequencia, la manera en que Hispanos y Latinos se identifican y celebran su cultura varia también. Para López, el aspecto más importante de su cultura es el sentido de comunidad cuando su familia celebra un cumpleaños. "Hasta los vecinos pueden participar en las festividades, porque no puede haber una fiesta de cumpleaños sin todo mundo," compartió López, agregando, "Así es como yo defino mi cultura–el sentido de tener familia y amistades alrededor."

Por supuesto, la comida típica también toma un gran lugar. Sabastián Chacón '19, que se identifica con Méjico y El Salvador, dijo, "cada Día de Acción de Gracias y Navidad, mi abuela cocina bastante comida Mejicana, como tamales, horchata, frijoles, y pozole."

Muchos alumnos Hispanos y Latinos también celebran fiestas únicas a sus culturas. Por ejemplo, Ollin Mendoza '19 festeja el Día de Los Muertos, una fiesta cultural Mejicana para conmemorar a familiares y amistades fallecidos. Gelbach celebra el Dia de Reyes, una fiesta en Enero para recordar a los Reyes Magos que visitaron al Niño Jesus en la tradición Cristiana. Gelbach también festeja dos Días de la Madre: el de Panamá y el de los Estados Unidos.

La comunidad de Choate fue muy receptiva al evento. "Quería regar la palabra de Hispanic Heritage Month," dijo De Jesús, "porque no mucha gente saben que existe." Hay muchos alumnos en Choate que se identifican como Hispanos o Latinos culturalmente. Poco a poco, a través de esfuerzos como los de HLF, esta comunidad está dando pasos para honrar sus culturas.

For an English language version of this article, please visit thechoatenews.choate.edu.

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Flashback Friday: Resurrecting a Forty-Year-Old Poll

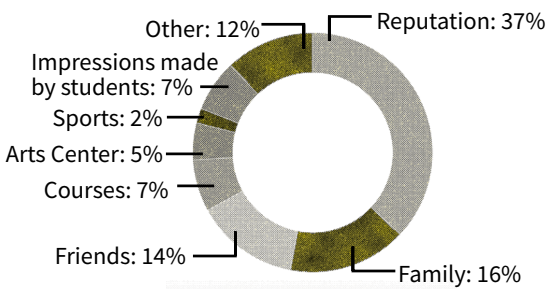
On October 29, 1976, *The News* ran a front-page story covering the results of a then-recent poll surveying student opinions and habits on a variety of issues. In total, there were 203 respondents to the poll, with a boy-to-girl ratio of 4:1. The poll was conducted by Thomas Agan '78 over an 11-day period. We have reformatted the results, which were originally in text, into the below graphics.

If you became president of CRH, what is the first change you would make?

Top five responses are listed below.

1. Improve the food
2. Integrate the Choate and Rosemary campuses more
3. Reduce homework
4. Change Friday night curfew to 11:30 p.m. and Saturday night curfew to 12:00 p.m.
5. Relax dress code

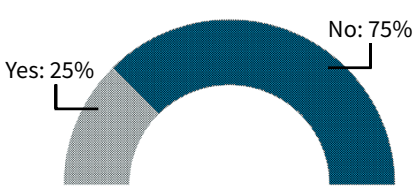
What factor most influenced your decision to attend CRH?



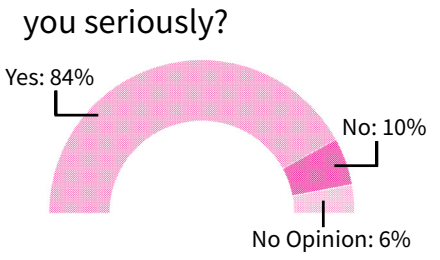
How would you personally rate CRH on a scale of 1 to 10, 10 being the highest?

The numerical average was calculated to be **7.7/10**

Have you smoked pot since the beginning of the year?



Do you feel that the faculty and administration take you seriously?



Information courtesy of the Archives.

YALE IMPROV GROUP COMES TO PMAC

The Yale Ex!t Players, Yale's Improv group, pose for a picture with all their members.

Photo courtesy of Yale Arts

By **Eben Cook '18**
Staff Reporter

"Where would you go on your first date?" "How much money do you make?" "What is your opinion on Crocs?" Different audience members asked a variety of questions to three "single and ready to mingle" bachelors on stage: Viktor, a neighborhood doctor capable of solving all cures; Natalie, a lawyer looking to escape the anxiety of her job; and Sam, a racecar driver who "talks real slow but drives real fast." It was up to Tristan Jamidar '18 to determine who he wanted to go on a date with.

There were no actual bachelors on the stage, as far as we know, but this was the opening act of the improv performance by the Yale Ex!t Players, the group that, in 1984, introduced improv to Yale. In the decades since, the group has performed hundreds of shows across the country, at theaters, schools, and festivals. The group has studied improv at the iO Theater in Chicago, as well as the Magnet Theater and the Upright Citizens Brigade Theater in New York.

Improv is a form of comedic theater in which all aspects of a theater production, including plot, characters, and backstory, are all made up on the spot. The initial ideas often come from members of the audience, and the actors quickly develop a story that has never been performed before.

Improv uses life skills that you wouldn't normally think of, like listening to other people and being supportive.

Hannah Billingsley
Yale Ex!t Performer

For the main show, the Yale Ex!t Players took one word and developed this word into a complete story with a plethora of personalities involved. The word, chosen by an audience member, was "brick." The story began with a girl delivering a monologue about a brick fountain on a mountain, the water flowing out of the brick mouths of old men. More and more characters were added to the plot, including two brothers traveling to Nebraska in order to fulfill their mother's wish of spreading her ashes in her home state, two freshmen spray-painting a wall while reflecting on their lives, a fairy and boy who wanted to be the fairy's assistant, and a group of musicians playing Tchaikovsky's Third in a park while mocking the trianglist for her lack of rhythm.

Ms. Kalya Yannatos, head of the Aorts Department, helped bring the group to campus. She said, "I think it's really valuable for us to have a relationship with our neighbors down yonder. Yale is so close, so why not work that I-91 corridor?"

Like the audiences they perform for, many of the Yale students in Ex!t are all but brand new to improv. Deb Monti, a sophomore in the group , said, "I had never done improv before, like a lot of us. It seemed like a good way to meet a good group of close friends, and because there are usually seven to nine of us, it's so tight-knit."

Hannah Billingsley, a junior in the group, added, "I did a little bit of improv in middle and high school, but I was also an athlete, so I didn't have much time for theater. A few of my friends were also trying out for improv, so I saw it as an opportunity to create new worlds."

The challenge of improv is to devise both a frenetic, haphazard world in which anything goes, and, by skit's end, to knit those disparate strands into a unified whole. Improv can seem simple, its underlying complexity overshadowed by laughs from the audience. "Improv uses life skills that you wouldn't normally think of, like listening to other people and being supportive," Billingsley said. "I wasn't necessarily expecting that, but it is something that is really helpful in my everyday life."

Listening, offering support, other key life skills — yes, before the end of the night's main skit, those brothers had made it to Nebraska.

Eben Cook *may be reached at ecook18@choate.edu.*

Ex!t Players Educate Choate on Improv

By **Jeanne Malle '19**
Staff Reporter

Last Friday, before Yale's oldest improv group, the Yale Ex!t Players, performed in a free show for the Choate community, the theatrical troupe hosted a workshop for students interested in the crazy, complex world of improv.

Director of the Arts Ms. Kalya Yannatos explained workshops with guest performers "give an opportunity for students to interact with guest artists in an experiential way," she said.

The exceptional vitality of the six actors who took the stage in the Gelb Theater not only motivated Choate's improv group—which practices diligently every Friday and will soon put together the annual Iwazaru show—to participate, but also the many freshmen and sophomores who attended the workshop.

Improvisation can be a difficult skill to develop. Polina Ermoshkina '19, a sophomore in Choate's improv group, said, "There was such great, positive energy that I had not seen come out of my cast-mates before. The Ex!t Players were a riot. They really helped us to just go for it. Hopefully we can use some of the techniques we learned from the workshop in our own show."

Photo courtesy of Mr. Ross Mortensen

Yale Ex!t Players teach Choate students the basics of improv acting.

The workshop, began with some basic concepts, such as never saying no during an improvised exchange — "Yes, and..." is the common refrain — recognizing the characters of all actors, and letting the scene go in the direction that actors' imagination naturally takes it.

The sketches the Choate students learned to perform slowly rose in difficulty. One of the last exercises was difficult because it incorporated all of the techniques that the improv actors had taught. Students had to perform two-person plays in a random setting given by the audience. The lines that structured the skit were "You look..." and "I feel..."

In one hour, a group of 20 Choate students, many of whom had essentially never acted before, discovered a new, on-stage world of courage with the Ex!t Players.

Jeanne Malle *may be reached at jmalle19@choate.edu.*

DEANS EXPLAIN MUSIC PROGRAM CANCELLATION

By **Nicole Yao '18**
Staff Reporter

Last week, *The Choate News* reported on the administration's decision to cancel this year's special program before Parents' Weekend, which traditionally takes place on Tuesday evening and features performances from students in various musical ensembles.

Mr. James Stanley, Dean of Students, has since elaborated on that decision, which he and his colleagues made in late July.

"We knew the fall was going to be really busy," Mr. Stanley said. In addition to the provocative plays students were required to attend a few weeks ago — *Slut: The Play* and *Now That We're Men* — the *New York Times* opinion columnist Nicolas Kristof was scheduled to speak in a required Special Program. Rosalind Wiseman and Charlie Kuhn, speakers from Cultures of Dignity, visited Choate this past weekto meet with various student groups and talk about ways to improve the school community and culture.

"Quite honestly, we wanted to give students a night off," Mr. Stanley said.

After the administration's decision, Mr. Kristof rescheduled his visit until January. He spoke instead this fall to a panel of the United Nations.

Mr. Stanley was also concerned about an increasing amount of practice time required for the students performing at the Parents' Weekend Special Program. "It's my understanding that they started to do a dress rehearsal for the Tuesday night concert," he said.

Mr. John Ford, a science teacher who came up with the idea for this Special Program several years ago, expressed his disappointment over the program's cancellation. "I think it's a shame we're not doing this," he said, "because an opportunity to have the entire student body see and hear some of our music ensembles is rare. Appreciating those talented musicians is important."

William Wu '19, who participated in the program last year, agreed. "It's such a bummer," he said. "Musical appreciation should really be a common feature of Choate students, and this Special Program helped everyone with that."

We're looking at the music program for every other year, and maybe doing a different program on off years.

Mr. James Stanley
Dean of Students

Chloe Choi '19, who plays the piccolo in the orchestra, might be slightly disappointed but she also sees an advantage to the cancellation. "I'm glad because the audience won't say that they were 'forced' to listen to our music," Choi said. "I hate seeing the thoughtless, bored looks in the audience's faces."

She went on, "I don't want music to be a waste of someone else's time. I want people to appreciate music, though, I wish we had a better way of showing that."

There will still be a performance on Saturday night this year, open to all members of the Choate community. Additionally, as Mr. Stanley mentioned, students are welcome to go to the dress rehearsal for this performance on Tuesday night, when the mandatory Special Program would have taken place.

Next year, however, the performance is likely to be, once again, mandatory for all students. Mr. Stanley said, "We're looking at the music program for every other year, and maybe doing a different program on off years." Students are given a day off of classes on Wednesday, before the start of Parents' Weekend and the day after this program. Mr. Stanley said, "It is the single best night of the year to have a Special Program."

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Critics Hail Newest Novel by Maria Semple '82

By **Inc Thongthai '19**
Staff Reporter

Photo courtesy of Always with a Book

For as long as a full year, *The New York Times* has placed Maria Semple's '82 latest novel, *Today Will Be Different*, at the top of their book list, and Choate is proud to recognize this notable alum as a member of the community, one who exemplifies its characteristic sense of innovation. A graduate of Choate and later a graduate of Barnard College, Semple is currently on tour for her new book.

The embodiment of a creative mind, Semple has written many TV shows and novels students at Choate may be familiar with, including "Beverly Hills," "90210," "Mad About You," "Arrested Development," *This One is Mine,* and *Where'd You Go, Bernadette?* Semple has been nominated for an Emmy, a Writer's Guild of America Award, and the Pacific Northwest Booksellers Association Award. A celebrated author whose *Today Will Be Different* spend more than a year on the *New York Times* bestseller list, and winner of the American Library Association's Alex Award, her accomplishments range from literature to television entertainment.

The novel is up to interpretation depending on how you live your life, but you must have a frollicking good time reading it.

Maria Semple '82

Maria Semple's latest novel, *Today Will Be Different,* centers on a female protagonist, Eleanor Flood, who lives a prosaic life until a kaleidoscope of events comes her way. The novel inspires readers to break the mold of routine and to take time to reflect on more than their own work. "I wanted the reader to take inspiration from Eleanor Flood. Everyone should enjoy all that life has to offer. The novel is up to interpretation depending on how you live your life, you must have a rollicking good time while reading it," Semple said.

Janet Maslin, of *The New York Times* writes the following, "Ms. Semple is an immensely appealing writer, and there's something universal in her heroine's efforts to get a handle on a life spinning out of control." *Today Will Be Different* is a poem laced with satire and soul. The poetry in the novel is unlike the prosaic life of Eleanor Flood. Maslin went on, "But this time delivering laughs does not turn out to be her primary purpose as a novelist. Her new book, *Today Will Be Different* can be outrageously funny. But it cuts closer to the bone than Bernadette, and its main character's problems feel more real."

Many authors leave traces of themselves in their literary counterparts, Eleanor Flood, like Bernadette Fox, almost imitates Semple, who recalled in an interview, "Regrettably at times, Eleanor Flood is very much like me. I pulled on my own experiences, my life, and reflected it on Eleanor." All three women have careers involving entertainment and television. Perhaps it is because of this similarity that Semple paints such realness onto her characters. *The New York Times* stated, "The characters have memories, fantasies, desires, all of which serve as a toggle switch, allowing the narrative to move easily among past, present and future."

Today Will Be Different is a novel which reflects deeply on Maria Semple's life, starting off as a poem — even a diary. Semple stated in an interview, "The first thing I wrote was the very first page. I didn't know that it would become a novel. Instead, I was trying to channel some deep part of myself, a part of me that was hidden. But when I read that page, I realized it was a book." The refined character of Eleanor Flood not only exemplifies good fiction, but is also an extension of Semple.

Despite having a busy schedule much like her literary counterpart, she stopped to reflect on her time at Choate, "I love the whole writing process. Nothing gives me more enjoyment than creating a vivid dream for the reader and getting lost in that vivid dream myself. Choate was definitely a place that helped me find my passion in English. As an alumni, speaking to current students, I hope you can relate and reflect with *Today Will Be Different*."

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The Library: An Underutilized Resource

By **Neve Scott '18**
Staff Reporter

Ibn Battuta: A Muslim Traveler of the 14th Century, by Ross E. Dunn, may seem like an odd choice for the most frequently checked out book at the library this September. But for the first time this year, librarians worked with the fourth form history department to create a new lesson plan for the course. The course emphasizes project-based learning over critical-essay writing and suggests that when librarians and classroom collaborate the books in Choate's stacks circulate.

It might make sense that the most popular books that are checked out are ones that pertain to school classes, but it is surprising how few Choate students take advantage of all the reading resources that the library has to offer.

With the exception of papers that require library sources, Choate students often find themselves browsing other venues for books. For leisure reading, nine out of ten students say that they would rather order a book directly from Amazon or another online retailer than attempt to find it in the library.

"There's nothing wrong with going to the library and it's a great opportunity to find books that you wouldn't normally come across," Elyse Cornwall '18 said, "but I prefer to have a book that I can write in and not worry about having to return it.

In an increasingly digital world, libraries seemed to have lost their traditional footholds in the center of community culture. Choate's extensive library is filled with countless resources as well as an incredibly well-stocked archive. Students still, though, seek PDF versions of stories and plays on the internet, order paperback books. The free books of the library collect dust on the shelves.

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Photo by Elle Rinaldi/*The Choate News*

A student browses the library bookstacks.

The Choate News

SPORTS

Vol. CX • No. 4

Friday, October 21, 2016

Show Your Support: Boys' Varsity Water Polo vs. Williston Northampton • 10/26 • 3:00 p.m. • Larry Hart Pool

FIELD REPORT

Saturday's Games

Boys' **XC** (3-2-0)
beats Deerfield, 19-36

Girls' **XC** (1-3-0)
falls to Loomis, 32-23

Field Hockey (7-2-0)
beats Taft, 2-1

Boys' **Soccer** (7-3-1)
beats Brunswick, 1-0

Girls' **Soccer** (10-0-1)
beats Taft, 3-2

Girls' **Volleyball** (9-2-0)
beats Taft, 3-2

Boys' **Water Polo** (9-2-0)
beats Canterbury, 14-2

Wednesday's Games

Field Hockey (7-2-0)
beats Kingswood, 3-1

Boys' **Soccer** (7-3-1)
beats Suffield, 1-0

Girls' **Soccer** (10-0-1)
beats Kingswood, 4-0

Girls' **Volleyball** (9-2-0)
falls to Loomis, 1-3

Alumni in Athletics: Etzel Twins of '15

Danielle

By **Joseph Coyne '19**
Staff Reporter

Danielle Etzel graduated from Choate in 2015, having played center midfield and goalkeeper on Girls' Varsity Soccer for four years. She is now a goalie for Harvard Crimson women's soccer.

Joseph Coyne '19: For how long have you been playing soccer?

Danielle Etzel '15: I began playing at around five years old. They start you off really young in local rec leagues and whatnot. From rec, I moved to town travel teams, then middle school and high school teams as well as club. I've been playing goalie since I was around 12; in club, we always switched around between field and goal. I became a full-time goalie a couple years later.

JC: When did you know you wanted to play soccer in college?

DE: I always knew I wanted to continue playing, provided that the game would still be fun for me, and that I'd still be able to do well academically. In high school, I always looked up to the upperclassmen, especially the ones that were going on to play Division I soccer. For me, it seemed like a no-brainer to continue playing the game I love.

JC: How was the transition from soccer at Choate to soccer at the collegiate level?

DE: The speed of play and the physicality required at this level are more demanding than in high school, although the finesse and technicality that you see in club games are replaced by simplicity and teamwork in college. I think the hardest part of the transition was adjusting to the time commitment for soccer.

JC: How was the transition from Choate to Harvard overall?

DE: My transition to Harvard was much easier than that of non-boarding school students. Things like managing time, organizing, and seeking out help when I need it are all things I brought from Choate. However, you gain a new sense of independence when you have your own place.

JC: Do you have any advice for people preparing to make the jump from Choate to college?

DE: Make the most of the opportunities at your college. While soccer does take up a lot of time, I have found that there are so many amazing extracurricular opportunities to take advantage of.

JC: What have been your most exciting experiences as a soccer player, at Harvard and elsewhere?

DE: On October 1, Harvard beat Yale in our night game 2-1! It was a pretty rainy, cold night, and we were behind for most of the game, but we ended up tying with fifteen minutes left and then scoring the winner about five minutes later. It was an exhilarating game. Outside of Harvard, my favorite moments are from playing with Region 1 ODP (Olympic Development Program), since I was fortunate enough to have a great team for each trip. The opportunities to learn from top-level coaches, as well as travel internationally, have been amazing experiences.

JC: What are your hopes for this season?

DE: The team's goal this year is to win our conference, but we take the season one game at a time. Personally, I want to keep growing as a goalkeeper, player, and leader.

Joseph Coyne *may be reached at jcoyne19@choate.edu.*

Photo courtesy of Brown University Athletics
Christine makes five saves against Harvard in one of her first matches.

Photo courtesy of Danielle Etzel
Danielle trains for a second successful season at Harvard.

Christine

By **Cecilia Curran '20**
Reporter

Among the select graduates from Choate who attend Ivy League schools are those who now thrive on prestigious Division I Ivy sports teams. One of those people is Christine Etzel, who graduated from Choate in 2015. After being goalkeeper for Choate's highly successful Girls' Varsity Soccer team, Etzel moved on to play at Brown University. During her first season there, she was awarded Ivy League Rookie of the Week three times. In addition to that, she is currently ranked second in the league for total saves.

Etzel remarked that preparing for the season entailed "doing a lot more fitness training than I did in high school." Her days were comprised of "consistently doing goalkeeper training and perfecting anything that I felt was weak." Her hard work definitely paid off when preseason came around. Etzel was the starting goalie for every preseason game in her freshman year, although it was no easy feat. She explained, "The only other goalkeeper was a year older than me, and we were competing for the starting spot during preseason. My coach eventually told me that I would be the starter." Etzel mentioned that her transition onto Brown's soccer team went smoothly. "The team was super welcoming," she said, adding, "The girls supported all of the freshmen."

Not only did Fitzel have to get comfortable around new teammates, she also had to get accustomed to the rigor of college soccer. In regards to the level of play, she said, "I was kind of surprised. There's definitely a transition regarding the speed of play. The games are much faster than high school soccer." As for the style of play, Etzel has adjusted well to Brown's strategies. "My freshman year, we were hitting the ball more often, but this year we're more about possession. The team is definitely trying to keep the ball more and play out of the back." One could certainly say she has learned the reigns of Brown soccer, with a save percentage of 83.3% and 75 total saves under her belt.

Along with the demands of her D1 team, Etzel had to juggle all other aspects of transitioning into college. She commented, "I was a four-year boarding student at Choate, so I was already pretty comfortable being away from home. College is very similar." She also mentioned what it is like balancing her time at college: "In the offseason, there is definitely time to get involved in other stuff. For example, my team volunteers at local school. It's kind of a struggle because there's so much work, but you can always find time."

When asked if she had any advice for incoming students or student athletes, Etzel said, "Take everything in; my freshman year just flew by. Step back and enjoy every moment." She added, "College is something you'll remember for the rest of your life. Just make sure you're having fun."

With all the success that Etzel has had, one could assume that her positive outlook on college life and work expectations have benefitted her. Stay tuned during her next two years at Brown University because Etzel is one to watch.

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CROSS COUNTRY: SURVIVAL OF THE (MENTALLY) FITTEST

Photo courtesy of Ross Mortensen, Photo illustration by Sabrina Xie
Mr. James Davidson prepares to announce the start.

By **Laila Hawkins '19**
Reporter

For the zverage Joe, racing through Choate's forest for miles on end is a daunting task. However, for cross country runners, running that trail is second nature.

Cross country is a unique sport because it demands both physical and mental stamina. As the boys' captain, Joe Berafatti '17, put it, "Cross country is kind of two sided. First, you need the day-to-day dedication to train six days a week. The other side of it is that is you need the mental strength to push through a race. Even when you're really tired and hurting, you have to drive for the finish line with a mile left."

The Girls' Cross Country coach is Mr. James Davidson, known as JD to his athletes and students. A teacher in spiritual life and meditation, JD makes it a priority to keep his runners in tip-top mental shape as well as physical. In regards to the role mentality plays in cross country, he said, "It's at least forty percent of the challenge, because once you improve your endurance, you begin to believe in yourself."

Mental state is everything because the minute you give up, you can't run anymore.
Joseph Coyne '19

JD went on to say that, for a runner, "the worst mindset is when you become preoccupied with where you are in the race. You begin this internal dialogue where you are pretty much convinced that you are not as fast as you thought you were, or you're not as fast as the other people in the race. That feeds into your awareness of feeling winded or of a minor ache. This makes it difficult to compete at any level."

Throughout the season, JD and the Boys' Cross Country coach, Mr. Ned Gallagher, make a point to teach their runners about mental awareness and relaxation. Berafatti said, "Sometimes on Fridays, before a Saturday race, we do 'Neditation.' We all go into the locker room and visualize ourselves running the race. That helps build confidence. When race day comes, you know what you have to do to perform to the best of your ability."

Along with that, JD commented on how he prepares his runners, "After relaxation, we do some breathing exercises that are linked to visualization. Also, before a meet, we always try to gather up and take a couple deep breaths." One of his runners, Claire Gussler '19, said, "The exercises help calm your mind and get you mentally prepared for the meet."

Haley Williams '18, who has been participating in individual sports since she was little, said, "Mentality is basically everything when you are competing independently." For cross country, in particular, she said that "being able to keep running is completely in your head. If you tell yourself that you're strong and you're able to continue, then you can run as far as you want."

Runner Joseph Coyne '19 said, "Everyone is going to feel pain at some point in the race." Gussler added, "It's about who can sustain that pain and continue to run faster. Mental state is everything because the minute you give up, you can't run anymore. It's all about your motivation."

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POSTGRAD PROFILE

Senior Soccer Recruit, McGuirk '17

Photo courtesy of Choate Rosemary Hall

By **Sarah Gurevitch '19**
Reporter

You may have heard of the postgraduate who is playing Senior Soccer. If not, then you are probably wondering what a PG is doing on the Senior Soccer team, which means we are all on the same page. George McGuirk '17, a Madison, Connecticut native, arrived at Choate this year to play for Boys' Varsity Lacrosse in the spring. Surprisingly, MGuirk has also proved to be a major asset to the Senior Soccer team.

Sarah Gurevitch '19: How have you been adjusting to life at Choate?

George McGuirk '17: It was a little rocky at first, being one of the new kids here. Boarding school is completely different from the public schools I've attended, but I've really started to adjust in the past few weeks. I've set a daily routine, which has definitely helped. I really like it here.

SG: Why did you choose to join Senior Soccer instead of trying out for the varsity soccer team?

GM: I really wanted to join an intramural sport where I could meet a lot of other kids, especially kids in my grade. I thought a lot of PGs would be playing Senior Soccer.

SG: So how is it being the only PG on the Senior Soccer team?

GM: To be honest, it was a little weird at first. But I've become close with the team and have really grown to love Senior Soccer. It is a lot of fun.

SG: What position do you play?

GM: I'm actually not sure. I play left wing most of the time, and sometimes I'll drop back to play defense. I'll also play center back or hop in and play goalie every once in a while. It really depends.

SG: What is the dynamic of the Senior Soccer team?

GM: (Laughs) It's a very diverse group of people, ranging from those who are pretty skilled at soccer to people just trying the sport for the first time. The team has really great camaraderie, though. Everyone meshes really well together, and we all take it seriously and try to win.

SG: Have you witnessed any particularly funny moments with the team?

GM: Yes. There have been many instances where people have been hit in the face with the ball. It actually happens quite frequently. Handballs are also a problem. Sometimes, people think it's a good idea to smack the soccer ball in the air with their hand. Every time this happens, everyone laughs.

SG: What are all the sports that you play?

GM: My only team sport is lacrosse, but I also surf, snowboard, skateboard, and play pickup sports like basketball and hockey with friends.

SG: Do you have any particular role models that you'd like to talk about?

GM: I would say my father. He's taught me a lot of morals and ideals that I live by. He's helped me realize the best way I can go about my life and how I can succeed.

SG: Who's your favorite professional athlete?

GM: Sage Kotsenburg, who is a U.S. Olympic snowboarder. I really like his message. He's not about the competition, but more about exploring the unknown and being adventurous.

SG: What is your life motto?

GM: Explore the unknown because there is so much out there that people haven't seen or experienced. I really like to broaden my horizons. I feel like not knowing something gives you more drive to go out and try to attain that knowledge.

You can catch George McGuirk tearing it up on Senior Soccer during the team's match versus Choate faculty on November 4.

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