



UNSEEN FACULTY COMMITTEES HELP SHAPE SCHOOL LIFE

By **Claire Yuan '21**
Copy Editor

Throughout their time at Choate, students will likely become familiar with the various clubs and student groups on campus. While these groups greatly influence student life, they are not the only groups to do so. In fact, there are several important groups of people that have often been overlooked: faculty committees.

Charged with responsibilities ranging from reviewing the wellness program to overseeing community service initiatives, faculty committees deal with issues that affect the entire School. While many committees deal with student life, others are more focused on supporting faculty or Choate as an institution. These committees discuss topics such as faculty workload and housing, reshaping the School's mission statement, or creating Strategic Plans.

Unlike student groups like the Student Council or Judicial Committee, faculty committees are often not permanent fixtures but are formed when the need for one arises. Dean of Students Mr. Mike Velez said,

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Educated author Tara Westover signed copies of her book and answered students' questions in an interview during her time on campus Tuesday.



Photos courtesy of Danielle Capri

TARA WESTOVER, BEST-SELLING AUTHOR OF *EDUCATED*, SPEAKS TO STUDENTS

By **JeeHwan Kim '21**
Copy Editor

Dr. Tara Westover, author of the book *Educated*, visited campus on Tuesday as this year's Summer Reading Series speaker. The English Department required all Choate students to read *Educated*. Dr. Westover's memoir about growing up in a Mormon survivalist family in rural Idaho, last summer. The book has spent 87 weeks on The New York Times best-seller list and received a variety of other honors.

Dr. Westover was introduced by Caroline Rispoli '20 and interviewed by English teacher Ms.

Brooke Fichera, who mostly asked questions provided to her by students across all forms. When asked about her writing process for *Educated*, Dr. Westover explained that she taught herself how to craft narrative nonfiction in part by studying *Slaughterhouse-Five* author Kurt Vonnegut's analysis of archetypal narrative arcs. She acknowledged that before *Educated* she'd engaged only in technical, often abstruse academic writing.

As a girl, Dr. Westover said, she was never able to process the complex emotions engendered from her childhood trauma, which caused trouble later in life when the

effects of those experiences came to fruition. She stressed the importance of accepting vulnerability in times of hardship and never forgetting that there is always more to one's story arc — that is, there is more to come in life.

Dr. Westover also commented on society's addiction to their phones. She stressed the value of learning from traditional books that cannot "know that you're reading them," in contrast to internet-based technology, which tracks user patterns and tailors content to users' preferences. Literature, Dr. Westover argued, must be

taken as is, without user-specific modifications.

Additionally, when asked about gender discrimination, Dr. Westover acknowledged the overwhelming statistics that suggest sexism exists but said that she herself never assumes the others' motives.

Dr. Westover said that she plans to write a series of essays reflecting on unjust economic trends in rural America. Like *Educated*, these new works are inspired by the stories of acquaintances back in her home state of Idaho.

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Big Changes in Admission Office

By **Chris Lin '21**
Staff Reporter

Starting this past summer, Choate has seen many significant changes within its Admissions Office, including the departure of Mr. Amin Abdul-Malik Gonzales, Choate's former Director of Admission.

The most significant change in the Admission Office this year was the implementation of SLATE, a new software system used almost exclusively by colleges and universities. According to SLATE's website, the program is "the only solution that can handle the breadth and depth of modern admissions and advancement." It allows users to easily review and manage all interactions, communications, applications, test scores, relationships, and materials, as well as seamlessly organize outreach, travel management, online applications, and online reading. SLATE provides Choate with a more personalized system of communication for prospective students and families.

"SLATE will also make our reading and selection process more streamlined and easy for officers," said Mr. Jeffrey Beaton, the Interim Director of Admission. "Our old reading system was clunky, and we lost time due to technical inefficiencies. We are excited that SLATE will give us more time to review applications."

In another administrative change, the Admissions Office took the sustainability effort to go paperless this year, getting rid of filing cabinets and re-vamping the office space.

This year, Choate has also brought in two new members to join the Admissions Staff: Mr. Nick Skitko and Mr. Ryan Strange. In addition to being a graduate of The Hill School in Pottstown, Pennsylvania, Mr. Skitko, the new Assistant Director of Admissions, has experience working in college admissions. Mr. Strange, an admissions officer, is a graduate of The Westminster School in Simsbury, Connecticut.

Mr. Gonzales was offered the position of Vice President and Dean of Admission at Wesleyan University, where he is an

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BAKING CLUB HOSTS INAUGURAL COMPETITION



Photo by Renee Jiang/The Choate News

A team incorporates the required ingredients of orange, paprika, and white chocolate into its recipe.

By **Varun Ramamurthi '22**
Reporter

On Sunday, October 27, Baking Club held its first-ever baking competition, which took place from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. in the Dining Hall kitchen.

The competition was similar to and inspired by Food Network's program *Chopped* — each of the four teams consisting of two to four students had access to a variety of primary ingredients, but the catch was that all competitors had to use a certain set of special in-

gredients revealed to them at the start of the contest: orange, paprika, and white chocolate. Then, each team had two hours to create a baked good before it was presented to the three judges: Baking Club co-presidents Wavy Griffin '21 and Iris Parsons '21 and the club's faculty adviser, Ms. Victoria Pierotti.

The judges evaluated each dish using three criteria: taste, creativity, and presentation. The group whose dish received the highest score was awarded a \$30 gift card to Colony Diner & Restaurant in Wallingford.

Anna Bonnem '21, Aidan Concepcion '21, Kai Joseph '21, and Aarthi Katakam '21 were on the winning team. Concepcion described their winning strategy: "We used orange zest in our batter and a ton of paprika that surprisingly wasn't very prominent in the finished product. We also took the white chocolate, melted it, cut a hole in the middle of our cupcakes, and filled it with that. I couldn't tell you what our frosting was, other than that it

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JFK Students Dine and Discuss with Judge Katherine Forrest '82

By **Praj Chirathivat '22**
Staff Reporter

Last Tuesday, October 22, Choate students in the John F. Kennedy '35 Program in Government and Public Service (JFK) participated in a discussion and dinner with former Southern District of New York Judge Katherine B. Forrest '82 regarding artificial intelligence (AI).

Part of the purpose of the dinner "[was] to see someone who has worked in the government as a federal judge and give students a career path to explore," said Mr. Ned Gallagher, Director of Choate's JFK Program.

During the dinner, Forrest focused her talk on the development of AI and the digital world. Because this event was the first-ever dinner exclusively for the JFK Program, students were excited to meet a professional who has worked in both the public and private sectors of law.

"I think that before the presentation, I [hadn't] realized how impactful AI is in our lives," said Naina Sharma '21, a fifth former in the program.

Forrest provided students with insight on how AI will become a more significant aspect of everyday life, discussing the formation of laws regarding artificial intelligence, the use of AI as depositories of evidence, the

use of deepfakes (a technique used to alter photos or videos), and how AI will be used by law enforcement.

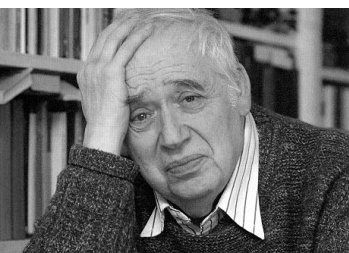
"We are the first generation that has to deal with AI. So, we are the ones who have to build the infrastructure to support the increasing involvement with it to make sure we don't suffer from advancements in AI technology," Sharma said. Nate White '20, a sixth former in the program, added, "my main takeaway from the dinner was that not only is artificial intelligence going to play a big role in our lives: it already is. It was interesting to hear her talk about the current applications of AI in law, such as predicting recidivism for released prisoners."

After graduating from Choate Rosemary Hall, Forrest earned her Bachelor of Arts at Wesleyan University and received a graduate law degree and a doctorate in history from New York University School of Law. Her professional career focuses on litigation and judicial work involving digital media and antitrust, and she served seven years on the bench from 2011 to 2018. Currently, Forrest works as a lawyer at Cravath, Swaine & Moore in New York City.

In its second year, the JFK Program is continuously im-

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Read it, then recycle it.

Visuals by The Paris Review, The New York Times, Choate Flickr, and David Loeb

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FIRST-EVER BAKING CONTEST TAKES PLACE IN SAGE KITCHEN

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started off as buttercream and ended up being chocolate after Anna dumped cocoa powder in to thicken it.”

Bonnem said, “The competition was a great bonding experience for me and my teammates. We were able to play off of each other’s strengths and weaknesses. For example, Kai did not know what zesting an orange meant, but he was a great team player. We were able to pull it together at the last second after a team huddle in the walk-in fridge that inspired us to just go out there and have a good time.”

Parsons explained that the competition was created not just for fun but also to get more people on campus involved in Baking Club. “Sometimes people make fun of us, [saying,] ‘That’s such a dumb club,’ but we think there’s some value in just having some fun downtime,” she said.

Parsons also noted Baking Club’s appreciation for the SAGE workers that helped with the competition. “The dining

Sometimes people make fun of us, [saying,] ‘That’s such a dumb club,’ but we think there’s some value in just having some fun downtime.

Iris Parsons ’21

hall kitchen has a very complex rotating oven and the SAGE workers were very helpful to the competitors who were trying to put their items in the oven. They were also very supportive of the fact that we were using their kitchen for the competition,” Parsons said.

Ms. Pierotti said that the event was an opportunity “to work on the fly and make decisions under pressure, but in a fun and safe environment.”

She explained that events like the baking competition are an aspect of Choate that she enjoys: “It’s one of the reasons I really like working at a boarding school — you get to have a more holistic approach to education.”

Concepcion reflected on his experience with his team: “I had a great time, and I think the competition was such a great time. I hope they have another soon, and maybe then we’ll come prepared with actual recipes. Or not. That’s the fun part, after all.”

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NEW SOFTWARE SYSTEM INTRODUCED TO STREAMLINE ADMISSIONS PROCESS

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alumnus with previous experience working in their admissions office. “Though he loves Choate, this was a career opportunity that he just could not pass up. We are all very happy for him,” said Mr. Beaton.

Alongside Mr. Gonzalez, Ms. Corina Fitzgerald has left the office to work at a start-up company in San Francisco called Front. “We are always proud when they can take what they have learned in our office and use it in their new profession to further their career path,” said Mr. Beaton.

Despite major changes in personnel, staff turnover has not had a noticeable impact on the Choate Admission Office. “With Mr. Beaton being able to fill Mr. Gonzalez’s role, he has made the transition in the office quite seamless. Mr. Beaton has been doing a great job,” said Ms. Anne Nations, the Admission Office Manager.

The Admission Office is currently preparing for an information session for prospective students and families on Monday, November 11. The information session will be the equivalent of an open house, and more than 300 people have already RSVP’d to the event. Unlike previous information sessions, this one will no longer involve massive group tours. Instead, there will be panels from students, families, faculty, and the Admission Office to answer questions for applicants who are not familiar with the boarding school application process. Those who attend will hear from Head of School



Photo by Ryan Kim / The Choate News

Admission officers meet to discuss new initiatives such as the integration of technology into their process.



Photo by Praj Chirathivat / The Choate News

New admission officers Mr. Nick Skitko and Mr. Ryan Strange were immediately integrated to campus.

Dr. Alex Curtis and a panel of current students and faculty members, and there will also be a talk from numerous admission officers.

“This is a great opportunity for families to have an in-depth look into the Choate community,” said Mr. Beaton. “We want families to come away with what makes Choate different and unique compared

to the other schools they may be considering. We also want to help them with any admission-specific questions they may have, such as any questions regarding the application or financial aid process.”

The Choate Admission Office is a tightly knit team that gives prospective students their first look into what the

School has to offer. In Mr. Beaton’s words, the staff’s creativity and nimbleness are what have allowed the admissions team to be so successful, even through the many changes it has experienced.

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Choate Prohibits Use of Smart Speakers

By **Alexis Lien** ’23
Reporter

Despite their growing popularity, new technologies such as Alexa, Amazon Echo, Xbox, and other smart devices that respond to vocal commands have now been banned at Choate. Students’ desire to be able to use those devices on campus has subsequently caused new rules to be put into place. Last year, the Deans’ Office and Head of School Dr. Alex Curtis discussed whether these devices should be allowed to register with Choate’s WiFi network and be made accessible to students. For a period of time, such devices were permitted.

Recently, however, Director of Information Technology Services Mr. Andrew Speyer consulted with Dean of Students Mr. Mike Velez ’00 and came to a decision to prohibit such devices. In the student handbook, gaming consoles and other peripheral devices that connect to the WiFi in dorm rooms have been restricted to being a senior prefect privilege only.



Graphic by Sesame Gaetsaloe / The Choate News

Choate’s ban on certain technologies considers students’ privacy.

While devices with voice recognition that can play music and turn on lights can be convenient and beneficial for students, the prohibition was implemented to safeguard students’ privacy and safety, including mitigating the possibility of devices constantly listening to and possibly recording conversations. This is consistent with one of Choate’s older policies that prevents the use of

webcams in dorm rooms. Mr. Speyer said, “If we allow Alexas to be connected in a room with two roommates, you are encroaching on the privacy of the other roommate if one roommate has the Alexa on. Even if they both agree to have one, you have to make a policy that works for everybody.”

The new rule was also designed to eliminate any potential misuse of these devices. Mr.

Speyer added, “We don’t want pranks where kids are yelling down the hall saying ‘Hey, Alexa, buy something on my Amazon.’” In addition, the presence of more devices on campus that are connected to Choate’s WiFi has also hurt the efficiency of wireless systems on campus, as there is a capacity limit for the network to run smoothly.

Many students reacted to the new rule with disappointment. Some expressed that the use of certain prohibited devices would enhance their dorm lives. Nicolas Madon ’21 said, “I wish I could have an Alexa for my alarm clock and for telling me the weather.”

Similarly, Sophie Yang ’22 said, “I personally don’t have one, but some people use it to multitask. For example, if you were trying to set a timer for something or play music, I think that it is useful.” Students have been able to adapt, however, and most have faced no problems with the tech ban.

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FACULTY COMMITTEES PLAY CRUCIAL ROLE IN SHAPING SCHOOL MISSION

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“As topics are brought to the attention of the administration, there are then conversations that occur to decide whether or not a committee needs to be formed to look into the matter.” While some committees like the Faculty Committee tend to be more permanent, others like the Visitation Committee may be formed only for a year or two when the School sees the need for a renewal of a specific policy or program.

Depending on the committee and its various needs, faculty members may either volunteer to participate or be nominated and voted into the committee. Mr. Velez said, “For example, in the Faculty Committee, faculty members elect members to that committee every year, so there is always turnover. But this year’s Faculty Committee may have inherited certain topics from last year’s committee, and next year’s committee could undertake a project that was left unfinished this year.”

The faculty committee meetings, although not uniform in frequency and length, are based in review and discussion. “Usually a committee’s charge is to look at a specific area of Choate life and then to make recommendations on how that area could be improved or changed,” said HPRSS teacher Ms. Kyra Jenney who has served on a variety of faculty committees, including the Evaluation and Assessment Committee and last year’s Visitation Committee. “So a typical committee meeting is really just a discussion about whatever issue needs to be addressed.”

Following its discussions, the committee will produce a formal report or proposal that is brought to other faculty for review and feedback. “After those recommendations, typically there is a larger discussion held by the faculty,” said Mr. Velez. “The recommendations

are then vetted for further consideration and discussion, and then ultimately the administration will look at the recommendations, take into account feedback from faculty members, and make their decisions.”

Ms. Jenney noted that each committee’s roles, responsibilities, and meeting requirements vary. “In the visitation discussions last year, we were discussing what we saw as challenges to current policy, what issues students are facing at large, whether our policy addresses those issues, and, as our School evolves, whether our policy [will] still [be] in line with the School’s values,” she said.

This year, Ms. Jenney is serving on a committee dedicated to reviewing the prizes given on Prize Day and the process for selecting prize recipients. “In the past couple of years as we’ve gone through the prize process, a bunch of different issues and concerns have come up, and so Ms. [Katie] Levesque, who’s the Dean of Faculty, said we should take a look at this,” Ms. Jenney said. “I’m interested in that, so I volunteered for this committee.”

Whereas the Visitation Committee met only once or twice a term and is continuing its discussions this year, the Prize Committee plans to meet once a week or every other week until it issues its proposal to the faculty this coming February. The committee hopes that its proposal will be completed soon enough for the proposed changes to be implemented in this year’s upcoming Prize Day.

Although much of their work goes uncredited, faculty committees are consistently instrumental in the evolution of the School. From visitation to faculty housing, these committees have implemented new policies to improve student and faculty life for the Choate community as a whole.

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Katherine Forrest ’82 Presents on AI Technology

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proving by bringing in more guest speakers and hosting more activities and presentations. For this school year, Mr. Gallagher is organizing field trips to various government locations. “We take a lot of students in the Political Science 555 class to Washington, D.C. For the last two years, we have met with five members of Congress on each trip and visited the Supreme Court,” he said. “We go to Hartford in the fall and spend half of the day meeting with government officials. It’s part of the theme of what we are trying to do — getting [the students] to know people who are professional policymakers.”

Beyond going on field trips, the seniors in the program will give a public presentation in the spring term that is similar in format to TED Talks. “Similar to the way the Science Research Program works, [they] will present about the things they have



Photo by Ryan Kim / The Choate News

Katherine Forrest ’82 spoke extensively on how “deep fakes” could influence the upcoming election.

learned. The topics are pretty broad, and we want them to be something the kids are passionate about,” said Mr. Gallagher.

Students who are currently part of the JFK Program have

responded positively. “I think that the JFK program has done a good job helping people who are interested in politics and government find ways to learn more and get involved. As the program

continues, I think it will only get better from here,” said White.

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HAROLD BLOOM, YALE HUMANITIES PROFESSOR, DIES AT 89

By Linda Phan '22
Reporter

On October 14, esteemed literary critic Dr. Harold Bloom passed away in a hospital in New Haven at the age of 89. A longtime professor at Yale University, he continued to hold classes until the week he passed away. He also taught Choate English teacher Mr. David Loeb while Mr. Loeb was earning his graduate degree at Yale. Bloom's legacy shaped the world of literary criticism and education.

Born into a Jewish, Yiddish-speaking family in 1930, Bloom received a B.A. in Classics from Cornell University and a Ph.D. in English from Yale. In 1955, he became a professor of English at Yale and continued to teach English there for the next six decades. Throughout his career, Bloom received many accolades for his contributions to the field of English literature. In 1985, he received a fellowship from the MacArthur Foundation, and in 1999, he received a Gold Medal for Belles Lettres and Criticism from the American Academy of Arts and Letters. He was also awarded the title of Sterling Professor of the Humanities at Yale.

As a literary critic, Bloom passionately defended the western canon, a body of classic works of literature written by Western authors. These include Joyce's *Ulysses*, Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*, and Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales*, many of which remain staples of high-school and college syllabuses. Choate, for example, teaches *The Odyssey* to third formers and frequently includes many of Shakespeare's works in higher-level English courses.

In 1994, Bloom published his magnum opus *The Western Canon: The Books and School of the Ages*. In this book, he defines certain standards for a work to be regarded as a classic and asserts the importance of 26 au-

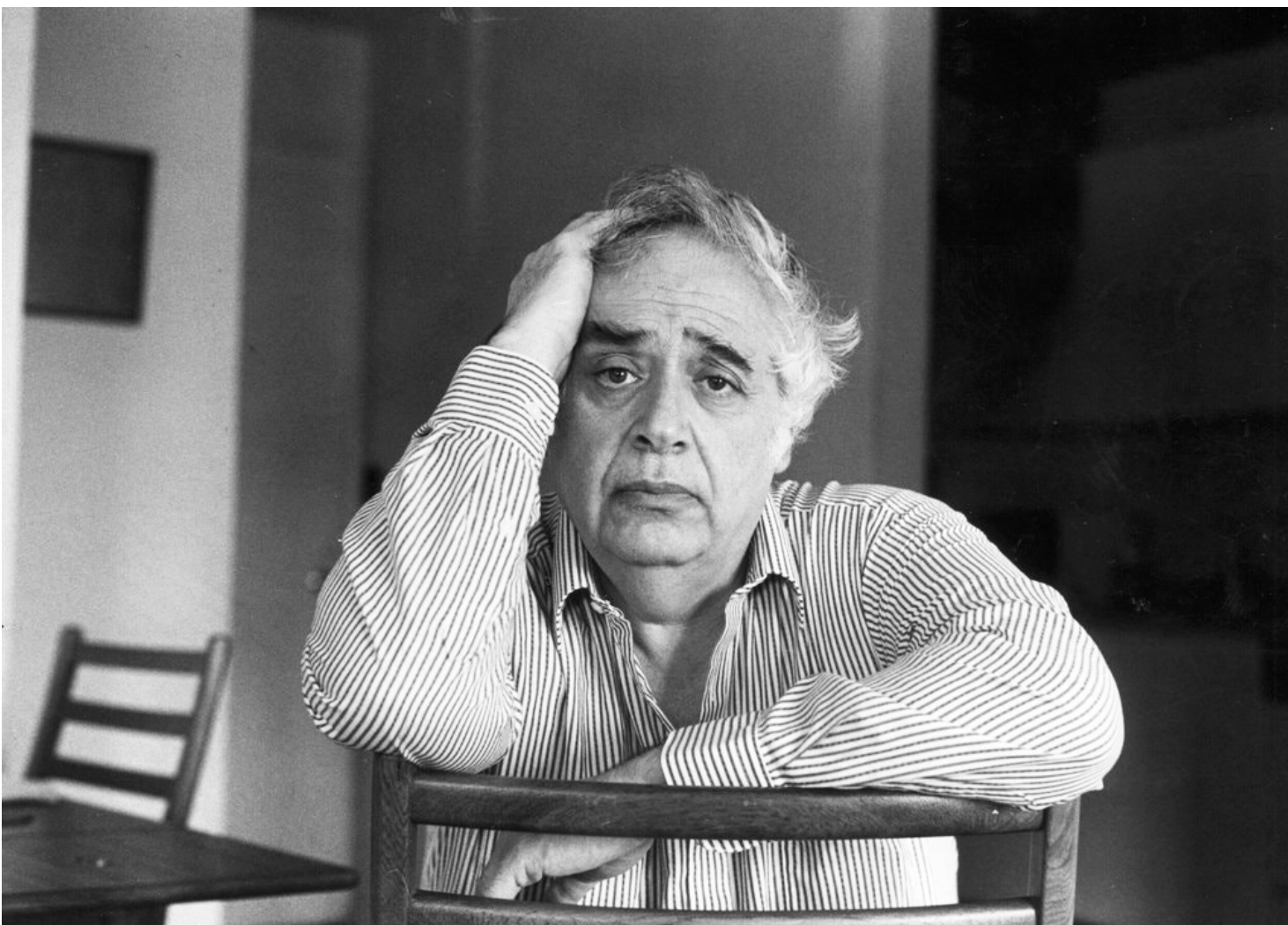


Photo courtesy of The New York Times

On October 14, Harold Bloom passed away in New Haven at the age of 89.

thors whom he deemed the core of Western Canon. His book was met with resistance due to the lack of diversity within the list of selected authors, which was largely composed of white men.

Bloom defended the Western Canon from a literary movement which he termed "literature of resentment." He claimed college professors taught works of literature that were inferior to Western Canon in an effort to promote their own political beliefs. He argued that literary analysis and education should focus on the merit of a text rather than push a political agenda.

Bloom's controversial legacy lies beyond his critical perspectives regarding texts outside of the Western Canon. As a literary critic, he also discussed

the concept of literary influence. In his book *The Anxiety of Influence*, which he published in 1973, Bloom argues that poets write "weak" poems because they feel pressure to live up to the legacy of the poets that came before them. He claims that this problem stems from a misunderstanding of the purpose of poems. As Bloom saw it, when poems become a form of retaliation or response, they lose originality.

In 1986, Mr. Loeb took a class on Victorian prose that was taught by Bloom. According to Mr. Loeb, Bloom "was this enormous personality, and he talked and asked questions just to the universe. And he tended to answer them himself, and it was a little intimidating and also very exciting."

On Bloom's controversial views on literature, Mr. Loeb said, "Professor Bloom was often trying to provoke, so I think that he was probably a little less dogmatic about things than he pretended to be." As it happened, Bloom taught both Mr. Loeb and Mr. Loeb's daughter, Hannah, now a graduate student in literature at the University of Virginia. "She was a much better student for him," said Mr. Loeb. "They were closer than he and I were. He was kind enough to pretend to remember me when I went over one day with her to visit."

Although Bloom gained much success and admiration as a literary critic, his reputation was marred in 2004 when Dr. Naomi Wolf, one of his former students, accused him of "sex-

ual encroachment" in an article in *New York*. Dr. Wolf, now a best-selling author, claimed that at a dinner the two had together in 1983, Bloom made sexual advances toward her, including touching her inner thigh. Dr. Wolf asserted that Bloom's actions did not reach the level of sexual harassment. In her article, she said that she was bringing up the event after 21 years because "every year, I wonder about the young women who might have suffered because I was too scared to tell the truth to the people whose job it is to make sure the institution is clean."

Bloom adamantly denied the allegations.

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NOV. 2, 10:00 a.m.

48th Annual Oxford Arts and Crafts Fair
Shop the hand-crafted artwork of more than 30 local artisans

Oxford Center School
Free admission; no registration required; \$32 car ride

NOV. 2, 10:30 a.m.

Saturdays with Sara
Join art teacher Sara Taussik for an art workshop for younger children

Wallingford Public Library
Free admission; online registration required; for children ages three to five

NOV. 2, 1:00 p.m.

Place, Nations, Generations, Beings: 200 Years of Indigenous North American Art
Celebrate the opening of this exhibition consisting of 75 pieces of Indigenous North American artwork

Yale University Art Gallery
Free admission; no registration required; \$21 car ride

NOV. 3, 10:00 a.m.

Fall On the Farm Festival
Bob for apples, sip hot apple cider, enjoy hay rides, and celebrate the changing of the seasons at Cold Spring Farm

Cold Spring Farm, Colchester
Tickets at the door; no registration required; \$24 car ride

NOV. 3, 1:30 p.m.

Native Americans In The Colonial Wars Living History Event
Explore a recreation of a Native American soldier's campsite with a living historian of Algonkian life

Mill Hill Historic Park, Norwalk
\$10 admission; online registration recommended; \$60 car ride

Beyond - the - tuck shop

By Peter DiNatale '21
Copy Editor

Serving a wide selection of Asian dishes, Roodle Rice and Noodle Bar Restaurant has established itself as a mainstay of the Wallingford food scene. Since the restaurant opened its Wallingford location two years ago, each dish at Roodle has been prepared with careful attention to flavor, authenticity, and presentation. The restaurant has another location in Hamden and a food truck in New Haven.



Photo courtesy of Roodle website

Roodle serves a variety of Asian dishes including kui cheai, a deep-fried chive cake. Perhaps the most unique dish on the menu is a twist on traditional Japanese udon noodles that includes homemade Thai garlic chili sauce.

The chefs at Roodle have over 20 years of experience in cooking Asian cuisine. According to the restaurant's website, the chefs "offer you and your family delectable fully cooked meals to eat at [their] cozy restaurant." The main goal of Roo-

dle's chefs is to ensure that their customers' experiences are unforgettable. The restaurant wants customers to leave eager to return.

In addition to its careful attention to customer service, Roodle also has a family-friendly environment. Pik, a server at Roodle who asked that only her first name be used, noticed and appreciated the family-oriented atmosphere of Roodle when she first started

working for the restaurant. "This is a family [oriented] business," said Pik. "There is a good [age] range of people that come here and eat."

Combining a selection of flavorful Asian dishes with a comfortable environment, Roodle provides every customer with a satisfying experience.

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PROTON THERAPY CENTER PLANNED IN WALLINGFORD

By Nathan Lang '22
Reporter

Every year, more than 1.7 million Americans are diagnosed with cancer, and 600,000 succumb to the disease. In Connecticut alone, every year, more than 21,000 people are diagnosed, and 6,000 succumb to the disease. In efforts to battle cancer, two health care systems in Connecticut are teaming up to provide cutting-edge treatment. On October 23, Yale New Haven Health System and Hartford Healthcare announced plans to construct a new cancer treatment center in Wallingford that will specialize in proton therapy. Currently, there are only 25 proton therapy centers in the United States, none of which are in Connecticut. The \$72 million center will offer patients in Connecticut the opportunity to receive safer, more effective cancer treatment without having to travel long distances.

Preliminary plans have indicated that the center will be a 25,000-square-foot building on Northrop Road, but the construction date has yet to be announced. Hartford Healthcare and Yale New Haven Health System are working with a Georgia-based company called Proton International to construct the center. Proton International has already constructed three proton therapy centers in the United States and three more in the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, and Ger-

many. The center in Wallingford will be operated by nurses, physicians, and clinical staff from both Yale New Haven Health System and Hartford Healthcare.

Proton therapy is a lesser-known form of radiation therapy that uses protons rather than X-rays to treat cancer. This technique delivers radiation to cancerous tumors more precisely than its X-ray counterpart, reducing the risk of inadvertently exposing healthy organs and tissue to dangerous levels of radiation. Studies suggest that proton therapy may have fewer harmful side effects compared to other forms of radiological treatment.

Richard D'Aquila, President of Yale New Haven Health System and Yale New Haven Hospital, expressed his enthusiasm for this new center in a statement released by the Yale Cancer Center: "Our unique collaboration with HHC will allow us to care for patients with cancer in a new and effective way by bringing a life-changing therapy to our state."

In a separate press release, Mayor William W. Dickinson Jr. affirmed D'Aquila's excitement. "It's so exciting that we will have cancer treatment of this caliber so easily accessible, right here in Wallingford," the statement read. "Not having to drive out-of-state to get proton therapy treatment will be such a blessing to so many people."

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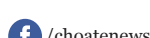
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WRITING FOR CAMPUS OPINIONS: WORDS ARE MY POWER



Graphic by Chandler Littleford/The Choate News

By **Rachel Pittman '22**

Copy Editor

When I sat down to begin drafting several weeks ago, the flashing cursor of my computer screen seemed to taunt me: before I had put even a letter down on the page, I felt guilty. The article I was about to write spoke out directly against Choate's administration. With this piece, I would risk angering the School and even some students who had participated in the program I planned to discuss. I was scared.

A symptom of this fear was insecurity. After researching for hours, I finally crafted what I hoped would be a solid argument. Still, the writing process was like trying on jeans in a dressing room: with every pair — with every new group of words strung together — the sterile lights got brighter, the awful music got louder, and I felt more insecure. Soon, I started to second guess the validity of my voice: who am I to share my opinion?

I write pieces for Campus Opinions, often about topics that disagree with a school policy or program. And each week, I go through a cycle of doubt and guilt. When my article comes out, I am jittery. As the Dining Hall tables become littered with copies of *The Choate News*, a piece of me becomes exposed for the entire campus to judge. When I see people reading the newspaper in the Dining Hall, I walk past them quickly, head down, not wanting to catch their reactions to my opinion, or worse, to give them the opportunity to talk to me about it. And yet, when the next assignment meeting rolls around, I sign up to write another Campus Opinions piece.

I do this partly because I enjoy the section's discerning outlook and informal tone, yes. But on the days when the thought of sharing my opinion seems particularly daunting, I write not because I want to, but because I need to. Words are our power. With words, we can maim, we can fall in love, we can build nations or sow

discord among them. When I write for Campus Opinions, I am enacting my power. I believe journalism is one of the most powerful systems of accountability, both on a global and local scale. When I see something unjust on campus, I turn to the keyboard.

*I write not because
I want to, but
because I need to.*

Still, I often worry that my opinions are too strong and will, indeed, get me into trouble. Last year, I feared that my article about the flaws of our wellness program was too accusatory of the School, especially after they had worked so hard to reform it. But if there isn't something within a piece that people may disagree with,

would it be worth writing? What would that contribute to the world? In this sense, opinions writing is inherently controversial, but this same controversy is what makes it so critical.

I wish I could say I am a fearless journalist who can share her opinions unflinchingly, concerned only with expressing her point and not with how the audience will react, but, at least for now, that's not me. I obsess over articles, searching for the perfect balance between rebellious and respectful. While I think that an opinions writer should never censor their thoughts to satisfy an audience, I have found that the best way to battle insecurity is to rely on writing in an informed, conscientious, and respectful way.

So, I will continue to voice my opinions. Only through combating my fear can I use my voice, my power, to its fullest.

Rachel Pittman is a fourth-former from Cheshire, Conn. She may be reached at rpittman22@choate.edu

DISAGREEING WITH MY FAMILY: GENERATION GAP?

By **Jay Zhou '21**

Opinions Writer

One of the most memorable political debates I had with my family was about LGBTQ+ legal marriage. I remember it very clearly; it took place on the drive back home after I visited a college in Los Angeles. I was streaming "The Office" in the car when my parents asked me lightheartedly about my plans for the future. I blurted out, "I don't know — get a job. Maybe marry, but certainly no kids." Instantly, I realized I had set off my mother's anger, and I braced myself for her long tirade.

According to my mother, because I am an only child, it is my responsibility to make sure that the Zhou family line is continued. Zhou is one of the most ancient Chinese surnames, and there is even an entire ancient dynasty named after it. Obviously, it would be a shame to see part of this venerable family line disappear on my behalf. My mother grew up during China's baby boomer era, when families were encouraged to have as many kids as possible to increase the labor force. The importance of passing down a family legacy, getting married, and having children has been long indoctrinated in my parents' minds.

Listening to my mother's spiel on the purpose of marriage, I became curious about the purpose of LGBTQ+ marriage. I asked, "If giving birth to kids and ensuring that the family name gets passed down are the foundation of marriage, then why is LGBTQ+ marriage becoming legalized? LGBTQ+ couples can't biologically produce offspring."

In response to my question, my parents argued that LGBTQ+ marriage should not be legalized — their argument shocked me. They say they respect the LGBTQ+ community, but they don't support LGBTQ+ marriage because, as they see it, such unions defy the long-standing role of marriage and one of its

fundamental purposes: to bring life to the next generation.

For the rest of the car ride, my parents and I were engaged in a long debate. I argued that marriage should be for any two people who love each other, and it shouldn't simply be a vehicle for reproduction. If two people are incapable of physically producing offspring but wish to spend the rest of their lives together, then getting married is wonderful. Even some heterosexual married couples don't have kids, so it is unfair for their marriage to be legal, while the marriage between two people who don't identify as heterosexual is not.

However, my parents were still concerned with the importance of reproduction because, as they see it, we as humans carry the responsibility of ensuring that our offspring continue the human population. If marriages cease to be concerned with kids, they argued, the human population would decline.

Who knew that my parents and I had such different opinions? Perhaps this is why we rarely discuss politics — so that we won't find ourselves in a family feud. I suppose that the generational gap and the differences in our education are accountable for the divergence in our political beliefs. As someone who began studying abroad in sixth grade, my opinions have become significantly more liberal than my parents. They, however, have always been taught that they should value the country first and do what's best for the community, even if that means prohibiting certain people from getting married.

Only through occasional discussions such as this one do I really get to learn about my parents' perspectives and backgrounds. Though our disagreements often lead to heated debates, my parents have allowed me to make peace with the fact that there are others who do not share my opinions, even within my own family.

Jay Zhou is a fifth-former from Shanghai. He may be reached at jjzhou21@choate.edu

A Letter To My Love, Raphael



Photo courtesy of Musei Vaticani website

The School of Athens, one of four wall frescoes of the Stanza della Segnatura in the Palace of the Vatican.

By **Abby Lu '22**

Opinions Staff Writer

Dear Raphael,

Even though I am writing this letter to you, the truth is, I don't know what to say. Did you know that you inspired me to love art history? Did you know that I love you? When I crumbled under the weight of life, it was you that held me up. If I hadn't known about you, I would not have taken that first step to explore the abstract world. So, I want to thank you. Thank you for painting *The School of Athens* on the walls of the Vatican and inspiring me to explore.

Art History is my solace, my escape. When I sit down in the screening room with my classmates and Bill, my teach-

er, nothing matters except for the artwork. It's an intimate moment, something sacred. It's when our minds collide, and I open my heart up to the artist's genius. There's a delicate silence that lingers after Bill's explanation, a silence I dare not break. So I sit, wide-eyed, and feel everything else peel away. When I'm learning about Gudea's ancient piety, I don't need to worry about the next math test or the next essay I need to finish. Art History is more interesting to me than any novel or movie. The wisdom and insight of ancient artists guide me through dark times. Without them, I am lost.

Since taking Art History, I've learned to appreciate beauty everywhere. As I walk around campus, I start to recognize the Greek elements

on the columns of the chapel. I know when something's Dorian, Ionic, Corinthian, or a mixture of them — it's a wonderful feeling, like enlightenment. Though I can never fully understand all of the nuances, recognizing architectural and artistic elements in everyday life is like running into an old friend. I feel less lonely with this newfound perspective.

I look at my other subjects through the lens of Art History, and this helps me decode difficult topics that I would not have otherwise understood. Art History links World History, French, and English — it's a glue that brings other subjects together. What I've learned about early Christian and Byzantine art has helped me better understand that time period and place in World His-

tory. When learning about Art History, I listen to podcasts in French, which in turn strengthens my language skills.

Above all else, Art History introduced me to you. Even though we reside in different eras, your spirit is everlasting. Through Art History, I found a community, albeit one from another world. For the first time, I felt belonging. It doesn't matter that most artists in that community are dead, because their spirits live on. I think Art History is like the Soul of the World in Coelho's *The Alchemist*. It's a constant in this chaotic world.

Love,
Abby

Abby Lu is a fourth-former from Hong Kong. She may be reached at alu22@choate.edu

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TRUDEAU'S REELECTION OFFERS A CHANCE FOR REDEMPTION

By **Sabahat Rahman '21**
Opinions Staff Writer

Justin Trudeau has just been reelected as Prime Minister of Canada and is now headed into his second term. However, his victory was a narrow win. Trudeau's Liberal Party lost its majority in government, claiming just 46% of the seats in the House of Commons. The Liberal Party received a meager 33% of the popular vote, less than its rival, the Conservative Party, which came in at 34.4%. What's just as, if not more, important is the way that things have changed since Trudeau's first win, in 2015.

The numbers tell the story. According to Gallup, Trudeau's approval rating dropped from 72% in 2016 to 46% right before the election. Canadian citizens' faith in Trudeau has been tainted, particularly after he illegally interfered in a federal investigation of a Quebec-based construction company and pictures surfaced of him

Trudeau's lack of fidelity and resolve on his key campaign promises has weakened Canadians' trust in him.

wearing blackface and brownface in the past. Voters in the energy-producing regions of Canada, threatened by Liberals' emphasis on green energy, also played a big role in the Conservatives' popularity this election.

Seeing as Justin Trudeau has become Prime Minister again despite his drop in numbers, it is clear he still holds promise and hope for Canadians. However, Trudeau must prepare himself for a second term that will begin with much less glamor and charm than his first.

The first thing that will present a major challenge for Trudeau is uniting the different parties in Canada's House of Commons. With this election, the Prime Minister's Liberal Party lost its majority in the House. As a strong Liberal, Trudeau's past laws have included the implementation of a carbon tax and the legalization of recreational marijuana. But if Trudeau is preparing to pass similarly leftist laws in his second term, he will need to think again. His

legislation cannot be as radical as it once was and must appease the other parties in the House, namely the Conservatives, Bloc Québécois, and New Democrats. Liberal Canadians will have to accept that any reforms they have been hoping for will likely not be happening in the next few years, particularly regarding heavily disputed topics like climate change, abortion, and LGBTQ+ rights.

Trudeau must also increase transparency regarding his true positions on different political issues. When Canadians first voted for Trudeau in 2015, they expected to see a prime minister who would fight tirelessly to address issues like global warming and indigenous peoples' rights. However, not everyone was satisfied. Though Trudeau ratified a carbon tax, he later supported the expansion of oil pipelines.

Likewise, the same man who had gone around advocating for indigenous peoples' rights during his campaign also understood that these very same

pipelines he supported were trespassing on natives' land. Trudeau's lack of fidelity and resolve on his key campaign promises has weakened Canadians' trust in him. After his narrow win, Trudeau must solidify his viewpoints through action if he wants the unwavering support of voters in the future.

Albeit, Trudeau has not totally lost the support or approval of Canadians. In fact, he has done a surprisingly good job of recovering from his scandals and reestablishing Canadians' faith in him; thus, Trudeau is now assured a second term as prime minister. However, his reproachable actions, controversial legislation, and wavering standpoints have certainly shaken voters' trust. This election served as an excellent wakeup call for Trudeau. He must now seize his second opportunity to govern using what he has learned from this election.

Sabahat Rahman is a fifth-former from Dhahran. She may be reached at srahman21@choate.edu

U.S. MUST INTERVENE IN HAITI'S POLITICAL CRISIS TO MAKE AMENDS



Photo courtesy of Associated Press

On October 13, protestors calling for the resignation of President Moïse and for "another Haiti" marched through Port-au-Prince.

By **Niki Gummadi '21**
Copy Editor

Since February 7, 2019, Haiti has been in political turmoil due to ongoing protests against Jovenel Moïse, the country's president. The opposition party has been calling for Moïse's resignation, claiming that the president's corruption is the reason behind the country's failing economy. Protests have led to more than 20 deaths — with the numbers rising each day. Since the United States has played a large role in Haiti's political unrest, it has an obligation to also play a part in helping restore peace to the country.

The United States must start by publicly withdrawing support for President Moïse, a leader this country should never have supported to begin with. The U.S.'s former behind-the-scenes support of Moïse would make public denouncement of his actions all the more powerful. In 2014, he was involved in a corruption scandal in which he was awarded contracts to construct a road that he never built. Two years later, Moïse was accused of tampering

with the results of the election that won him the presidency. Moïse has proven time and time again that he cannot be trusted, yet the United States still supported him, albeit unofficially, throughout the election.

Just because American involvement is one of the reasons Haiti is in this precarious situation does not mean that the United States should no longer intervene. In fact, the United States now has a responsibility to fix its own mistakes. However, the U.S. should not be directly involved with the events taking place in Haiti. The United States has consistently proven that, when unsupervised, it will only act in its own best interests, so it should turn to the United Nations and petition the organization to help restore peace to the country. The first step in this process would be to reintroduce the presence of the United Nations' international peacekeepers in Haiti. This presence would bring some security back to region as the Haitian people continue their protests. The United States should also urge the United Nations to help the opposition party find a path for-

ward. It is not enough to only help them win the revolution. Without a concrete plan for government reformation, Haiti could fall right back into the trap of corrupted leadership, and the protests will have all been for nothing.

Intervention by way of the United Nations will help not only Haiti, but also benefit the United States. The Department of State itself said, "When Haiti is more prosperous, secure, and firmly rooted in democracy, Haitians and Americans benefit." Haiti is rich in natural resources, including oil and natural gas. A stable Haiti will allow for the global supply of these resources to go up, resulting in a decrease of the prices for these materials worldwide.

Haiti and the United States are also geographically close enough that stability in Haiti will lead to a decrease in Haitian immigration rates to the United States. President Donald J. Trump P 'oo himself has referred to Haiti as a "shithole country" and spoke about his irritation at the growing number of immigrants arriving from the country. That despicable comment notwithstanding, if

President Trump really is intent on reducing immigration from Haiti, the best way to do so would be to help restore stability to the country. In addition, helping the opposition party in Haiti would further cement the United States' spot as a key player in the spread of democracy worldwide. As Edwidge Danticat wrote recently in *The New Yorker*, the opposition wants "a more egalitarian, inclusive, and just society, where the rights of every citizen will be respected. Not just the wealthy and well-connected but the urban and rural poor, too." By supporting the opposition party, the United States will show the world that it supports these values of democracy on a universal scale.

The United States no longer has the luxury of claiming that it does not want to intervene in Haiti's political affairs — it already has. American intervention is what got Haiti into this mess, but it also has the power to help get Haiti out of it.

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

Next U.S. Secretary of Homeland Security Needs to Focus on Domestic Terrorism

By **Marcus Amine '22**
Opinions Writer

On October 11, Kevin McAleenan, the acting United States Secretary of Homeland Security, announced his intention to resign. After two of President Donald J. Trump P 'oo's top choices to fill the position were deemed unqualified, Trump and his administration have struggled to find an eligible candidate to replace McAleenan. Trump's top picks lacked bipartisan support from the Senate for confirmation and are largely thought to have been chosen because of their loyalty to the president's immigration policies.

To break the deadlock and make sure the Department of Homeland Security can efficiently and effectively carry out its task of protecting American citizens, Trump must nominate someone who is well-experienced and will have bipartisan support rather than play a political game that seeks only to ensure the continuation of his border patrol policies.

Trump's next pick for Secretary of Homeland Security must be able to autonomously operate the Department of Homeland Security without giving into Trump's political and moral biases. The best candidate for this dynamic government position



Photo courtesy of Associated Press

After six months as Acting Secretary of Homeland Security, Kevin McAleenan submitted his resignation.

should be someone with a background in military operations, knowledge of the modern-day shift in technological warfare, a lack of political biases, and a set of morals that will push the Secretary to uphold the security and safety of our great nation.

The Department of Homeland Security was created by President George W. Bush in 2003, as a response to the attacks of 9/11, primarily to combat domestic terrorism and

targeted violence on American soil. However, the department was recently scrutinized for the time and attention it has given to the strict border policies of President Trump rather than domestic terror threats.

While illegal immigration is an important issue, the rise in domestic terrorism and the lack of effective response has been alarming. For example, responses to the El Paso shooting and the Pittsburgh Tree of Life shooting

were minimal, and these tragedies could have been prevented with better understanding of, and preparation against, these types of attacks.

Therefore, the Department of Homeland Security should initiate and develop stronger relationships with local and state authorities to enable more proactive targeting of domestic terror threats at their source.

Federal law enforcement officials have said that because

committing acts of domestic terror lacks specific legal penalties, they do not have the tools and resources needed to stop domestic terror threats. Implementing and enforcing laws that specifically target domestic terrorism would enable local authorities to access and utilize the resources necessary to combat acts, or threats, of domestic terror.

The Department of Homeland Security's recently an-

nounced Strategic Framework for Countering Terrorism and Targeted Violence is a step in the right direction, but appointing a Secretary who is committed to actively seeking and destroying all potential signs and threats of domestic terrorism is crucial to the protection of our country.

For example, capturing a lone domestic terrorist seeking to do harm independently and not as a part of an organization would be extremely difficult. However, multi-departmental intelligence collection efforts and cooperation with local communities and governments — to detect potential terror threats before they become operational — will serve as a much better plan for total prevention, not just minimization, of independent domestic terrorism.

While border patrol is crucial for homeland security, the department must not neglect its other duties to the American people. The coalition of our legal, administrative, and law enforcement systems that fight for national security must function together and execute plans to prevent formations of and attacks by domestic terrorists.

Marcus Amine is a fourth-former from Greenwich, CT. He may be reached at mamine22@choate.edu

Library Modifications Keep Student Needs in Mind

By **Stephanie Chen '23**
Reporter

If you’ve been to the Andrew Mellon Library this school year, you may have noticed the clear, rectangular box in the reading room covered with a sea of colorful sticky notes. This isn’t a new piece of artwork that the School has invested in — although it does seem to have the potential of becoming quite a sophisticated piece of Cubist artwork. Instead, this box is one of the library’s many new features implemented this year aimed at improving student life and academic resources.

At the suggestion of the Student Council and under the initiative of Dr. Sherry Newman, Director of the Andrew Mellon Library, the decades-old library has received some upgrades. First, the library is increasing its supply of required class textbooks. If all goes as planned, every single textbook required in any Choate class will be on reserve at the library. Next, the library has created a new multimedia room equipped with many tools for project-based learning including green screens, tripods, iPads, editing software, and even a vinyl-cutting machine. Finally, the library has been trying to generate more student input on books. Whiteboards and the sticky note-covered rectangular boxes have been placed throughout the library to give students a place to share what they are reading at the moment. Similarly, students can post book recommendations and reviews on the library’s website.

JeWon Im ’23 said, “I really like the new ‘What Are You Reading?’ boards. I was looking at them and I saw that someone was reading *The Maze Runner* and they really liked it, so I went and checked it out. It also really helps that the boards are right in the library, so you can get the books immediately in case you’re like me and forget things easily.”

In addition, the Writing Center, which has long been a useful resource for students to receive peer feedback on their writing, has been moved to the

back room behind the circulation desk.

Kiki Kim ’20, a tutor at the Writing Center, said that the relocation was a smart move. “Before, the Writing Center was in the silent study area, so whenever we were giving advice to our tutees, we would feel slightly embarrassed whenever we spoke since everything was so quiet. We had to do everything in a whisper. But it’s so much better now, since it’s in a less quiet area, so we get to engage with our tutees more. It’s very freeing.”

To complement the Writing Center, the library is also working on creating a math tutoring center to provide math extra help.

These library changes to improve student life were overdue, according to Dr. Newman. “I think the library was seen as a study space and a repository for books, and I wanted it to be more than that,” said Dr. Newman. “I wanted it to be a student-driven center that provided a space that not only provided study space, but also provided space for support where we do the academic support sessions and where we do the math center. I also really wanted to incorporate the student voice, where they help create and curate the book collection here.”

Dr. Newman hopes that these new features, especially the new multimedia room, will improve student’s academic experience within the classroom as well. “This is a student space where you can be creative, and you can go beyond those PowerPoint presentations and create really incredible projects,” she said.

These new changes are already starting to benefit members of the Choate community by making the library much more vibrant and resourceful. However, the creativity and innovation that the library can hold ultimately comes down to the enthusiasm of the students using it. As the library continues to change and improve its resources, there is one thing they always keep in mind: the needs of the students.

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INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS: FAR FROM HOME, BUT FINDING THEIR WAY



Photo by Jessie Goodwin/The Choate News

Faris Alharthy ’20 is a senior from Jeddah, Saudi Arabia — an 11-hour plane ride from Choate.

By **Natarsha Yan '21**
Reporter

As a school that prides itself on its diversity, Choate is home to students from across the globe. Last week, I had the opportunity to talk with some of Choate’s many international students about their personal experiences on campus.

When asked what their experience at Choate has been like, responses varied from the appreciation of new opportunities offered at Choate to the rather tumultuous nature of adjusting to campus life. Dasha Asienga ’20, a senior from Nairobi, Kenya, talked about how her experience at Choate has had its ups and downs, saying, “Coming to Choate was difficult at first, because I was suddenly in a new place for a prolonged period of time, and I was also experiencing this new life alone, no longer as a tourist as I had in the past.” For Asienga, getting acclimated to the food, way of speaking, and weather in Connecticut was difficult. She credits the tremendous support she’s received “from so many people and a few clubs here” for her successful adjustment.

Similarly, P.J. Sethbhakdi ’20, a senior from Nonthaburi, Thailand, had a similarly challenging transition period. He said, “I guess it was just the struggle to adjust to boarding life that made my experience difficult at first. However, Choate has given me many differ-

ent opportunities to make me feel connected to its community.” He believes that with each additional year at Choate, his experience on campus has only gotten better.

Many international students have found Choate to be much more diverse, both in culture and activities, than their previous schools. Sesame Gaetsaloe ’21, a junior from Gaborone, Botswana, explained that Choate is very different from her previous school, a boarding school in South Africa. She explained that she was one of only five international students in her grade in South Africa. Here at Choate, she finds greater diversity in the international student community, but simultaneously notes that there is still a common understanding and shared experience among students, which she finds comforting. “Acknowledgment of everyone’s different backgrounds is really lovely,” Gaetsaloe said.

Faris Alharthy ’20, a senior from Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, also commented on the greater diversity of courses offered at Choate. “My old school only had 12 courses in total, and they were very general. I would study science, art, history, geography, and math. At Choate, there are so many courses in each of those disciplines, and they are more specific. I can actually choose what exactly I want to study,” he said.

Asienga has found the learning environment at Choate vast-

ly different from her previous school. “My old school was very structured and very formal. I had no relationship with my teachers outside of class, and it was almost a crime to question or challenge a teacher in class,” she said. “I’ve enjoyed the learning environment at Choate as I’ve been able to form relationships with my teachers outside of class on sports fields and in the dorms. It’s also changed the way that I approach learning as less of a relaying of information from an authority figure to the student, and more of a way of expanding my knowledge by asking questions and approaching the material from different perspectives.”

Many international students experienced a culture shock in the beginning of their transition to boarding school. Gaetsaloe finds that there are always a few cultural differences that she still has to ask for explanations for, but as the years pass, those moments have happened less frequently. Alharthy explained, “Before coming to Choate, I was in the same school for 14 years. It was one of four day schools in Jeddah that nearly everyone went to. Many of my friends I had known since I was three years old. Because I was so used to living around the same people, the same school, and the same daily life, it was difficult to transition to Choate at first.” He continued, “But it also opened my eyes to more things. Some things

that many people here may see as normal, like using an Uber or same-day mail delivery, don’t exist where I come from. It makes me appreciate and notice the smaller things that others might take for granted.”

Ideally, Asienga would want to live far enough from school that she could still be a boarder, but close enough that she could go home if she ever really needed to. “It is difficult, as a teenager, to come to terms with the fact that I can’t just go home for family birthdays, my grandparent’s burial, my friend’s graduation, because I can’t just hop on a plane for a 15-hour flight for the weekend,” she said. Sethbhakdi echoed this sentiment, explaining how it is hard to be away from his family for months, and how it is even harder to say goodbye whenever he has to come back to Choate after breaks.

Although being far away from family is tough, many of Choate’s international students have accepted the School as their second home. Through support from friends and faculty, students can more easily adjust to the transition to boarding school in the United States. The diversity of people and the opportunities Choate offers make it a place students from across the world choose to return to year after year.

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Inside the Kitchens of Two Faculty Members

Ms. Kolina Koleva and Ms. Diana Beste share their best recipes.

By **Sidharth Rao '23**
Reporter

Math teacher Ms. Kolina Koleva has a recipe that she’s known her whole life. It is for klin, a Bulgarian dish from the Rhodope Mountains where she grew up. Rhodope klin is a savory dish traditionally made with filo pastry, rice, eggs, cheese, butter, and salt. It is a variation of banitsa, another Bulgarian dish, and similar to spanakopita, a Greek pastry.

Ms. Koleva’s grandmother used to prepare klin for her and her family, so it was easy for Ms. Koleva to learn the recipe. When preparing klin, Ms. Koleva is reminded of days spent in the kitchen with her grandmother. She said, “Our oven in Bulgaria was too small, so my grandma would get the stovetop heated, and she would cook one side of the klin, and then flip it and cook the other side. Now, I cook one side and move it around because my stovetop is too small.”

Ms. Koleva continues to make klin because it reminds her of Bulgaria; it serves as a way for her to connect to her home country. Her family also loves her klin, so she prepares



Photo courtesy of 196 Flavors

A traditional Bulgarian klin.

it very frequently. She enjoys klin’s versatility, with its endless possibilities and variations of preparation. “Every family does it their own way — the consistency can be very different,” said Ms. Koleva. Some people like to add spinach and kale, while others do not. Ms. Koleva’s personal preference is to add a lot of cheese.

Ms. Koleva’s klin:
(serves 3-4)

- filo dough sheets
- butter
- 2-3 eggs
- Bulgarian feta cheese (usu-

- ally 3x6x6 cm block, depending on the size of the klin being prepared)
- pre-cooked rice

1. Mix the cheese with the eggs in a bowl.
2. Butter up the filo dough sheets.
3. Spoon dollops of the feta mix over the individual sheets.
4. Roll the sheets.
5. Butter the sheets on the top.
6. Roll the sheets into a spiral.
7. Place individual spirals onto baking tray with the center facing upward.
8. Bake at 350 °F until golden-brown.

Ms. Diana Beste, a Latin teacher, often prepares a recipe that celebrates her love of French culture and cuisine. “The recipe for clafoutis was given to former French teachers Mr. Dan Chisholm and Mr. Zabby Scott years ago at a Parisian restaurant,” said Ms. Beste. Clafoutis is a baked French dessert of fruit — traditionally black cherries — arranged in a buttered dish and covered with a thick batter. It is also sometimes served with cream. The recipe that Ms. Beste knows is a variation on this dish, which she says she makes more cake-like. She loves to make it for her colleagues, students, friends, and family. “It is very easy to make and always a crowd pleaser!” she said.

Ms. Beste’s clafoutis:
(serves 8)

- 1½ cups flour (with leavening)
- 1½ cups sugar
- pinch of salt
- dash of cardamom (optional)
- 2 eggs
- dash of milk
- dash of vanilla extract
- 10 tablespoons melted butter



Photo courtesy of 196 Flavors

A classic French clafoutis.

- fruits of your choice
 - crème fraîche
1. Preheat oven to 325 °F.
 2. Butter and line with parchment paper a dark, metal cake pan.
 3. Mix the flour, sugar, salt, and cardamom.
 4. Add in the eggs, milk, and vanilla extract.
 5. Finish with 10 tablespoons of melted butter.

6. Stir until it glistens.
7. Transfer batter to tart pan.
8. Place fruits of your choice into the batter. (Ms. Beste recommends apricots, raspberries, or peaches!)
9. Bake until golden brown.
10. Sprinkle with sugar and serve with crème fraîche.

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Behind The Scenes of Parents' Weekend A Cappella Performances

Pictured from top left, clockwise: Lilith, Bellacanto, Maiyeros, Whimawehs, Bellacanto, Melatones.



Photo Courtesy of Caroline Rispoli

Lilith presidents planned their performance "Rich Girl" and "Valerie."



Photo Courtesy of Song Detoc

Whimawehs performed a mashup of "Red Bone" and "Valerie."



Photo Courtesy of Paige Loughlin

Bellacanto uses Noteflight to create their arrangements.



Photo Courtesy of Sabrina Carlier

Bellacanto picked common fast and slow songs to entertain the crowd.



Photo Courtesy of Kiki Kim

Maiyeros scouts for new voices with higher vocal ranges.



Photo Courtesy of Arjun Singh

Melatones hope to expose students and parents to more music genres.

By **Tony Lee '21**
Staff Reporter

With one ensemble decked in blue sweatshirts to another dressed up in black suits, purple accessories, and red outfits, Choate's five student a cappella groups lit up Colony Hall over Parents' Weekend with their first performance of the year. The groups performed songs from a variety of genres and time periods, from 2000's pop with "Rich Girl," by Gwen Stefani, and "Valerie," by Amy Winehouse, to more recent songs like Rixton's "Me and My Broken Heart" and The Lumineers' "Ophelia."

Whether in student dorms or on stage during an all-school meeting, most of Choate's a cappella groups perform for fellow students. In contrast, as the name suggests, parents composed the majority of the audience during the Parents' Weekend performance. As a result, the a cappella groups had to adapt to their new audience and select songs that entertain parents as well as students.

"We sang 'Grenade,' by Bruno Mars, and 'Ophelia,' by The Lumineers. We usually do a fast and a slow song — one that has a slower beat, and that one still has energy and that we all know," said Julia Ekholm '20, co-president of Bellacanto. "You have to think about your song choices according to your crowd. They have to also know it and understand it, so the songs can't be too crazy or complex."

Lilith performed "Rich Girl," by Gwen Stefani, and "Everybody Talks," by Neon Trees. Co-presidents Caroline Rispoli '20 and Jamie Shin '20 discussed the upcoming Lilith performances over the summer and planned out the songs to sing for each program. According to Rispoli, she and Shin brought the two song suggestions to the rest of Lilith and cemented the decision.

Melatones, Choate's most newest a cappella group, established in 2017, sang "The Kids Are Alright," by Chloe x Halle. Co-president of Mel-

atones Dominic Thomas '21 hoped to expose students and parents to more diverse musical genres with the R&B song choice. "The founders of the group wanted us to only perform songs by artists of color, so we could expand the knowledge of songs on campus. At Choate, you mostly hear the same sound from the same genre from similar artists," Thomas said. "We want to bring a new aspect of a cappella to the Choate campus."

The performances were a success and even more impressive considering the short amount of time for rehearsals — auditions for the a cappella groups took place only a month before the concert.

"Bellacantos recruited people from all grades, and we knew what we needed. All of the groups kind of zoom in on the niches they're missing in the groups — missing spots in vocal ranges or styles — and look for people that fill in the gaps," Ekholm said.

As the co-president of the only all-male a cappella group

on campus, Maiyeros, George Trammell '20 noted the importance of scouting for new voices with higher vocal ranges. Trammell said singers who have higher voices and strong falsettos are valuable assets to the group, but it's difficult to predict if someone's voice will deepen throughout their years at Choate.

Wide singing range and pure vocal talent aren't the only criteria for the a cappella recruitment process. According to Will Robertson '20, co-president of Bellacanto, members need to be vocally flexible and be able to adapt their voices for songs in diverse genres and styles, from light, slow songs to grungy rock tunes.

Parents' Weekend is the first major a cappella performance of the school year. Every year, the short time between auditions and Parents' Weekend forces groups to have tighter practice schedules and stricter rehearsals. All five a cappella groups at Choate held one-and-a-half to two-hours-long rehearsals twice a week, with

extended and more frequent rehearsals closer to the performance date.

"In a typical practice, we initially break into voice parts and individually learn our parts, then come together after. This week, as a reward for our hard work, we don't have rehearsal on Wednesday," said Rispoli. She and Shin make diligent efforts to balance productivity with fun in Lilith with cookies, food, and team items.

According to Robertson, many people appreciate the final a cappella performances, but don't understand the behind-the-scenes process behind each song arrangement. Robertson shared the tool groups used to arrange and practice songs: NoteFlight.com, an online website that allows members to write and modify music directly on the sheet music.

In addition to the vocal element of a cappella, Rispoli notes other intricacies in each performance, such as costumes, choreography,

placement of members, and consideration of the location. The Parents' Weekend show was the first a cappella performance in the brand new Colony Hall, and the new location held both pros and cons for the groups. "Colony Hall has improved acoustics compared to the steps outside of the PMAC, but the stairs we performed on weren't as wide as the PMAC steps, so positioning the members was a little awkward," Rispoli said. "I think it's a great performance space overall: it's a lot brighter, and the inside is warm and well-designed."

"The group this year has so much potential, so I am incredibly excited for what the rest of the year holds for us," Larissa Gazda '20, Vice President and three-year member of the Whimawehs.

Be sure to look out for upcoming a cappella events including the holiday program, vocal concert, and Acappellooza!

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Arts Concentration Feature: Maxwell Brown '21



By **Bianca Rosen '21**
Columnist

Maxwell Brown '21 played Rooster Hannigan in *Annie* in the third grade. Since then, Brown's newfound passion for theater blossomed. Today, Brown is a part of Theater Arts Concentration, president of Choate's all male a cappella group the Maiyeros, member of dance company and step-squad, and a stage manager for the fall musical *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*.

Any theater production requires a huge commitment in and outside of rehearsals to fully interpret the production, connect with the characters, and grow comfortable performing. Brown brings his spirit and professionalism to every production and cast. It can be relatively straightforward to participate in rehearsals, by relying on one's natural ability and the eventual moment when it all clicks, but Brown looks at the process differently. He believes that a good performance is achieved through productive rehearsals and consistent hard work. It isn't solely about the final product, but the chain of events occurring before it.

Brown's key to practicing for a performance is repetition, living by the slogan "practice makes permanent." He nails the part of

the performance that's scripted to establish a solid foundation for his part, and then focuses on layering his own interpretations on top.

Pinpointing how to portray a piece involves lots of experimentation and trial and error. Brown likes to use other people as a mock audience in order to get more advice and criticism. He says that he learns best when receiving feedback from his peers.

In addition, a key technique Brown's acting coach taught him is to use his breath. According to him, breathing in acting is like reading a paper out loud — you hear where the flow is off or where the sentence structure is repetitive. Similarly, your breath is a way of measuring the rhythm, a component of the script that is critical to a good performance.

All of this hard work and practice culminates in the final on-stage performance. Brown said, "The feeling of being in the moment on stage is exhilarating because it's a feeling of total freedom."

Brown also draws much of his inspiration from African-American performers. African-American actors often haven't received the same recognition as white performers,

so seeing an African-American on a stage or screen is an inspiration. "I see myself in them, and I picture myself with them on the same stage," said Brown. For this reason, Brown's dream role is Aaron Burr in *Hamilton*, a character traditionally played by an African-American actor.

When Brown first decided to choose Choate, in eighth grade, he came to campus to see the 2017 production of *The Addams Family*. Brown was amazed by the performance, and it got him excited about the art programs at Choate. In particular, Scott Romeyn '18 stood out to Brown because of his confidence on stage. To Brown's amazement, when he came to Choate, he and Romeyn ended up in the Maiyeros together.

The horizon is full of lots of exciting things in the arts for Brown. During his time stage managing *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*, which will premiere in the beginning of November, Brown has enjoyed watching the cast transform into their characters as the show comes alive.

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Photo by Jenny Guo/The Choate News

Choate's 2017 production of *The Addams Family* inspired Maxwell Brown '21 to pursue the arts at Choate.



FIELD REPORT

Choate Fall Record
75 - 87 - 13

Varsity Saturday Games

Boys' Cross Country (1-7)
falls to NMH, 15-44

Girls' Cross Country (3-4)
beats NMH, 28-27

Field Hockey (2-11)
falls to NMH, 1-4

Boys' Soccer (5-6-4)
falls to NMH, 0-4

Girls' Soccer (8-1-4)
ties NMH, 1-1

Girls' Volleyball (5-9)
beats NMH, 3-1

J.V. Saturday Games

Boys' Cross Country (3-3)
falls to NMH, 27-28

Field Hockey (3-7)
falls to NMH, 0-1

Boys' Soccer (5-5-1)
falls to NMH, 0-3

Girls' Soccer (5-3-3)
ties NMH, 1-1

Girls' Volleyball (10-1)
beats NMH, 3-0

Thirds Saturday Games

Boys' Soccer (3-6)
falls to NMH, 0-1

Girls' Soccer (0-1-1)
falls to NMH, 0-2

Varsity Wednesday

Field Hockey (2-12)
falls to Kent, 1-6

Boys' Soccer (5-7-4)
falls to Taft, 2-5

Girls' Soccer (9-1-4)
beats Kent, 8-0

Girls' Volleyball (6-9)
beats GA, 3-1

Boys' Water Polo (4-10)
falls to Loomis, 8-13

J.V. Wednesday Games

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

Girls' Soccer (6-3-3)
beats Kent, 7-0

Girls' Volleyball (11-1)
beats GA, 3-2

Not-So-Lazy Sundays with Varsity Ultimate Frisbee



Photo courtesy of Ross Mortensen

Every Sunday afternoon, returners and newcomers practice Ultimate for two hours.

By **Bianca Rosen '21**
Staff Reporter

Varsity Ultimate captains Liam Podos '20, Will Zhu '20, and Eric Li '20, along with Head Coach Avery Feingold, have kick-started the school year by playing pick up ultimate frisbee on Sundays and occasionally throughout the week — even though their team's season will not begin until the spring term.

Having graduated 14 out of last year's 15 Varsity Ultimate players, the team sees its casual pickup practices as an opportunity for players unsure of joining the team to test the waters and familiarize themselves with the sport. These relaxed practices are also a way for veterans and newcomers alike to practice their skills, hang out with some friends and teammates, and feel connected to a community. "We want to get a jump start on learning the basics such as catching and throwing, so we can hit the ground running when the season actually starts," said Podos. Also, it's just fun to get some returners and new frisbee players together to play for an hour or two on Sunday afternoons."

The team encourages anyone to attend pickups, whether they are serious about the sport

or simply looking for something to do after class that does not require much prior experience and is enjoyable for its players. Ultimate frisbee is unique in its emphasis on both commitment and enjoyment. Even at its most competitive stage, the sport still encourages a sense of whimsy and individuality. While in college, Feingold competed at the ultimate national championships in a Princess Leia costume. "There's a beautiful duality to ultimate. It is both serious and silly at the same time," said Feingold.

The captains incorporate a mix of games and techniques in the practices. This can mean passing around, playing a game, or running through a set of drills. Ultimate is, at heart, a simple game, and because of that has become something of a universal game — nearly anyone can play it and pick up the rules quickly. The game has a full spectrum of possibilities; the sport is both recreational and competitive, serious and casual. Varsity Ultimate Frisbee pickups can be an opportunity to become invested in the sport or nothing more than a fun, one-off Sunday activity.

Above all, ultimate players emphasize creating an upbeat and collaborative culture that fo-

cuses on one's growth as both an athlete and a person. "The number one rule of ultimate is something called 'spirit of the game,' which is this idea that above any level of competition, above any amount of fierceness always has to come to a deep respect for one's opponent," said Feingold.

Even at the highest levels of ultimate, there are no referees. Players are responsible for calling fouls for themselves and for practicing integrity and self-control in games. The idea of moving throughout the field without running into or harming the opposing team, takes self-restraint and an extra awareness. This is something many sports fail to emphasize, but ultimate frisbee places it at the forefront of its rules.

Ultimate frisbee is about balancing competitiveness with respect; in a sense, it models the idea of sportsmanship. The pickups are less about frantically preparing for the spring season, but more about creating a sense of community that goes hand in hand with the actual playing. However, the practices will hopefully lead to a successful start of the spring season for Varsity Ultimate.

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Senior Soccer: Choate's Lone Undefeated Team

By **Sam Anastasio '23**
Reporter

Each fall, around a few dozen seniors looking for an enjoyable and stress-free afternoon activity partake in the intramural sport Senior Soccer. Throughout the season, the team scrimmages the boys' and girls' soccer teams on campus and other intramural teams including Regatta Crew. Most years, the intramural squad of inexperienced players loses to the interscholastic soccer teams. But this year, Senior Soccer has taken down Boys' J.V. and Thirds Soccer, Girls' J.V. and Thirds Soccer.

This year's team is comprised of about 30 to 40 players of various genders and levels of soccer experience — some players come after years playing on interscholastic teams, while others have never kicked a soccer ball. The team meets to practice for an hour every day, from Monday through Thursday, and it plays a game against another Choate team once a week. "It's all games, it's all about fun, and it's a time for sixth formers in the fall term, which is notoriously known for being hard to play around and laugh," said head coach Mr. John Cobb.

The team only scrimmages during its practices — they do not complete drills or conditioning. Most of the team members are friends with each other, and the primary goal is to have fun. "I like to think of it as an oasis in the midst of a really hectic term. Our rules are to laugh, pass to everyone, and to not talk about college stuff," Mr. Cobb said.

The team's unusual success is in large part thanks to former soccer player Jake Nadzam '20, who, most observers agree, is the best player on the team. Nadzam has been playing soccer for more than seven years and played on Boys'

J.V. Soccer during his freshman, sophomore, and junior seasons. This year, Nadzam turned down a spot on Boys' Varsity Soccer to focus on the rigorous and demanding college admission process.

"I'd rather feel bad for quitting the [varsity] team than feel bad for not applying to colleges well," Nadzam said. He added that the time commitment of a varsity sport made it difficult to play for Boys' Varsity Soccer during the fall, but Senior Soccer was the perfect place to continue a sport he enjoys while having more time during afternoons and weekends. Like Nadzam, other seniors see Senior Soccer as a way to have a fun time with friends and exercise, while still maintaining enough time to work on college applications and other academic commitments.

In addition to Nadzam, the team has a few other players with an interscholastic Choate soccer experience. Alexandra Alkhayer '20, Christopher Gore-Grimes '20, Sonali Singh '20, and George Trammell '20 have all played on either Boys' or Girls' J.V. Soccer. These players, as well as Nadzam, give the team enough talent in its lineup to be competitive against the interscholastic Choate soccer teams.

Some seniors new to soccer have also played critical roles for the team. Andrew Mi '20 has been a brick wall in the net, despite having never played goalie prior to this fall. Newcomers Tash Hobson '20 and Yolanda Wang '20 form a solid defensive line ahead of Mi.

Whether it's the friendships they've formed or their skillful squad that has contributed to their success, one thing is clear: no Choate team will easily defeat Senior Soccer.

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PLAYER PROFILE

IN THE POOL WITH JACK SUN '21

By **Alex Skrypek '23**
Reporter

Jack Sun '21 does it all for Boys' Varsity Water Polo — leading the team with 53 goals, 6 assists, and 22 ejections drawn. Sun arrived at Choate with extensive water polo ability and has started games from the team since he arrived on campus as a new sophomore. Recently, Sun spoke with reporter Alex Skrypek '23 about his water polo career before and during his time at Choate.

Alex Skrypek: How did you start playing water polo?

Jack Sun: I started playing water polo during my seventh-grade year at the Eaglebrook School, in Deerfield, Mass. I was already a swimmer, which was a winter sport, so I needed a sport for the fall. My dad suggested I play water polo because I was already a swimmer, and I had big hands.

AS: What other water polo experience did you have before Choate?

JS: I've never played on a club team or done a summer camp. I've only played at my schools, so just Eaglebrook and Choate.

AS: Did water polo play a role in your decision to come to Choate?

JS: I chose to come to Choate because of the sense of community I felt when I visited. Water polo definitely played a role in that decision. When I revisited, I met my cap-



Photo courtesy of Ross Mortensen

This season, Jack Sun '21 has totaled 53 goals, 6 assists, 20 steals, and 22 ejections drawn..

tains-to-be — Ollie Chessen '19, Tommy Wachtell '19, and Matt Anastasio '19 — who warmly welcomed me.

AS: How did you adjust to playing against high-school competition?

JS: The transition was definitely unexpected. You start playing against people who've played their whole lives and can do things you've never seen. There are people from California, part of the Olympic Development Program who play a completely different kind of water polo than

you're used to. You're forced to learn and adapt to these competitors, and the game is so much more physical. In water polo, anything underwater that the referee can't see is allowed. I learned that the hard way, with a lot of bruises and scratches.

AS: What are the differences and similarities between swimming and water polo?

JS: I think I'm equally competitive in both sports, but I have to say I enjoy water polo more. Swimming gets really monotonous at times. You're spend-

ing two hours a day following a black line at the bottom of the pool, and when you're lucky, you get a change of scenery to the roof of the pool. There's very little variation in swimming. Water polo, on the other hand, has endless possibilities. There are so many ways to improve and beat the other team, and that's what I enjoy about the sport.

AS: What is your favorite thing about the sport?

JS: The game is physically, intellectually, and mentally demanding. Obviously, you

have to be physically fit to play the sport. Treading water and swimming back and forth for four seven-minute quarters is exhausting. Intellectually, you are forced to make a smart decision in an instant — where to pass, where to shoot, who to guard, where to shot-block. Mentally, you've got to learn to keep a cool head. After your defender punches you in the stomach and nearly drowns you, you have to learn to keep your cool and focus on the game. When your opponent scores goal after goal, you have to learn to focus on the next play and learn from your mistakes.

AS: What number are you, and do you have a story behind that number?

JS: I am number nine in the pool. Last year, I wanted to be number eight, because American water polo legend Tony Azevedo was number eight. However, one of the seniors last year pulled the seniority card, and so I changed to number nine. I've grown to like it.

AS: What are your future plans in water polo?

JS: I would love to play water polo at the collegiate level, whether that's on a varsity or club team. I don't think I could stand being separated from a sport I love so much.

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