



# THE CHOATE NEWS

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## NEW COVID-19 GUIDELINES AFFECT SAGE DINING

By **Harper Knight '23**  
*Reporter*

When Choate students returned to campus after the Covid-19 shutdown, the School's SAGE dining system was modified to adapt to new infection prevention guidelines. While students pre-pandemic could freely travel to and from the Dining Hall, new social distancing guidelines have forced the community to make many adjustments when it comes to dining post-quarantine at Choate.

During the quarantine period when students first returned to campus prior to the School's transition into in-person classes, all three meals of the day were delivered by SAGE workers to each dorm on campus — with the exception of students from Hall, West Wing, and

Library, who picked up their meals directly from Hill House.

While breakfast and lunch mostly consisted of simple, quick meals like bagels and sandwiches, dinner consisted of hot meals closer to the pre-pandemic dinners at Choate. As the School shifted from quarantine to warning level orange, or moderate risk, and students returned to in-person classes, various dining areas have opened around campus to accommodate both boarders and day students.

Students are assigned specific times and dining locations based on their class schedule. Meals are served in Hill House (in three separate sections), St. John Hall, Lanphier Center, Ruutz-Rees, and the gallery of the Paul Mellon Arts Center, where students

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Graphic by Yoyo Zhang and Sesame Gaetsaloe/The Choate News



## MATRICULATION MODIFIED AMID THE PANDEMIC

By **Nicholas Ng '23**  
*Reporter*

On Monday, October 21, Choate hosted its annual Matriculation Ceremony for new students. Given the varying circumstances of students induced by the Covid-19 pandemic and the number of students studying remotely this term, only 231 of the 267 new students were able to sign the Matriculation books in person.

A tradition that predates the merging of The Choate School and Rosemary Hall, Matriculation requires new students each year to sign the School

Register, pledging themselves to personal growth, integrity, service, and compassion for others. Dean of Students Mr. Mike Velez '00 explained that the process acts as a welcome for new students joining the Choate community. The event involves remarks from Head of School Dr. Alex Curtis and speeches delivered by the head prefects as well. It aims to act as a more official induction of new students to the School.

Mr. Velez hoped that the administration's planning for this year's Matriculation ceremony would ensure that the event keeps in mind not only

in-person, but also remote students who are new to Choate. "For our new students, it's one of those first moments where the meaning of what it means to be part of the Choate community takes root. Matriculation signifies the official entry of a Choate student and what that entails," he said. "For remote learners, we have a plan in place where students will be able to sign the ledger. We want to make sure that all students have the opportunity [to sign the books], and we have a while to make it happen."

See **WELCOMES**, Page 2

## Hill House Construction Proceeds on Schedule



Photo by Ellie Pyper/The Choate News

Hill House construction, stopped in March because of the Covid-19 pandemic, resumed in June.

By **Sabrina Wang '23**  
*Staff Reporter*

During a school meeting last February, Head of School Dr. Alex Curtis shared plans for the reconstruction of Hill House. Although the fire started by a lightning strike in the summer of 2019 had been contained to a small area of the building, extensive water damage prompted the School's eventual plans to redesign both the exterior and interior of the building. To promote symmetry, an extension will be built on the right side of the building where the Class of 1961 Archway stood. For the interior, a new faculty lounge, private dining areas, college counseling spaces, student dorms, and faculty residences will be built.

When the School closed its campus in March due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the construction of Hill House halted. However, by June, construction continued with new safety measures for on-site workers, such as wearing personal protective equipment and conducting daily health screenings.

Chief Financial Officer Mr. Patrick Durbin said, "In construction projects, one of the biggest risks is bad weather. You lose construction days because of the rain. Luckily, we had a dry summer, so there really hasn't been anything unplanned."

Over the past month, the construction workers have also been working hard to make the building weather-resistant before the approaching winter season. The roof is currently being rebuilt, and the placement of exterior windows is planned to take place by January.

Though the renovation of Hill House has been running smoothly, it has affected students living in nearby dormitories. Tiffany Xiao '23, a resident of Hall, said, "While I'm very excited for the reconstruction and reopening of Hill House, it's sometimes inconvenient when construction takes place in the morning when I have a sleep-in or when I'm doing work."

West Wing resident Sydney Alleyne '23 said, "Though the

construction noises sometimes wake me up in the morning, it's interesting to see the construction process, and I'm excited to finally go into Hill House."

Once completed, a corridor near the back of the building will connect St. John Hall, the Hill House Dining Hall, and the Andrew Mellon Library into one large complex. "It's great to see the building starting to take shape," said Mr. Durbin. "It's going to be a great hub for that quad and a focal point of campus. In the courtyard, the building will be accessible by ramp, so it really provides better connectivity."

Hill House is set to open in the fall of 2021. As of now, no architectural plans for the building have changed, and construction has remained within budget. Though loud mornings accompany the current construction process for some students, when completed, Hill House will once again be a space for the Choate community to enjoy.

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## SAC Events Get Innovative

By **Ryan Kim '23**  
*Reporter*

With new social distancing measures in place and a significant number of students staying remote, the Student Activities Center (SAC) and club leaders have mobilized to provide Choate students with an array of opportunities to engage in activities while also staying safe.

In the past few weeks, students have had opportunities to watch outdoor movies, play Capture the Flag, and test their knowledge of China with trivia. Other events included a scavenger hunt, a virtual escape room, and a kickball tournament.

"Considering the restrictions, I think it's really nice that it still feels like Choate," said Director of Student Activities Ms. Alex Long. "St. John was a little bit full, which was like before, because normally on a Friday night the building is very busy."

Her enthusiasm was echoed by the student body. "The events have been very fun and engag-

ing and it honestly feels like we're not in a pandemic while at them even though we're following Covid procedures," said Kenadi Waymire '22.

**"Considering the restrictions, I think it's really nice that it still feels like Choate."**

*Ms. Alex Long*  
Director of Student Activities

In addition to mandatory mask use, social distancing regulations have limited outdoor activities to 50 people and indoor activities to just 25. With the exception of kickball, the majority of the hosted activities have had low attendance rates.

"We are hoping to increase attendance by adding more ambience like firepits and Adirondack chairs," said Assistant Director of Student Activities Ms. Colleen

Kazar. Regarding offering students a wider variety of activities, Ms. Kazar said, "We are looking forward to partnering with clubs for unique event ideas."

Looking forward to upcoming events, Ms. Kazar said, "On Halloween night, there will be a sort of Halloween party that includes firepits, smores, candy, and an opportunity for students to come out and chill." In addition, students can look forward to the first-ever virtual Deerfield Day, comedy events, game nights, flashlight tag, and more movie nights behind St. John Hall. Signing up for events on the Choate portal and attending activities will add students' names into the fall term raffle for prizes from the School Store.

In the meantime, Ms. Long urges students to be responsible and follow the community compact so that everyone can stay safe and continue to participate in fun events.

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**Trump or Biden?**  
Students discuss their reasons for supporting their preferred candidate.  
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**Safe and Sounder**  
Choate Medical Director Dr. Miriam Cohen shares her insight on Covid-19.  
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**Fall for Wallingford**  
CT enjoys beautiful autumn foliage this season.  
**Local News • P3**



## DEBATING FRACKING, CHOATE STUDENTS MODEL CIVIL DISCOURSE



Graphic by Sage Setty/The Choate News

By **Jonathan Zhuo '23**  
Reporter

On Wednesday, October 21, the School held its second virtual student debate, which had the resolution “The United States federal government should implement a ban on fracking within the next presidential term,” and involved pod leaders of the School’s debate team Jordan Azzinaro ’22 in affirmation and Emma Hermacinski ’22 in negation.

This event is a part of a series of monthly webinars between September and November leading up to the 2020 U.S. Presidential Election.

According to the Director of Equity and Inclusion Dr. Rachel Myers, this debate aimed to help the audience understand what it means to be an informed voter and to remind the community that people can be both thoughtful and politically different.

“Modeling civil discourse is so important right now because what we’ve been seeing over the last decade is increased vitriolic exchange

and even encouraged divisiveness from political candidates,” said Dr. Myers. “One of the things that all of our alumni panelists agreed upon was that the presidential debate that occurred on September 29 was not representative of how debate should have went for two people competing to lead the United States for the next four years.”

“Modeling Civil Discourse: A Live Choate Debate” was moderated by Debate Captain Bianca Rosen ’21. Because the purpose of the debate was to demonstrate civil discourse, the arguments presented by each debater do not necessarily reflect their beliefs.

“I think these debates are extremely important because they’re educational and really showcase the heart of an issue,” said Hermacinski. “Having debates based on research and fact as well as persuasion is critical to understanding the issues of our nation and our world.”

The debate began with Azzinaro emphasizing the immediate threat that fracking poses

with its detrimental effects on the environment. Azzinaro recognized that four years is a short amount of time to ban fracking, but she argued that the U.S. needs to take action as soon as possible to prevent further irreversible damage from climate change.

She went on to discuss several other drawbacks to fracking, explaining that the chemicals involved are hazardous to human health and that the process of fracking has led to an increase in human-induced earthquakes.

Azzinaro’s proposal was to build renewable energy plants in place of fracking, which would also provide more jobs. She said,

“I think no matter what regulations you pose on [fracking], you cannot eliminate the methane that it produces, and thus you cannot eliminate the effect it has on air pollution and global warming.

Therefore, regulations, no matter how strict and severe, would not be able to completely reduce the problem at hand the way banning will.”

On the opposing side, Hermacinski’s main arguments were that banning fracking so quickly is unreasonable and that doing so would cause massive consequences on the economy, including increasing unemployment and skyrocketing living costs.

She stated that fracking provides the world with a sig-

**“Modeling civil discourse is so important right now because what we’ve been seeing over the last decade is increased vitriolic exchange and even encouraged divisiveness from political candidates.”**

*Dr. Rachel Myers*  
Director of Equity and Inclusion

nificant amount of energy, and banning it will only lead the United States to depend on coal and other nonrenewable energy sources instead. While Hermacinski acknowledged that climate change was a serious issue, she explained that putting a ban on fracking would not help in the long run. According to Hermacinski, the detriments of a sudden ban on fracking to the national economy outweigh its possible environmental benefits.

“In the end, it is so much worse to shut down fracking and live off of foreign oil than to remain with a cleaner energy of natural gas and transition safely. It is so much costlier and less environmentally friendly to import fossil fuels and scramble to rebuild our energy grid in four years than to keep our independence and be prepared to switch to renewable [sources] when the time is right,” said Hermacinski.

She proposed that the United States should devote significant time to researching fracking during the next presidential term.

Both Hermacinski and Azzinaro, who are close friends and live in the same dorm, were excited to debate against each other and proud of their speeches.

Hermacinski said, “I’m quite proud of myself — that may have been one of my finest debates. I thought the structure and timing of my speech worked really well and that the eight to ten hours of research I put in paid off.”

Many audience members found the debate engaging and informational. Tenzin Bista ’23, who watched a recording of the debate, said, “I did not expect such a high level of debating and was pleasantly surprised. The debaters were very well informed and prepared and showed each other lots of respect as well.” Another viewer of the debate, Matthew Yeo ’23 said, “I really enjoyed watching the debate and certainly learned a lot about the topic.”

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## SAGE Dining System Adjusted

Continued from Page 1

can choose to take out or dine-in. Additionally, a snack is delivered to dorms in the evenings.

Some students are finding the Covid-19 dining system difficult to manage along with their social lives. Ral Nwogbo ’23 said, “I haven’t known the traditional Choate dining experience, but I miss being able to hang out with my friends and being able to eat with them, especially because it’s so difficult to coordinate dining schedules with friends.”

The new dining system has also impacted SAGE workers, who have worked to not only deliver breakfast and late-night snacks to boarding students during and after the quarantine period but also provide food for students in seven dining locations across campus.

Ruby Cameron ’23 said, “After being in quarantine for so long, I

have come to realize how much the SAGE workers do for us. I am so grateful for all the work they have done with the meals post-quarantine, especially with the added confusion and stress of Covid-19.”

As for dining plans moving forward, the administration recently decided to begin serving hot breakfast throughout the week.

Dean of Students Mr. Mike Velez ’00 announced that modified breakfast will be served in the Tuck Shop and all Hill House dining locations Monday through Friday. In addition, SAGE will serve a continental breakfast daily in the Hill House 3 dining location.

As the School continues adjusting to its “Orange” alert level, SAGE is working hard alongside the many new changes and guidelines to provide safe but nutritious meals for the Choate community.

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Continued from Page 1

Planning for the event involved overcoming several challenges, particularly those presented by social distancing restrictions. Mr. Velez explained that, in the past, all new students “congregated in the chapel at the same time.” This year, third-formers lined up on six-foot markers and signed their forms’ books outdoors on the steps of the Seymour St. John Chapel.

Students appreciated the tradition of the ceremony and were excited to participate in this year’s modified Matriculation. “It seems simple on the surface, but at its core, you can see the deep tradition that runs through,” said new fourth-former Alex Shenouda ’23. “Matriculation is a good way to transition into the school year, and it is also a good way to uphold traditions.”

However, though the Matriculation Ceremony is rooted in tradition, some students felt as though the modifications had taken away from the experience of the event overall. “The pandemic, plus all the distancing rules, stripped away some of the significance,” said Gigi Chen ’24. “Tradition and rules are

## CHOATE WELCOMES NEW STUDENTS WITH REVISED MATRICULATION CEREMONY



Photo courtesy of Choate Instagram

New students line up outside of the chapel to sign their form’s matriculation book.

strange to think about when some people are just trying to stay alive, and so many students aren’t even here to take part.”

Despite these adjustments,

Dr. Curtis and the form deans managed to uphold the spirit of the ceremony. The School shared a recording of the ceremony with the Choate community, allowing

everyone to hear the remarks of Dr. Curtis and the head prefects.

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# Covid-19 Positivity Rate in Connecticut Rises Above Four Percent

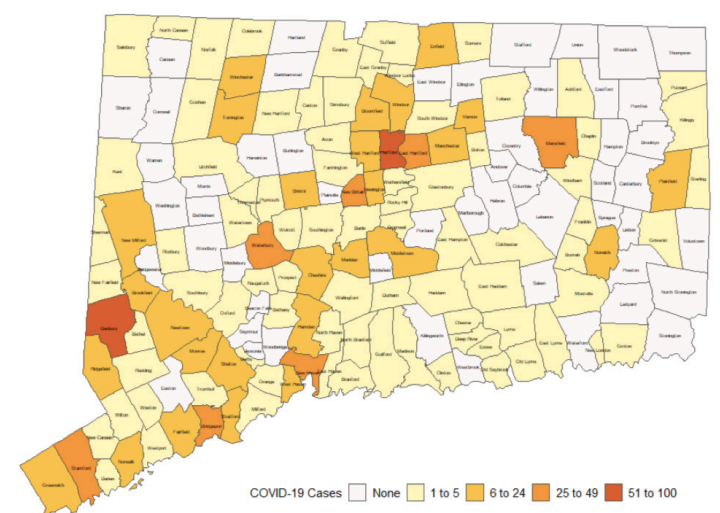


Photo courtesy of CT DPH

Covid -19 cases per county per 100,000 in CT on September 17

By **Linda Phan ’22**  
Copy Editor

After months of keeping the number of new Covid-19 cases low in comparison to other states in the U.S., Connecticut has seen a rapid rise in its daily positivity rate.

On October 27, Connecticut’s daily positivity rate for Covid-19 hit 4.1%, surpassing 4% for the first time since early June. This comes after 802 new reported cases on October 18, the highest daily increase since May. As of October 27, there are 309 patients currently hospitalized due to Covid-19, the highest since June.

According to the established town-level response framework by the Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH), 19 towns are now placed in “red alert” — indicating that they have a daily infection rate of over 15 per 100,000 population. Despite beginning phase three of reopening on October 8, some of the red-coded towns are now reinstating restrictions with concerns over the increasing number of Covid-19 cases. Windham, for example, has announced both a return to virtual learning for schools and a revert back to phase two for businesses.

Governor Ned Lamont remains optimistic, however, about the state of the pandemic in Connecticut. At a news conference on October 22, he said, “We contin-

ue to do a lot of polymerase chain reaction (PCR) testing, 22,000 [a day], and the positivity rate [is] 2.3%. That’s a lot better than where we were a few days ago. I can tell you it’s not a lot more than where we were a couple months ago.”

Although total hospitalizations have increased, Lamont also stated that the percent of patients needing intensive care has decreased in the past six months from 33% to 20% — with only a 6% fatality rate for those patients. “It’s trending up in a slightly controlled way,” he said.

In an effort to encourage Covid-19 safety and awareness, Governor Lamont is working with Glastonbury-based media company Cronin and Off Leash Studios to create a statewide campaign on a variety of platforms — ranging from the radio to social media — encouraging residents to act safely during the ongoing pandemic. The team is working on producing television spots that feature Connecticut celebrities performing the three essential steps to prevent the spread of the virus: wear your mask, wash your hands, and watch your distance.

Along with the increase in Covid-19 cases, healthcare providers in Connecticut are also seeing a rise in the need for Covid-19 testing. To ramp up their testing services, a network of primary care clinics in Con-

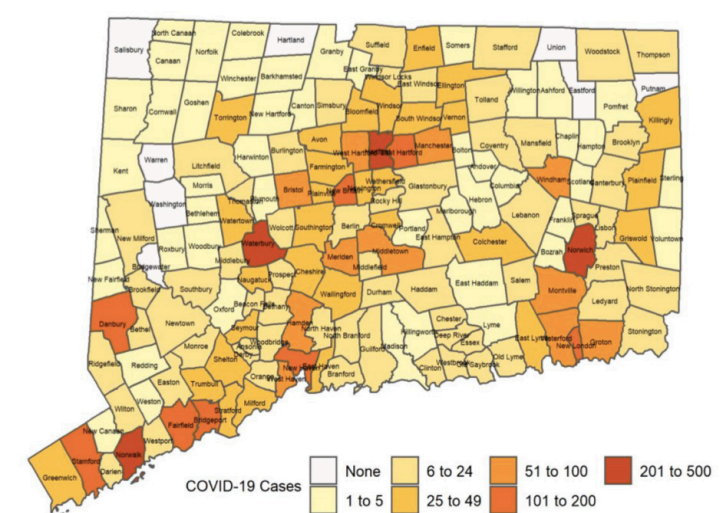


Photo courtesy of CT DPH

Covid-19 cases per county in CT on October 22

necticut called the Community Health Center (CHC) works to ensure Covid-19 testing remains an accessible option for all. Vice President of Communications Ms. Leslie Gianelli said, “We don’t require appointments, we test everyone. Testing is free, and, unlike a lot of the organizations that are providing testing now, we test children.”

The CHC is currently providing testing services five days a week at almost all of its healthcare locations. In addition to its main offices, the CHC is also operating four or five pop-up mobile sites daily. “We coordinate with various community organizations,” Ms. Gianelli said. “It could be a housing complex, a school, [or] a church.” Currently conducting on average about 2,000 tests every day, the CHC may need to increase the opening of testing locations to seven days a week to accommodate the new demand for testing, according to Ms. Gianelli.

Ms. Gianelli described the testing process provided by the CHC as relatively simple. Clients can either drive or walk up to testing sites from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. After registration is completed, clinical providers with personal protective equipment conduct the test, which takes less than five minutes. In two to three business days, results are privately released to the patient through

an online patient portal. People who have tested positive will also receive a call from a nurse at the CHC to plan the next steps of their treatment.

While the CHC provides testing and primary care services, it does not conduct contact tracing. “We report on a daily basis our results to the state, so the state knows who has tested positive within each of the testing facilities around the state, and then the state has the responsibility for contact tracing,” said Ms. Gianelli. The state’s contact tracing program, Contact, reaches out to all citizens with positive test results via the local health department. Those infected are then entered into the system along with a log of their close contacts during the possible period of infection. The listed contacts would be alerted of their possible exposure to Covid-19 either via phone call or text.

To combat the pandemic, a statewide effort by the government, healthcare providers, and the people is crucial.

“I know this has been going on for a long time,” Governor Lamont said. “We’re not quite out of the woods yet. But, we will be if we stay careful, stay cautious, wear the mask, and take care and look out for each other.”

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# WALLINGFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY CELEBRATES 140TH ANNIVERSARY

By **Trista LeBlanc-Serbyn ’22**  
Staff Reporter

The Wallingford Public Library hosted its 140th annual meeting on Monday, October 26, during which virtual festivities were opened to the public via Zoom and Facebook Livestream. The meeting began with a short business meeting, followed by the induction of the newest Poet Laureate, Ms. Deborah Kuan, and concluded with an overview of the library’s ongoing and future events.

Ms. Leah Farrell, the Adult Programming & Community Services Librarian, provided some information about the meeting, as well as current news regarding recent changes in the library and upcoming events.

“As far as the business meeting, we are an association library,” said Ms. Farrell. An association library is founded by its members, not by the town, like the more typical municipal libraries. She continued, “A lot of town libraries are departments, [and] we are closely connected with the town, but we are an association, so therefore we have a membership.”

Several new board members were voted in during the beginning portion of the event, replacing those who had recently retired. Afterwards, members discussed logistics such as the library’s annual report and budget.

The next section of the meeting covered the inauguration of the new poet laureate, Ms. Kuan, who is also a member of the Choate community as the wife of music teacher Mr. Matt McLean. Laying out the plans for the event, Ms. Farrell said, “We’re going to introduce her, she’ll talk a little bit about herself and what she plans to do to bring more poetry and love of poetry to Wallingford, and she’ll also read some of her poetry.” As for the reasons behind Ms.

Kuan’s nomination, she said, “Kuan’s credentials were just outstanding, and her poetry is wonderful, so we’re overjoyed to have her join us as this year’s Poet Laureate.”

Regarding her particular role as the poet laureate, Ms. Kuan said: “The poet laureate is like an ambassador of poetry and literature,” she said. “They communicate the value of poetry to the entire town in various ways, whether it be via readings, writing workshops, or other methods. They may also write poems to commemorate events that are of significance to a place. As poet laureate, I will be showcasing contemporary poetry and making it accessible for a wider audience.”

As the first person of color to fill this position, Ms. Kuan looks forward to, as she put it, “amplifying the voices and the work of other writers of color who have been marginalized for far too long.”

In order to make some of her work more accessible to the public, she also plans on featuring some of her more notable poems on the Instagram account @poetlaureate\_walling.

The meeting came to a conclusion with a session surrounding the “A to Z’s” of the library. According to Ms. Farrell, “The ‘A to Z’s’ of the library is a presentation by staff and our board. We go through the alphabet and talk about all the things A through Z that you didn’t know we have or do.” Currently, the library offers many events and resources, from virtual *Dungeons & Dragons Roleplaying Game* sessions to a makerspace opened in 2016.

“As technology changes, we’ll continue to evolve,” Ms. Farrell said.

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# THE BEAUTY OF FALL IN CONNECTICUT

By **Adrienne Chacón ’22**  
Copy Editor

The crisp air and the oranges and yellows of the trees remind us that we are surrounded by the classic New England autumn. In this sweet era between the heat of summer and the cold of winter when everything is winding down, we thought it would be a good time to step back and absorb the eye-catching beauty that this season brings.

Unfortunately, not all of the leaves around us are changing color this year, and we are not all together in Connecticut. Without Wednesday afternoon bus rides to sports games or week-

end outings to New Haven, we can feel removed from the world outside of campus, sometimes even from the world outside of our own dorm rooms.

This photo essay is a compilation of the beauty that students have recently found in Wallingford and its neighboring towns. Observe the breathtaking lakes, lovely fauna, and vibrancy of color. Whether you are missing your home at Choate, or you simply want to be reminded of the flourishing spectacle around you, view this photo essay for inspiration.

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Photo by Emily Goodwin/The Choate News



Photo by Trista LeBlanc-Serbyn/The Choate News



Photo by Tiffany Xiao/The Choate News



Photo by Trista LeBlanc-Serbyn/The Choate News



Photo by Senching Hsia/The Choate News

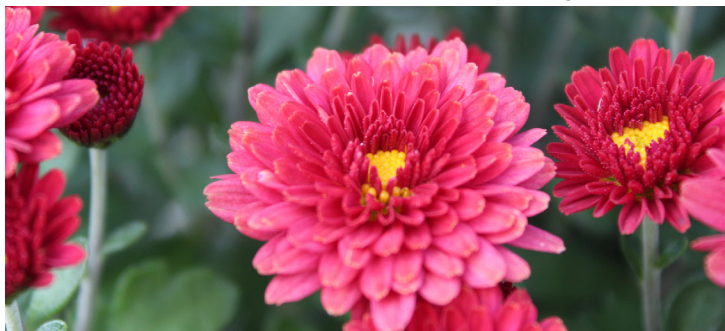


Photo by Trista LeBlanc-Serbyn/The Choate News



Photo by Rachel Pittman/The Choate News



### EDITORIAL

## *THE 2020 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION: WHERE WILL AMERICA GO NEXT?*

The Choate News's Opinions pages have always strived to serve as a medium through which student voices can spark discussion and challenge our school and global communities. As we approach the 2020 presidential election, we, the editors of *The Choate News*, shifted the focus of the Opinions pages this week to share the student body's hopes and frustrations as we prepare for this pivotal moment in U.S. history.

This year, the election means more than tax changes or budget cuts — it will determine the future of our country's environmental footprint, treatment of marginal-

ized communities, coronavirus response, political climate, and more.

In hopes of better understanding the candidate that Choate students believe can best navigate these issues, our Opinions editors interviewed ten students of different grades, backgrounds, and political beliefs about their feelings ahead of the election. From climate change to the pandemic, students' priorities span a wide range of topics. By and large, students were dismayed by the Trump administration's poor leadership and disregard for basic human rights.

While former Vice President Joe Biden is not necessarily who

students would ideally like to see in the Oval Office, another four years of President Donald Trump P'00 seems unbearable to many students — Anika Midha '22 expands on this point in her op-ed, "I Don't Like Biden, but I Abhor Trump."

A similar trend presents itself in the results of our election poll. Every presidential election cycle, *The Choate News* surveys the student body to determine the popularity of each candidate. This year, out of 322 students, 226 voted for Biden; 62 voted for Trump; and 6 voted for other candidates, including Kanye West, Brian T. Carroll, and Vermin Supreme.

As Wesley Boatwright '22 discusses in his op-ed "Vice Presidential Nominees are Kindred Opposites," this year's vice presidential nominees are more important than ever, running alongside two men in their 70s in the midst of a pandemic that disproportionately affects those over 65.

While the outcome of the election is hard to predict, there is no denying its impending and widespread impacts — regardless of which party comes out on top.

Regarding foreign policy, a Biden administration would look dramatically different than our current one. Using human rights as his cornerstone, Biden would challenge China on multiple fronts: trade, industrial policies, and technology. The U.S. would rejoin the 2015 Paris Climate Agreement, working with our allies on the most comprehensive climate change mitigation plan to date. President Biden would mend relations with our traditional allies, most notably Europe, and would re-engage our ties with the World Trade Organization, as well as the World Health Organization. In concert with other nations, the U.S. would aim for a multilateral approach to ending the coronavirus pandemic. —**Mealy Cronin '23**

As someone who wants Trump to win the election, I will admit that his response to Covid-19 has been less than ideal. In terms of policy and action, he did alright: provided a substantial number of ventilators, barred travel from China, then Europe, and pushed for a stimulus package. However, one of the most important jobs of a president is to serve as a calming voice in a time of chaos; in this respect, Trump has failed. His constant contradiction of his own health officials, unnecessary blabbering about "cures," and overall rhetoric on the pandemic will not serve in his favor going into the election. —**Michael Korvyakov '23**

As a woman from Mexico, migration policies are one of my top priorities going into the election. Trump does not understand the value of migrants in the United States. He has separated more than 500 kids from their parents, claiming to keep them in "clean facilities." As if being violently separated from their families weren't enough, the children are living in overcrowded cages without access to toothbrushes or soap. This is not a matter of politics. It is a matter of morals. No candidate is perfect, but in this case, Biden is the only choice. —**Ximena Castillo-Nunez '24**

I think that the heavy emphasis we've placed on the presidential election overshadows the local elections that will play an equally decisive role in the lives of Americans. This is a census year, and, if pollsters are correct, one that is likely to deal Republicans major losses. All of this could culminate in aggressive gerrymandering in Republican-controlled states. The other important consideration is the role this year's senatorial races will play on the future of American politics. 2020 is shaping up to be the most important election of our lifetimes. —**Campbell Pflaum '23**



## *Lifelong Activist, First-Time Voter*

By **Trista LeBlanc-Serbyn '22**  
Staff Reporter

When I was a in elementary school — way before I could vote — I liked to research the politicians running for election in my area and try to convince my parents to vote for my favorite one. I remember reading through all of the pamphlets local politicians dropped off at our door, searching up each of their websites, and making a pro and con list of what I liked and disliked about each of them. At the local Taste of Wallingford festival, I would collect information sheets from the political booths as if they were Pokémon cards, trying to understand the values of each party. Although I received a few skeptical glances from adults at the festival, my elementary school self continued to stay informed about the issues I cared about.

By middle school, I began going to political rallies with my friends to show our support for campaigns. In eighth

grade, sporting a pair of quintessentially 2016 neon yellow sunglasses, I attended a Bernie Sanders rally in New Haven. As I stood at the outskirts of the crowd, I smiled at the chance to feel involved — I was so excited to be there. I remember how ridiculous some of my friends and family thought I was for caring so passionately about an election I couldn't even vote in. But I didn't care; I continued attending rallies, holding onto my excitement to be part of something bigger than myself.

I've always been active on social media, too — whether in trying to make my own voice heard, or in trying to amplify the voices of others. Usually, I post about current events, repost information about important issues, or raise awareness for the causes I care about in hopes to keep myself and those around me updated. I have received criticism from many people for my posts — not for my actual political views, but for the idea of my putting any political opinions on social media. To those critics, I

was "too young" — I couldn't vote, so it shouldn't matter what I had to say, whether they agreed with me or not. Luckily, I didn't care. I kept posting, making my voice heard online since I couldn't yet make it heard in an election.

All these years, I've been getting involved in political conversations, working to stay as informed as I could, and trying to make my voice heard as a young adult. Now, I feel as though through all these years of political activism has prepared me for this moment — for this election. This year, I'm finally 18 years old and able to vote. It just so happens to be one of the most historic and high-stakes elections in American history. I've been waiting for my whole life for the opportunity to voice my opinion through the ballot box. Finally being able to do so feels surreal.

This election, I'm voting for Joe Biden. I'm voting for Biden because this election is about more than politics: it's about basic human rights. For the past four years, we've seen attacks on practically every

marginalized community in the United States, whether it be related to gender, sexuality, race, or countless other identifiers. We cannot let our country endure another four years of hatred. If I have any say in the matter, we won't.

All these years, I've been told I was too young: too young to care, too young for my voice to matter, too young to understand. But now, as I prepare to vote in my first election, I'm not.

Maybe, as it turns out, I never have been. Whether you are old enough to vote this year or not, let your voice be heard. As young people and the future of this nation, we are the ones who will have to grapple with the long-term effects of this election. Now, in this historic year, it is our time and our responsibility to take matters into our own hands.

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## THE CHOATE NEWS



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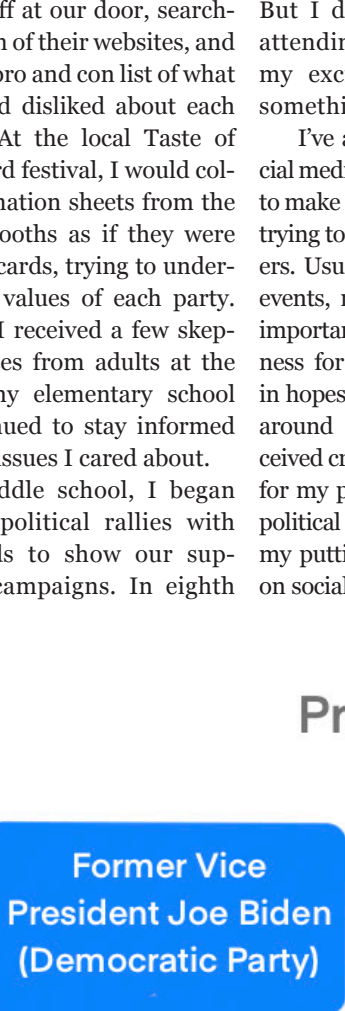
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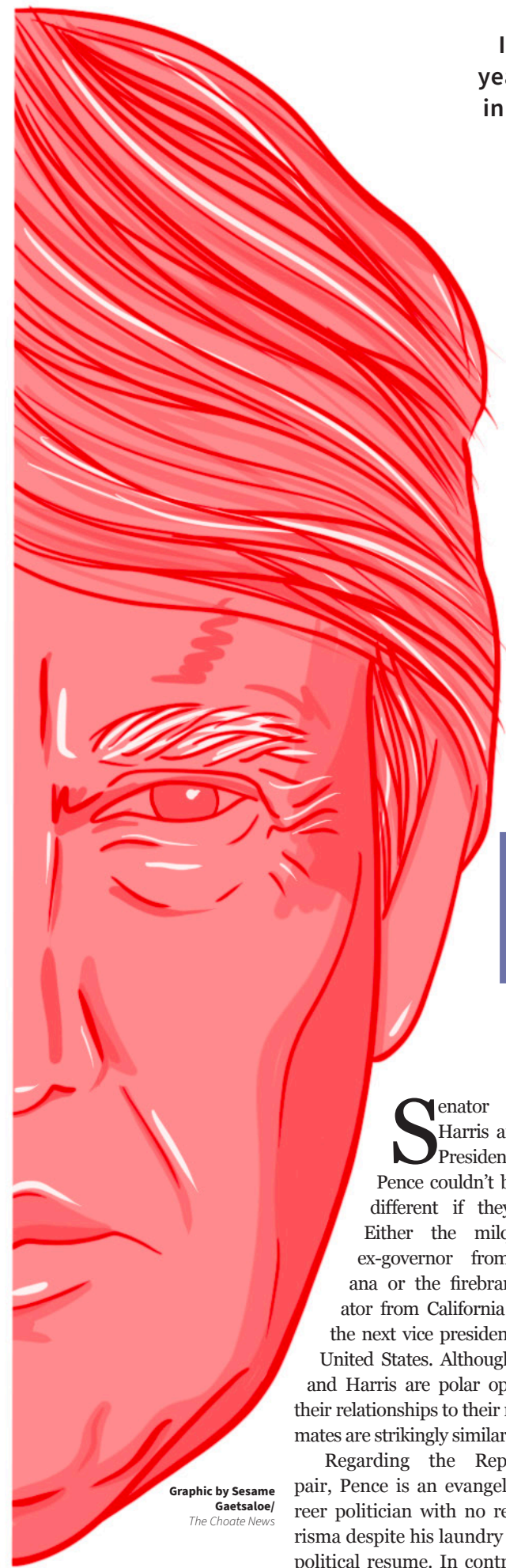
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## CHOATE Presidential Election Survey Options







Graphic by Sesame Gaetsaloe/  
The Choate News

I think the world is going to burn for another four years if Trump is reelected. Everything he has done in the past four years will happen again. Currently, some people think that they have the right to do terrible, racist things to people because there is an advocate for those actions in the Oval Office. If reelected, Trump will take rights away from many more people because he will have been confirmed in his delusions. —**Mila Hill '21**

This election is not about policy; it is about leadership. Trump's pre-covid economic plan led our country to some of the lowest unemployment rates in history, highest average household net worth, and bolstered other econometrics. His foreign policy has fostered alliances in the Middle East and normalized relations with Israel. All of those are great things, but he isn't a leader. The president is unfit for office and does not represent all Americans. A Biden presidency may be necessary to bring decency and normalcy back to the White House, even if that means sacrificing some potentially amazing gains under President Trump. —**Oliver Zemans '22**

As a woman of color, I fear what this election will mean for my fundamental rights as well as of those who identify as I do. Still, having Kamala Harris as a vice-presidential nominee has been a beacon of hope that shows how women of color are making progress in male-dominated fields. —**Charlotte Myers-Elkins '22**

I fear for the future of this nation. I fear for the future of democracy. I fear for my family. I fear for my friends. I fear that Trump — a power-hungry, radical old man — will become president. I fear that Biden — a power-hungry, radical old man — will become president. I fear that our nation will descend further and further into the quagmire of extremism, propelled by a mission of hate and spitefulness. I fear for the fearful. I fear for all those who think hope is lost. Vote Jo Jorgensen. Vote for hope. —**Alex Aronov '22**

Most people I know can agree that they don't necessarily love either candidate running in this election. However, for one of humanity's most pressing problems, climate change, Biden is making the most significant steps toward slowing it. His \$2 trillion plan would be a great investment not only for the environment but also for job creation in the clean energy sector to replace those that are rapidly disappearing in the oil sector. —**Melody Qian '24**

## VICE PRESIDENTIAL NOMINEES ARE KINDRED OPPOSITES

By **Wesley Boatwright '22**  
*Opinions Writer*

Senator Kamala Harris and Vice President Mike Pence couldn't be more different if they tried. Either the milquetoast ex-governor from Indiana or the firebrand senator from California will be the next vice president of the United States. Although Pence and Harris are polar opposites, their relationships to their running mates are strikingly similar. Regarding the Republican pair, Pence is an evangelical career politician with no real charisma despite his laundry list of a political resume. In contrast, his running mate, President Donald Trump P'oo, rode a wave of populism straight to the Oval Office with no experience in politics. What's more, Pence, who

refuses to eat alone with a woman who is not his wife, is the vice president to a president who has been married three times and accused many times of sexual assault and misconduct. By acting complicit amid Trump's blatant immorality, Pence has cast away the Christian morality he supposedly prides himself upon in order to advance his political career. But that moral clash is necessary for the Republican duo. Ultimately, Trump needs Pence to bolster his political credibility, and — although I never thought I would say this in reference to Pence — he is a breath of fresh air compared to Trump. Looking at the Democratic pair, Harris, in contrast to her Republican counterpart, is

a first-generation immigrant and woman of color. Her running mate, former Vice President Joe Biden, in comparison, is much older and more moderate. He doesn't generate nearly as much excitement from younger, more liberal voters but reassures a country traumatized after four harrowing years of Trump. Though Harris has publicly lambasted both Biden's history and future as a politician as recently as this election's Democratic primaries, she is now his vice presidential nominee. Similar to the Republican pair, Biden and Harris have contradictory moral and political beliefs that they've glossed over for the sake of the election. While the role of vice president is more symbolic than anything else, it does carry one major responsibility: becoming the new president if something befalls the current commander-in-chief.

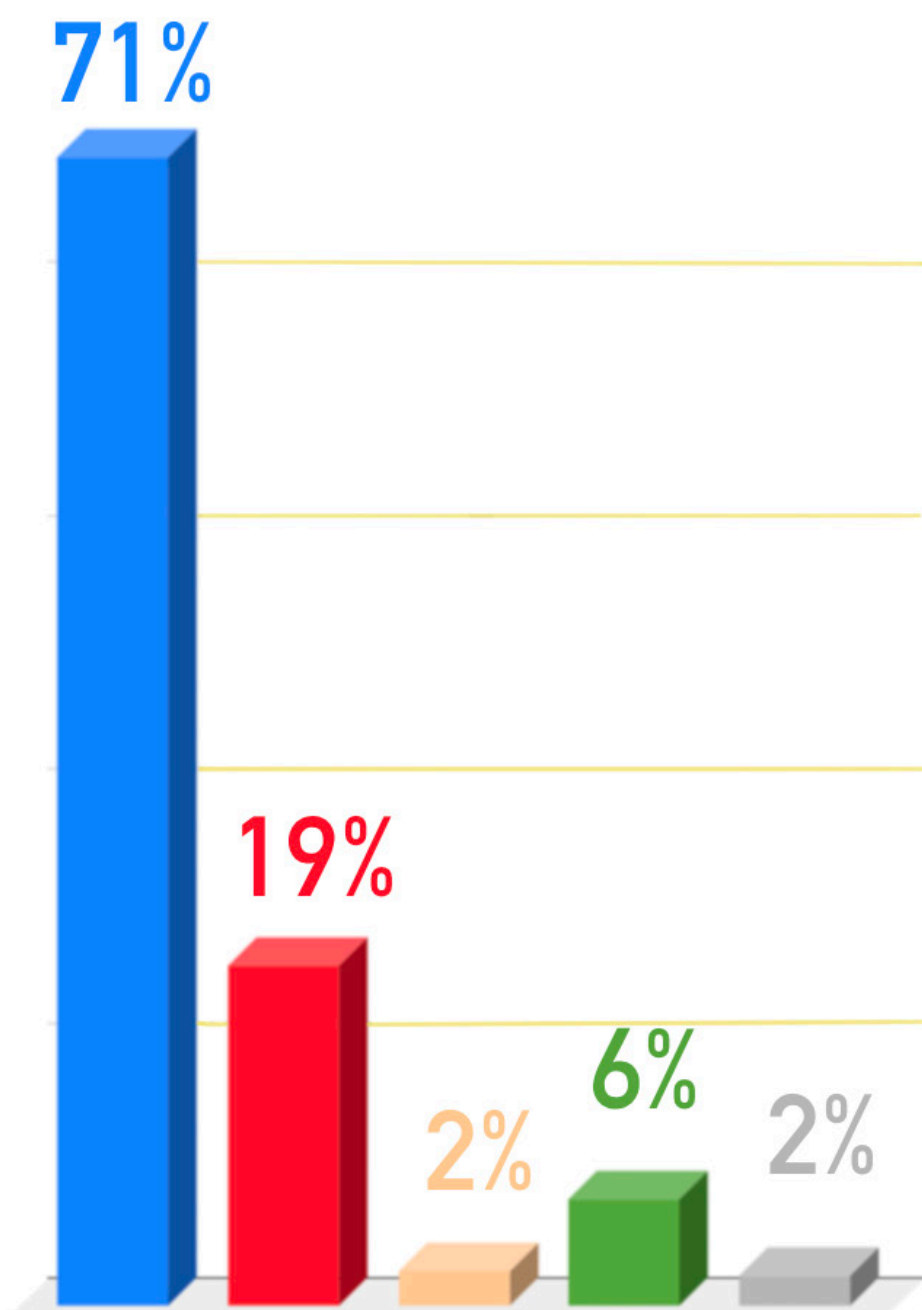
Both presidential candidates are in their 70s, so they'd be the oldest ever inaugurated — plus, we're in the middle of a pandemic that's disproportionately affecting senior citizens. If Biden wins reelection and suffers from a major health issue, what would a Harris presidency look like? For one, if the Democrats retake the Senate then President Harris would be able to enact positive and much-needed change, like environmental protections and more comprehensive healthcare. Although she is called a radical socialist by her detractors, Harris was squarely moderate during her stint as Attorney General of California. However, since her election to the Senate, she has edged toward the left wing of the Democratic party. In fact, according to GovTrack, a website that tracks voting records and bill sponsorship, Harris was the most liberal senator in 2019. Her

left-leaning ideology compared to Biden is perhaps what makes her a fitting counterpart for his ticket. So, we have current Vice President Mike Pence, a self-proclaimed "Christian, conservative, Republican, in that order," who is far more traditional and religious than Trump. Then, there is Harris who would bring youth, diversity, and liberal ideals to the Oval Office — different from her older and more moderate running mate. If tragedy strikes and either vice presidential candidate assumes the presidency, it would result in two vastly different administrations. On one hand, Pence and his hyper-conservative values would lead to little progress. Meanwhile, Harris and her left-wing ideals could push the U.S. into the future.

**Wesley Boatwright** is a fifth-former from San Francisco. He may be reached at [wboatwright22@choate.edu](mailto:wboatwright22@choate.edu)

## CHOATE

### Presidential Election Survey Results



## I Don't Like Biden, but I Abhor Trump

By **Anika Midha '22**  
*Opinions Writer*

The 2020 election is perhaps the most divisive election cycle in American history. Whether President Donald Trump P'oo or former Vice President Joe Biden is elected, a huge portion of Americans will be distraught, threatening a peaceful transfer of power and democracy itself. Ultimately, this election is not about being pro-Biden; it's about being anti-Trump. Trump's four-year reign has been devastating for the country, and, in determining the course of the next four years, Biden is the better option. The U.S. has become increasingly polarized this election cycle. Even though Trump and Biden have distinct approaches to domestic policy, both candidates have faced increased criticism. Now, Americans are tasked with choosing a candidate — a decision that will influence global dynamics for decades to come. In this age of misinformation and disunity, it is of the utmost importance that we endorse the candidate that will prioritize individual wellbeing over the economy, unity over fear and unrest, science over politics, and equality over prejudice. So, when considering the candidates, it's important to ask: what exactly is at stake? There is no doubt that Trump's leadership, or lack thereof, allowed the rampage of a pandemic that has gone on to take over 200,000 American lives. Trump's initial failure to acknowledge the severity of the virus, followed by his mishan-

dling of the government's pandemic response and withdrawal from the World Health Organization, has placed the U.S. in a precarious position. Trump peddles fear and sows chaos to further his own agenda. The economic recession and incredible loss of life seen over the course of the past six months could take decades to bounce back from. To initiate that recovery, Biden must be elected this November. Biden has emphasized the importance of an aggressive pandemic response that will "stop the political theater and willful misinformation that has heightened confusion and discrimination" and "put scientists and public health leaders front and center," as outlined in the coronavirus plan on his campaign website. In contrast to Trump's blatant ignorance of the coronavirus, Biden's plan will tackle the pandemic head on by relying on science and medical professionals to save lives. Many Trump supporters argue that Trump represents the interests of the average American through his economic policies. This perception couldn't be further from the truth. Trump has exploited his voter population, mainly consisting of uneducated white Americans, by claiming his trade policies have prevented the offshoring of American jobs. His crackdown on China has bolstered domestic support, but in reality, the trade war has damaged the U.S. economy. Yes, Trump's tax cuts did stimulate the economy, and, in 2018, the economy grew by 2.9 percent. But Trump's tariffs and the trade war with China have hurt the econ-

omy and discouraged companies from relocating to the U.S. The Federal Reserve reports that manufacturers have had to deal with employment losses as a result of the higher import costs. Overall, higher prices on \$360 billion of Chinese goods and \$100 billion of U.S. exports are still in effect — a huge disadvantage for American consumers. In short, Trump's economic policies have not brought out the benefits he claims they have. This holds true for much of what he claims to have done for the country. Yet, by far the most concerning aspect of Trump's presidency is his blatant disregard of human rights, especially when it comes to religion and race. Trump has praised numerous world leaders that have condoned the persecution of religious minorities in their respective countries. What's more, Trump has consistently expressed racist views and implemented racist policies, refusing to condemn white supremacists, targeting Muslims domestically and abroad, and modifying existing policies regarding drone attacks to limit transparency. Over the course of the last four years, the U.S. has gone from an admired global superpower to a divided nation derided by many. Considering his character, leadership, and experience, Biden is the only way to recover from the damage that the Trump administration has inflicted upon America.

**Anika Midha** is a fifth-former from Singapore. She may be reached at [amidha22@choate.edu](mailto:amidha22@choate.edu)



## A CONVERSATION WITH MEDICAL DIRECTOR DR. MIRIAM COHEN

By Brian Harder '23  
Staff Reporter

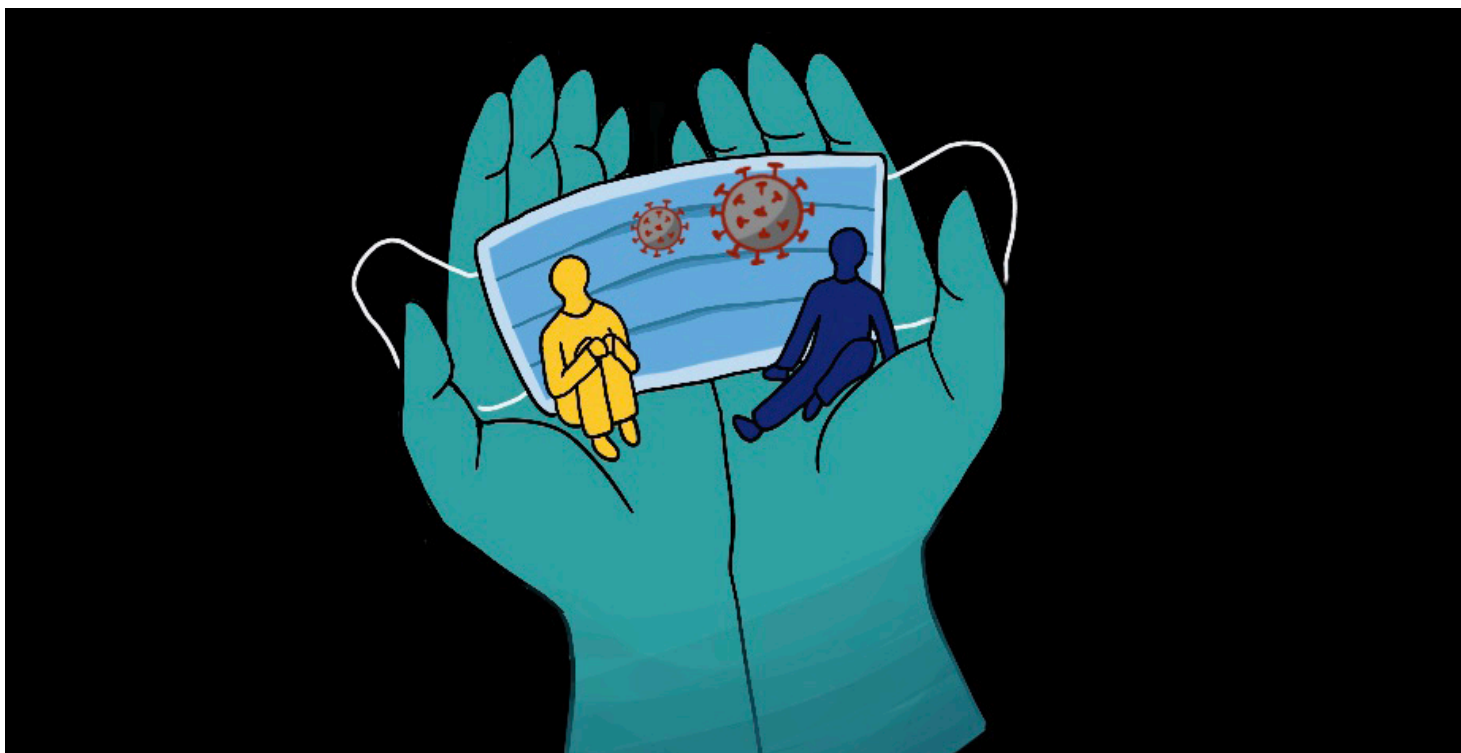
Choate Medical Director Dr. Miriam Cohen has been hard at work these past few months ensuring the safety of our community as the School reopened in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic. Finding an acceptable balance between a sustainable student life and adequate safety measures hasn't been easy, but through extensive research and much consultation, Dr. Cohen created what the School calls its Safe & Sounder plan. Brian Harder '23 recently spoke with Dr. Cohen about her role in our coronavirus-adapted community.

**What was your role in the development of the Safe & Sounder plan, and how did you work with the School on this?**

The ways that we monitor our risks and our testing were all plans that I researched and presented to the reopening task force that oversees the reopening and safety of being here at Choate. Supervising the overall plan was done by the Health Center, which came up with the modules for Safe & Sounder; the Communications team came up with the designs and posters. It's a team effort, but I did a lot of the medical basics and worked with the team to create the final package.

**How has your role as Medical Director changed over the past year?**

It's changed a lot since this pandemic started. It has



Graphic by Athena Liu/The Choate News

become much more of a supervisory, public health role as opposed to [one of] seeing students and [administering] medical care. I still do some of that, but our nurses here are doing more of it than usual, since I'm busy doing the public health initiatives.

**How have the services the Health Center offers changed due to Covid-19?**

We still have counseling, fortunately, but more of those sessions are being done remotely. Also, the Health Center itself has been divided into two sections. One is for people who do not have an illness, so things like injuries or general medical care, and the other is for people who are not feeling well.

**How has the adjustment of managing health and well-being been?**

This year is more stressful for all of us, particularly students. I know everyone was happy to be back, but it is hard to have the limitations. As far as the Health Center is concerned, I think we have adjusted tremendously smoothly.

**How have you tried to balance safety with student activities and enjoyment?**

That's a really tough one, but we have looked at what are the risks we are experiencing right now. For example, when everybody first arrived on campus, there were more risks involved as people had flown from all over the United States. Once we had some negative testing, we

were able to make changes and allow for more freedom and interactions. We tried to increase the opportunities for students to interact outdoors, which is obviously safer than interacting inside. The balance is trying to decrease as much as we can with protocols like masking and distancing that really prevent the spread [of Covid-19].

**How are the rising Connecticut cases a concern for the Choate community?**

It's a concern because many of us travel from outside of Choate — like day students, faculty, and staff. Every time we have community members coming in and out and interacting with a Choate community member, there's a risk for

transmission. For that reason, the rising numbers in Connecticut are concerning. We are monitoring this over a 14-day period, and if the daily case rate rises too high and stays up there, we would need to put new restrictions in place.

**How optimistic are you for an in-person return to campus in January?**

I am optimistic, but it's not going to be the first week in January as is currently on the travel calendar. We need to give a little time between the holidays and the return. But, we have to monitor. I am optimistic, but if illness and flu [numbers] are very high and we discover that [the combination of] the flu and Covid are very dangerous, we

may not be able to come back to campus. But, from what I'm seeing now on campus and how careful everyone is being, that's giving me optimism that we'll be able to come back in January.

**What will change if the School moves into the "yellow" risk zone?**

There are a couple things. One is that students will be able to go onto that greater Choate campus, so you'd be able to walk into town and get food there, for example. Within the family units for dorms and for day students, if [students] felt comfortable, they could take their mask off. Also, you could go into someone else's dorm room in your family unit.

**Did you foresee the pandemic getting this bad?**

I did not. I think by the end of March, it was obvious that the pandemic was not what I thought it would be and that [Covid-19] would be with us for a long time. When [Covid-19] wasn't really in the U.S. as much, I didn't see us here at the time.

**What advice do you have on staying safe and protecting others?**

Do the things that keep you healthy and safe, the masking and distancing, whether here or at home, and being mindful of who you are in contact with. For some people, it's a very mild illness and for others, it's not. We don't want anybody to get sick either here or at home.

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## FOREVER TRUE MENTORSHIP PROGRAM OFFERS SUPPORT TO BIPOC STUDENTS

By Emma Ding '24  
Reporter

To help support BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, & People of Color) students through the difficulties they may encounter on campus and beyond, Rachael Lin Wheeler '21 founded the Forever True Mentorship program this year along with other Choate alumni and current students. The program is based on a mentor-mentee relationship in which a BIPOC alumnus of Choate supports a Choate upperclassman through any challenges he or she may face as a BIPOC in a predominantly white institution.

Inspiration for the Forever True Mentorship program came while Wheeler was studying in Italy last fall, when the importance of a mentor for BIPOC was brought up during a class discussion. She decided to bring that idea to life at Choate in an attempt to create, as she put it, an "anti-racist, equitable, and inclusive environment."

She said, "I also wanted upperclassmen of color to have mentors who they could see themselves in, who could provide guidance about being a student of color at predominantly white institutions, and who could share any other advice or experiences they had."

Wheeler explained that the relationship between the mentor and mentee is a connection among BIPOC between the past and present. She hoped that the mentors could provide "hind-sight perspective on experiencing Choate as a student of color" and could share their experiences with current Choate upperclassmen.

Being a student of color comes with challenges in college applications, getting a job, and adult life overall. At a predominantly white institutions like Choate, general advice given to students may not be applicable nor helpful to a student of color. The new program aims to



Graphic by Sesame Gaetsaloe/The Choate News

create that extra net of support for BIPOC students and create another safe space for mentees and mentors alike. Already, the program has had an impact on both mentors and mentees.

Choate alumnus Nicole Wallace '14, a mentor in the program, said that the program created an opportunity for lifelong connections of mentorship: "Even if you have a gap where you don't speak to [your mentees], you can reach out to them later in life."

Similarly, Forever True mentor Marlon Antunez '13 explained that, between him and his mentor, he wants to create a space where the students can "focus on being 100% themselves." At the same time, he said, "I want to instill a sense of confidence in my mentees. Oftentimes, students of color have to work harder than their white peers to receive the same

recognition, especially those coming from a lower socio-economic background."

Shivani Sharma '22, a mentee, explained the value she saw in the Forever True Mentorship program: "Because of how racially charged this world has become recently, especially in the U.S., I think having experiences in learning from another person of color instead of just [a] white person giving advice, because people of color often have different experiences, is very valuable."

Both the mentors and mentees visualize the long-term benefits of such a program. Wallace explained, "I definitely wish that I had been part of a program like this while at Choate. I think it would just have been helpful in terms of [experience in college and beyond]."

Antunez said, "I wish a mentorship program like Forever

True had existed back when I was a student from 2009–2013 to talk about issues of race, class, and sexuality that were often ignored or given minimal attention in the classroom, school meetings, and conversations with peers."

Mentee Claire Fu '22 explained her desire for Choate to offer more preparation to BIPOC students for adulthood, and for a mentor to help her prepare to navigate the world beyond the School. She said, "Having a mentor is a great resource to go to, and I hope that we could keep up the connection in the future."

Wheeler hopes that the program can continue to address racial issues and provide "individualized, structural" support to BIPOC students at Choate.

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## THIS FALL, BE YOUR OWN HAIRDRESSER!

By Gigi Chen '24  
Reporter

In the midst of a global pandemic, when many are still stuck at home, who hasn't thought about cutting their own hair? Especially since many hair salons and barbershops remain closed, a DIY haircut seems like a fun approach. As your hair keeps growing longer and longer, here are a few tips on how to be your own hairdresser.

**Go in with a plan**

Do your own research! Everyone has a different hair type, texture, and thickness, and the internet is a great place to find resources specific to you. Generally, straight hair is best cut when wet, while curly, wavy, or kinky hair is best left dry so it's easier to get a more precise cut.

**Proceed slowly**

Cut less at first — you can always trim it more, but your hair won't magically reappear if you make a mistake. Section your hair into parts, especially if it's thicker or more textured. If you're just trimming the ends of your hair, try to make small snips with your scissors pointing upwards. Be patient. When cut-

ting short hair, dampening your hair and having someone else help (especially with the back) will make it easier.

**A note on bangs**

This might not be the time for a drastic style change. If you're trying to give yourself a hairstyle with bangs, please put down the scissors. Yes, you. Really, most people can get by with simply trimming their split ends.

**Find a partner in crime**

Rope a friend into cutting their hair with you or — even better — give each other haircuts. As Evelyn Stanley '24 said: "They're better if someone else does them. I tried cutting my own hair recently, but my mom had to fix it for me — I was FaceTiming a hairdresser at the time, and it still turned out that way."

All in all, a DIY haircut can be a great way to try out a new hairstyle or get around all the closed hair salons. Some final words: be careful, but also have fun with the process. It isn't every day that you get to be your own hairdresser!

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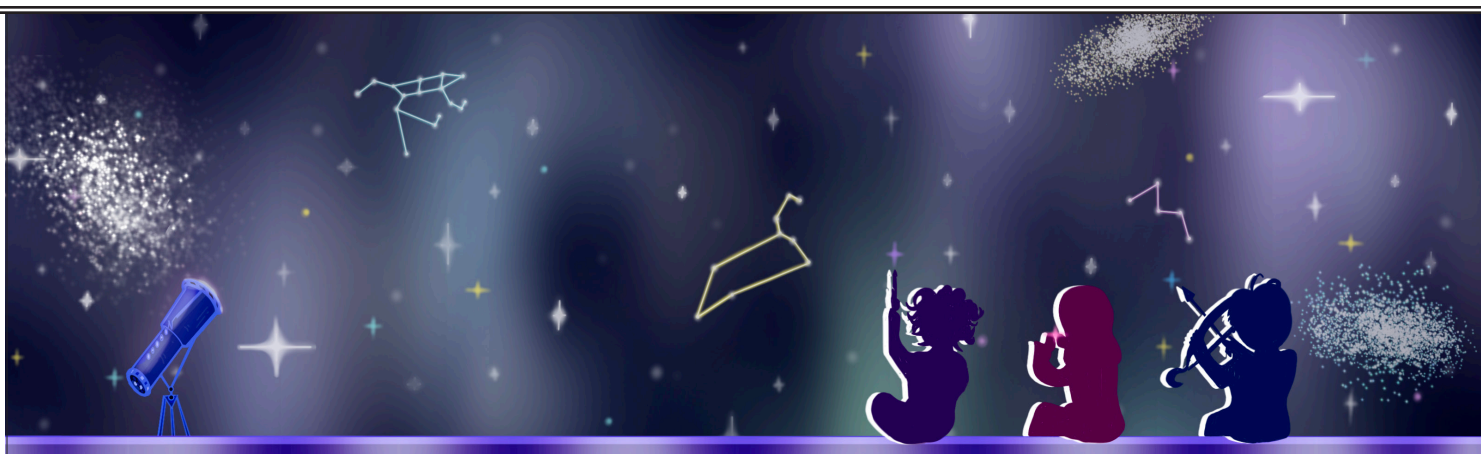
Graphic by Sesame Gaetsaloe/The Choate News



## COVID-ERA COUTURE: CHOATIES SPORT MASKS WITH STYLE



### Photographs by Tiffany Xiao '23



Graphic by Tony Lee/The Choate News

## Visual Arts Concentration Finds Art in Constellations

By **Jessica Wu '22**  
Copy Editor

Like distant constellations in the sky, Visual Arts Concentration students have spent the past spring term separated by tens of thousands of miles. Although most students are now back on campus, Arts Concentration advisers Ms. Smita Sen, Mr. Aaron Sober, and Ms. Jessica Cuni set out to find a way for new and returning visual Arts Con students — both virtual and in-person — to connect through monthly collaborative projects.

Before student artists returned to campus, they were randomly assigned partners with whom to create a piece of artwork inspired by Ada Limon's poem "Dead Stars" and the mythology behind a constellation of their choice. After choosing a constellation, the groups were given free range as to what art medium they wanted to use and how they wanted to express their artistic visions. Here's what they created:

In their search for a constellation, Senching Hsia '21, Caitlin Whitaker '22, and Manuela Sepulveda Cortina '23 came across the constellation Ursa Major, also known as the "the great bear." The group was drawn to the constellation because it is linked with four Native American stories rather than Greek myths, which Western culture conventionally associates with stars. "We decided that we're going to do embroidery — make a tapestry — and basically tell the story of these Native American myths through our piece," said Hsia.

"In relation to the poem, we felt that the Native American story is one that is obviously historically not represented," said Hsia. "We also thought of making a tapestry as a way to tell a

historical narrative, since it's a cultural art form that has been done over the centuries."

The group is planning on creating an embroidered tapestry with four vertical panels, each depicting one of the four myths, and stitching Native American symbols onto the fabric. The embroidered thread and panel colors will be in a traditional Native American color scheme of tan, navy, russet brown, and light ivory.

Janet Dolores Rosendo '22 and Audrey Kaye '22 were inspired to create a project based on the constellation Cassiopeia. "I was inclined to choose Cassiopeia because we both grew up in a place where it's so polluted in the sky you don't really see stars," said Kaye. "This summer, I was trying to learn how to spot some constellations and Cassiopeia was one of the only ones I could actually figure out."

The two decided to combine their two specialties — photography for Rosendo and traditional drawing for Kaye — by creating a digital piece.

Rosendo took portraits of her cousin with a dark background and soft white light. Then, Kaye drew on top of the photos using design software Procreate, sketching the faces of women wearing jewelry and sporting vain expressions with deep blue, purple, and pink contours. Their piece represents the self-absorbed queen Cassiopeia in Greek mythology, who was punished by Poseidon for boasting that she was more beautiful than his sea nymphs.

"Essentially, what we were trying to capture in our project was how there was this glorious, radiant, vain queen projected in the sky — a series of photos and illustrations that would show how Cassiopeia sees the world from the sky and how the world sees her," said Kaye.

Macie Simmons '22 and Oona Yaffe '23 took a similar approach of overlaying drawings on top of photographs. Inspired by the Gemini constellation that represents the twins Castor and Pollux in Greek mythology, Simmons drew the black and white outlines of the twins' faces on Procreate. Meanwhile, Yaffe took film pictures at a garden filled with Greek statues and various flora, highlighting the natural blues and greens of nature and the muted yellows and beiges of the sculptures.

"All the photos that Oona took are based around how the stars and the Greek gods interact with nature, and how they control everything that happens on Earth even though they're so far away," said Simmons.

The outline of the faces was then imposed onto the photos and separated into 15 squares by a black grid. Each square was printed out on normal printer paper and the faces will be colored in with mixed mediums.

"I want to use paint pens on one to get a really flat controlled drawing. I'm going to use charcoal on some of them so that they're black and white, and watercolor on others," said Simmons. "We're hoping to get the essence of the poem across and show that there's a story behind the stars that we don't really know."

Rather than focusing on only one constellation, Stella Dubin '21 and Sean Guzman '22 chose to feature all the astrology constellations in a project that combines Guzman's specialization in digital media and Dubin's in drawing.

Dubin will draw the constellations for

Guzman to then photoshop and manipulate so they can be projected onto the ceiling of the Black Box theater in the Paul Mellon Arts Center.

"Essentially, our project is to immerse the viewer into the feeling that they are stargazing, but at the same time that the stars are not only above them but all around them," said Guzman.

They are also planning on installing reflective material on the walls so light bounces around the room, making it appear as though the constellations are moving. The constellations will transition from day to night, changing from light blues and yellows of the daytime to the dark black, purples, and grays of the nighttime.

Guzman said they hope to convey peacefulness or serenity through their project, adding, "Especially if you're at Choate, there's a lot of hustle and bustle. This experience brings the idea of serenity where you can just lay back and watch something peaceful like the stars."

The Visual Arts Concentration members hope to share their finished projects with the Choate community at the student art exhibition at the end of the fall term.

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Artwork by Macie Simmons and Oona Yaffe

## Say Cheese! Photography Club Launches Publication



Graphic by Tony Lee/The Choate News

By **Angel Guo '22**  
Staff Reporter

The art of photography is capturing a fleeting moment; it recounts treasured memories and unique stories in a fraction of a second. This year, Photography Club is creating a new publication to promote photography on campus and provide students an opportunity to explore and share their passion in photography for students no matter their experience.

The club meets every month and organizes both digital photography and photo-editing workshops to encourage its members to explore photography while also improving their technical skills. In addition to regular meetings, the Photography Club holds photo competitions every term. The current contest, which will end on November 8, is centered around photos featuring the primary colors of red, blue, and yellow.

The club focuses on broad themes to provide participants ample creative freedom. After the sub-

mission deadline, Co-Presidents Jenny Guo '21 and Praj Chirathivat '22, and Vice President Renee Jjang '22, will analyze the entries and decide the winners.

In addition to the ongoing photo competitions, the Photography Club decided to create a photojournalism publication in response to the current pandemic. The cabinet decided that the debut issue would revolve around quarantine, as it is an experience shared by every member of the Choate community — whether remote or on campus. The first issue will highlight student perspectives before, during, and after quarantine through collages of photographs.

"We want the publication to tell a story, and we want it to be a story that the entire Choate community can contribute to," said Guo. The first issue of the photojournalism publication will be published before the end of the fall term.

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## FACULTY APPRECIATION: MRS. CAROL JONES & MS. KELLY LORRAINE

By **Lauren Kee '24**  
Reporter

Every day, students entering the Paul Mellon Arts Center and Ann and George Colony Hall are greeted with warm smiles from familiar faces, including Music Lesson Coordinator and Community Programs Manager Mrs. Carol Jones and Arts Department Assistant Ms. Kelly Lorraine '99. Mrs. Jones and Ms. Lorraine are crucial to keeping the Arts Department running smoothly, especially under new Covid-19 health guidelines and the impacts of socially-distanced learning on arts at Choate.

Mrs. Jones, whose office is located in Colony Hall, manages all music lessons, matches students' schedules to their teachers' schedule, and allocates practice rooms in the building. During her free time, Mrs. Jones is passionate about theater, directing multiple productions at Choate, overseeing the Theater Club, and running the Young Artists Summer Program.

Ms. Lorraine initially reached out to Ms. Kalya Yannatos, Head of the Arts Department, and offered to fill in as the Department Assistant after the former assistant passed away. Ms. Lorraine's inter-

est in the arts blossomed during her time as a Choate student.

"Her sharp organizational brain makes her the perfect partner for me," said Ms. Yannatos. Ms. Lorraine is in charge of the box office, public relations, marketing, and press materials during the performance season. She also curates guest artists' work exhibited in the PMAC gallery.

During the pandemic, Mrs. Jones and Ms. Lorraine took upon additional responsibilities to ensure the safety of the Choate community within the Arts Department, while also trying to create as normal of an arts environment as possible. For example, Mrs. Jones must now factor transition periods when scheduling practice room slots to allow for air circulation. Ms. Lorraine was responsible for ordering and delivering art supplies to students taking arts classes from remote locations. She also came up with a new key system, so students can access their practice rooms in the PMAC without swiping their cards.

"Mrs. Jones and Ms. Lorraine are the pillars of the Arts Department," said Ms. Yannatos.

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# NEW PROGRAM TRAINS ATHLETES’ MINDS AND BODIES

By **Maggie McCabe ’22**  
*Reporter*

At the beginning of the school year, Director of Athletics Mr. Roney Eford announced the option for Choate athletes to meet with sports psychologists to improve the mental aspect of their game. Mr. Max Groen ’15, a recent Choate alumnus and an Assistant Coach for the Boys’ Varsity Lacrosse team, helped create the program at Choate.

Currently, Boys’ Varsity Water Polo, Boys’ Varsity Lacrosse, Girls’ Varsity Soccer, and Varsity Field Hockey all have optional meetings once a week with sports psychologist Ms. Natalie Robb or graduate students in the field from Boston University. The university’s Wheelock program of Counseling Psychology with a specialization in Sport Psychology worked together with the School to develop the program.

“When it comes to mental skills, just like physical skills, it is best to start practicing well before competition,” Ms. Robb said. Especially during the Covid-19 pandemic when many athletes are dealing with uncertainty towards recruitment and their upcoming seasons, she emphasized how crucial this time period is for improving one’s mindset.

Ms. Robb also highlighted the importance of improving as a team and as an individual, working on skills such as performance profiling, growth mindset, goal-setting, leadership, and team cohesion with the athletes.

Girls’ Varsity Soccer Assistant Coach Ms. Susan Farell said she has already seen pos-

itive changes in mindset and leadership on the team. “We think the opportunity to be together for our sports psychology sessions and the content being discussed are contributing to the good things we see,” she said.

Girls’ Varsity Soccer center midfielder Alex Verna ’22 said that setting short and long-term goals with Ms. Robb allowed her to consider new ways to achieve success. Appreciating how Ms. Robb included fun games and team bonding activities into her psychology sessions, Verna noted that “the team is more connected and psychologically aware on the

field” and is applying the skills they worked on with Ms. Robb to their mental game.

To learn how to improve herself as an athlete, Alex Hasset ’23, a defender on the Girls’ Varsity Soccer team, mentioned how effective breaking down her performance in each game is for her as a player. She said that participating in sports psychology as a whole team allowed them to establish a closer bond within the team and “break the ice,” which has been especially challenging during remote learning.

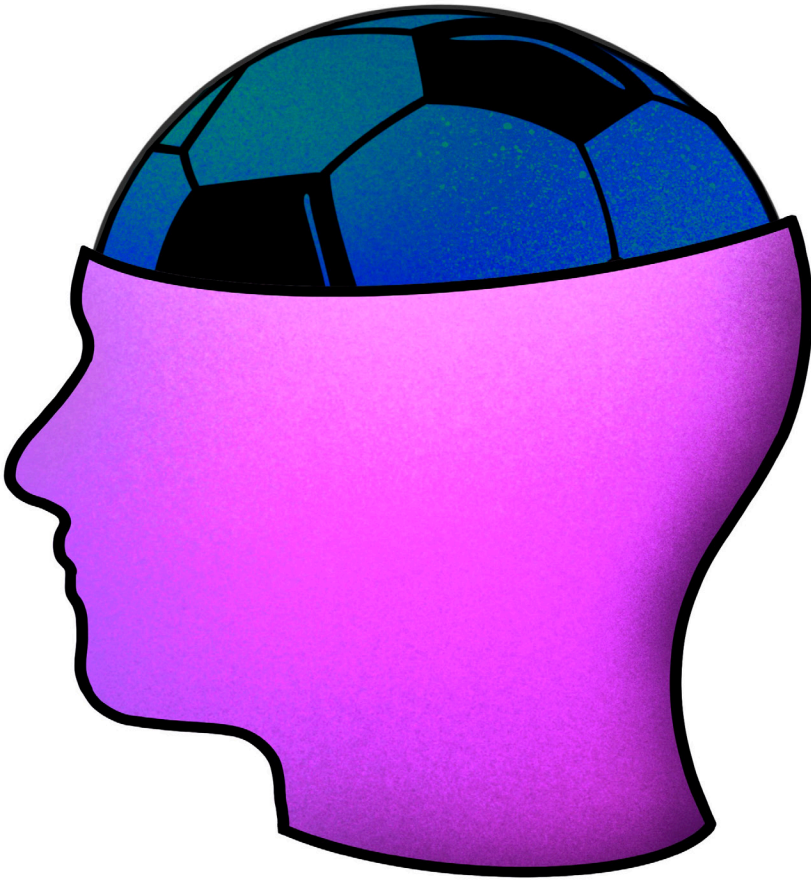
In the absence of interscholastic competition, Mr. Eford emphasized the need for athletes to properly utilize this

time to improve both physically and mentally.

“It is very important for our student-athletes to gain an athletic edge while enhancing the mental aspect of the game,” said Eford.

The Athletics Department has seen great results from this program so far, and they hope to continue the program with other teams. Especially due to the immense impact of Covid-19 on athletes around the world, developing a strong mental approach is more important than ever.

Graphic by Ethan Foreman/The Choate News



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# This Year’s Most Important Piece of Equipment? The Mask

By **Sam Anastasio ’23**  
*Staff Reporter*

With the return of athletics in the fall term, teams across campus have had to adjust their protocols according to Choate guidelines. Whether you are working out in the gym, playing football, or running on campus, facial coverings are necessary. Choate’s guidelines state that during the moderate risk level, the orange phase, “Everyone will be wearing a school-approved face covering and working out 12 feet apart indoors and 6 feet apart outdoors.” A school-approved neck-gaiter can also be worn during sports outdoors.

Head Coach of Boys’ Varsity Football Mr. LJ Spinnato told *The Choate News*, “All players will be required to wear a mask underneath their helmets, equipped with a full splash guard that covers the entire face.” When asked about the difficulties of wearing a

mask, strong safety Enzo DeFranco ’23 responded with “The mask isn’t too much of a damper, rather the plastic face covering especially inhibits my playing skills when it’s cold or rainy as it fogs up and is difficult to see more than ten yards in front.”

The Girls’ and Boys’ Cross Country teams, whose practices encompass lots of cardio, have had a hard time adjusting to wearing a face covering at all times. Luke Callaghan ’23 said, “When you start to work really hard and sweat, the mask basically becomes a wall. It’s frustrating as I can’t work as hard as I want to.”

With the responsibility of keeping the community safe, trade-offs need to be made and it has become evident that this is just one of the many obstacles that student-athletes face.

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Photo by Gabby Nirmal/The Choate News

Field Hockey players wear face masks during a drill.

# Winter and Spring Sports Take to the Field Early Amid Covid-19 Disruptions



Photo by Gabby Nirmal/The Choate News

Ruby Cameron ’23 practices erging during an off-season crew practice.

By **Bo Goergen ’22**  
*Reporter*

Although Covid-19 restrictions have limited the fall athletics season, Choate has provided the opportunity for winter and spring sports to practice during designated times throughout the entire fall term.

In previous years, there were no scheduled times for winter and spring Choate teams to practice in the offseason that did not also interfere with fall practices. One direct benefit of these new practices is that coaches are able to attend and help the team improve.

According to Girls’ Varsity Crew member Ella Sklar ’22, “These practices have allowed the entire team to work hard and push each other to get better. Without these practices, head coaches would not be able to see the strength of the team prior to

the season. Our coaches’ input is invaluable and definitely helps us get better.”

Another benefit of these practices is that the teams are able to build chemistry with the new players, as it is typically challenging for varsity teams to get to know each other before the season. Being able to practice and compete as an entire team, these fall sessions create bonds between the players that will carry over to the winter and spring seasons.

“Throughout my entire Choate career, I have never seen offseason teams have as much chemistry as they do this season. Usually, it takes new players a few weeks during the season to really feel welcomed and at home,” said Boys’ Varsity Baseball player Zach Vandale ’21. However, some athletes with multiple sports feel overwhelmed by the additions to their schedule and are often conflicted over which practice to attend, as winter and spring teams are assigned to the same time

block. Sarah Stern ’21, a member of Girls’ Cross Country and Girls’ Varsity Basketball, said, “It can be hard not really having a day off, and going straight from fall sports practice to winter sports practice can be really tiring. Also, it’s been difficult going from working out on my own to two structured practices in a day.”

Through all of these difficulties, Choate teams have been resilient. Boys’ Varsity Lacrosse player Alex Reitman ’22 said, “I am both impressed and surprised at our athlete’s ability to remain optimistic in the face of adversity. These practices have allowed us to remain positive, and they give me something to look forward to every week. I miss playing hard for Choate; however, I know we will emerge from this pandemic stronger than before, and I can’t wait to get back on the field.”

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# The Wild Boar Turns 25, As Spry as Ever

By **Renee Jiang ’22**  
*Copy Editor*

Last weekend marked the 25th anniversary of Choate’s official mascot, the wild boar. Adopted in October of 1995, the Wild Boars mascot was proposed by former Athletics Director and current HPRSS teacher Mr. Ned Gallagher.

For some fifteen years before, the School’s mascot had been the Judges, because William Gardner, the founder of The Choate School, had served as a United States District Judge. Eventually, both students and faculty felt that the mascot was not an accurate representation of the School. In an Opinions piece published in the September 29, 1995 issue of *The Choate News*, Mr. Gallagher wrote of his proposal, “This tenacious beast seems a much more suitable symbol for the athletic competition than a jurist. The wild boar is an authentic school tradition that reaches back to the nineteenth century; using it as a mascot would acknowledge the importance of athletics in our school’s heritage.”

Both The Choate School and Rosemary Hall have a history with the wild boar. A boar was featured on the crest of the Ruutz-Rees family, and Rosemary Hall’s official seal was the wild boar, which the School incorporated in Choate’s current seal. The boar was also used in the actual Choate logo from 1981-1987.

Mr. Gallagher’s proposal prompted widespread approval by both students and faculty around campus. Varsity team captains



Photo Courtesy of MaxPreps

The latest version of Choate’s wild boar logo.

soon voted in favor of it, and the Athletics Department officially approved its adoption. Right before Deerfield Day in the fall of 1995, the Athletics Department unveiled the new Wild Boars mascot to the Choate community.

However, after the introduction of the Wild Boars mascot, there was no campus-wide consensus on the specific design of a new athletics logo.

Ms. Alison Cady, the School’s Director of Strategic Planning and Communications, said, “Although well-drawn, this image did not translate well to uniforms as it was practically impossible to embroider due to the details. Likewise, it was far too detailed to represent well when used at a small scale, especially on the website.”

It was not until the fall of 2014 that individuals from the School’s Alumni Relations, Archives, Athletics, and Communications Departments developed a stan-

dardized design of the Wild Boars mascot. According to Ms. Cady, “The current version is very stylized, with bold linework and areas of solid color that translate well to various methods of reproduction including embroidery and screen printing. Plus, the artwork retains legibility at a small size.”

In addition to the sleeker boar design, a “C” logotype was also developed to be imprinted along with the new logo onto all athletic items.

Since its development, the Wild Boars logo has remained a distinctive marker of Choate’s athletics teams, whether seen on campus buildings or athletic gear. Despite the recent cancellations of an interscholastic fall and winter season, the Wild Boar will continue to stand strong as a symbol of Choate’s fierce and competitive athletic spirit.

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