



THE CHOATE NEWS

YEAR IN REVIEW 2022-2023

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In Loving Memory: Max the Snake

Summer 2022

A beloved member of the Choate community, Max the Snake passed away in the summer of 2022. Originally, Max was a corn snake that belonged to the grandson of a former English teacher, Mr. Connie Mathews, but he was taken in by the Science Department when his previous caretaker could no longer look after him. Arriving as a little creature but one foot in length, Max grew to be over four feet long during the course of his 15-year lifespan. Many Choate students and faculty members were deeply saddened by his passing. “It feels different without him,” said Cathy Liu ’24.



Graphic by Yujin Kim ’23 / The Choate News



Photo by Toffy Prakittiphoom ’24 / The Choate News

Community Service Day

September 30

For the first time since 2019, Choate’s annual Community Service Day made a comeback this last September. All students and select faculty members engaged in service projects that catered towards environmental justice, food insecurity, education access, and more. The theme of the day was “Service work is justice work” and included activities such as volunteering at animal shelters, senior homes, and public areas. Director of Community Service Ms. Melissa Koomson shared, “My hope is that students will learn the real, critical need of community service and that students will make connections with community service, and [understand] how it’s an integral part of Choate education.”

Family Weekend

October 27-29

This year, families from around the country and world arrived on campus for Family Weekend. On both Friday and Saturday, they sat in on classes, providing them with an inside look into a Choate student’s daily schedule. They then attended a concert performed by various student music ensembles on Friday night, including the Symphony Orchestra, Jazz Ensemble, Chamber Chorus, Wind Ensemble, and Concert Orchestra. On Saturday afternoon, visitors watched and cheered on Choate’s sports teams as they competed against rival schools. Christian Madon ’24’s mother said, “My favorite part was sitting outside and watching [Christian] play soccer. It was a beautiful day, so it was just a beautiful day to sit outside and watch.” For the first time since Covid-19, all the traditional activities and events of Family Weekend were held and enjoyed by visiting families.



Photo courtesy of Choate Flickr



Photo courtesy of Choate Flickr

Diversity Day

January 16

For the 32nd year, the Choate community celebrated Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day with Diversity Day. This year’s theme was “United in Difference,” which reflected Choate’s diverse community and continued efforts to create a globally aware student body. The School welcomed keynote speakers Dr. Ilyasah Shabazz, daughter of civil rights activist Malcolm X, and Mr. Ndaba Mandela, grandson of South African leader Nelson Mandela, for a school-wide presentation in the morning and special lunch with invited community members. Throughout the day, students also participated in both faculty- and student-led workshops and movie screenings on a variety of different topics, including reproductive rights and sociolinguistics.

Students 3D Print Prosthetic

November 15

12-year-old local cellist Miss Emily Reid and Choate alumna Dr. Allison Kessler Vear ’03 visited Choate to promote awareness of disabilities. To kick-start School Meeting, Miss Reid played a compilation of themes from Star Trek with a group of Choate musicians. The performance showcased the prosthetic that she used to play with, which was initially developed by Yale e-Nable students and later enhanced by Ryan Kim ’23 and Junho Lee ’24. The new version of the ‘cello arm’ was made through computer-aided design (CAD) software and 3D printing. After the performance, Dr. Vear shared her experiences with navigating the challenges of being disabled at Choate. She spoke openly about the discrimination she and other disabled people face on a daily basis and offered advice on how the community can work to become more accepting and inclusive.



Photo courtesy of Ryan Kim ’23



Photo courtesy of Choate Flickr

100th Anniversary of Deerfield Day

November 12

This year’s Deerfield Day marked the 100th anniversary of the Choate-Deerfield rivalry, a major milestone in both schools’ histories. Choate won three out of five varsity games — Girls’ Varsity Soccer, Varsity Football, and Boys’ Varsity Soccer — and secured the 2023 Deerfield Day victory. Both Wild Boars and Deerfield Doors showed up in high spirits to cheer for their respective teams in respect of the rivalry.

Choate-Deerfield Music Day

January 29

Deerfield Music Day, which aimed to break down the century-long Choate-Deerfield rivalry and foster inter-school camaraderie through a shared love of music, was held in Choate’s Ann and George Colony Hall this year. Choate and Deerfield student musicians spent hours practicing with each other and attended workshops hosted by notable guest musicians and conductors, such as Dr. Edward Cumming, Dr. Lauren Sevan, Dr. David W. Vandewalker, Ms. Pei-Shan Lee, and Dr. Jeff Douma. The day culminated in a concert featuring performances from every ensemble, and each student, regardless of school or section, worked together to bring the music notes to life.



Photo by Toffy Prakittiphoom ’24 / The Choate News



Graphic by Melody Qian ’24 / The Choate News

Drug Policy Revision

Winter Break 2022

This winter, for the first time in nearly three decades, the School revised its policies surrounding drugs, alcohol, tobacco, and nicotine use. Prior to the shift, cases involving these substances were addressed using separate policies, and any purchase, manufacturing, possession, distribution, use, or abuse of prescription drugs and chemical substances resulted in immediate dismissal. The new policy groups all illicit substances into the same category and evaluates infractions on a case-by-case basis. Mr. Velez hopes that the change will encourage students to learn from their past mistakes. “At the end of the day, we’re a school, and our goal is to educate our students. Oftentimes, when mistakes or lapses in judgment take place, that’s when we do our best teaching,” he said.

Revisit Day

March 27, 30, and 31

On March 27, 30, and 31, Choate welcomed 232 newly-accepted students to campus. They experienced life at Choate and got a glimpse into campus activities. Every morning, Gold Key tour guides and Boar Pen welcomed families to kick off Revisit Day. Then, Chief Enrollment Manager Mr. Jeff Beaton and Head of School Dr. Alex Curtis gave opening remarks, and student groups showcased their talents for visiting families. Prospective students spent the rest of the school day shadowing their hosts, who were paired with them based on shared interests. At the end of the day, visiting students reunited with their parents at the Chapel, where newly-elected Student Body President Amanda Benneh ’24 and Head of Student and Academic Life Ms. Jenny Elliott shared closing remarks. Families were also encouraged to visit Community Fair, where they spoke to representatives from the Athletic, Academic, and Art departments, as well as Signature Programs, the Summer Program, and a selection of student clubs.



Photo courtesy of Choate Flickr

Community Conversation

Year-round



Photo by Toffy Prakittiphoom ’24 / The Choate News

This year, the School continued the newfound tradition of Community Conversations, creating a space for underrepresented voices to share their experiences with the school community. Four conversations were held: gender non-conforming identity on October 10, male identity on January 31, Muslim identity on February 10, and neurodiversity and disability identity on April 25. A new addition to the School, Associate Dean of Equity and Inclusion for Student Programming and Support Ms. Jillian Fogue reported that “after hearing [the Community] Conversation, it sounds like there’s more work we can do to make it easier for teachers to see names and pronouns.”

Andrew Mellon Library Programs

Year-round

- AAPI Heritage Month Resource Display with Chinese Club, CKFA, CSAA Japanese Club, Thai Club
- Arab American Heritage Month Resource Display with MENA Program
- Arab Music and Storytelling Event with MENA Program
- Author Visit: Kevin Wilson with English Dept., Wallingford Public Library (One Book One Wallingford)
- Biannual Duck Scavenger Hunt in the Library
- Black History Month Resource Display with Black Student Alliance
- Community Conversation Resource Displays: Male Identity, Muslim Identity, Neurodiversity
- Diversity Day Resource Display with the Office of Equity and Inclusion
- Earth Week Short Film Fest, Letter Writing, and Resource Display with C-Proctors
- Feminist Poetry Reading and Women’s History Month Resource Display with Choate for Women
- Hispanic and Latine Heritage Month Resource Display
- International Education Week Movie Screening with Director of Global Engagement
- Jewish American Heritage Month Resource Display with Hillel
- LGBTQIA+ History Month Resource Display
- Neurodiversity Awareness Month Resource Display with the Neurodiversity Club
- Poster Making for One Book One Wallingford with Art Club
- Winter and Spring Cultural Religious Celebrations Resource Display with the Office of Spiritual Life
- Winter and Spring Poetry and Creative Writing Readings with The Lit

Wellness Day

January 20 and April 13



Photo by Toffy Prakittiphoom ’24 / The Choate News

The year, Choate reintroduced the wellness program, Wellness Day, intended to offer respite from the hustle and bustle of school. Activities included tie-dyeing, Capture the Flag, board games, cooking, fly fishing, and more. Many activities were also student-led. For example, Sachi Mehra ’23 hosted a game of rugby to share her love for the sport while simultaneously bringing something new and refreshing for the Choate community to try. English teacher Mr. David Loeb said, “It’s difficult for anyone at Choate to be at their best, teachers or students, unless they’re feeling their best, and events like this certainly allow people to have happy and relaxed moments.”

SPORTS

Choate Teams Win Deerfield Day *(November 12, 2022)*



Photo courtesy of Choate Flickr

After a long and hard day of competitions, Choate's sports teams successfully earned the 2023 Deerfield Day victory. Varsity Football won 40-32 and Boys' Varsity Soccer won 2-1, while Deerfield defeated Girls' Varsity Volleyball and Girls' Varsity Field Hockey. Girls' JV Soccer, Girls' JV Field Hockey, and Girls' JV Volleyball also collected wins for the School. The tie-breaking game came down to Girls' Varsity Soccer. After a thrilling match with an enthusiastic crowd, the team won 4-1, and students stormed the pitch in celebration.

Soccer Succeeds at Championships *(November 19, 2022)*



Photo courtesy of Choate Flickr

Girls' Varsity Soccer boasted a season record of 15-2-1. The team earned the 2022 Founders League and Women's Western New England Prep School Soccer Association (WWNEPSSA) titles. Furthermore, on November 16, they advanced to the semifinals of the New England Preparatory School Athletic Council (NEPSAC) Championships after beating Miss Porter's School 1-0 in the quarterfinals. Co-Captain Emma Kirk '23 said that next year's Girls' Varsity Soccer will "continue to thrive."

Squash Wins New Englands *(February 17-19, 2023)*



Photo courtesy of @choatesquash Instagram

Boys' Varsity Squash's impressive season culminated in a victory at the New England "B" Division Championships. After a series of competitive matches against Westminster School, Milton Academy, and Groton School, the winning game came down to Elias Starr '26. With an incredible comeback and an intense final game, Starr's win secured Choate's 4-3 win against Groton. "That's the best moment I've ever experienced as a part of the team," said fellow player Zach Starr '24. "It was so unreal watching that happen."

Wrestling Competes at Nationals *(February 24-26, 2023)*



Photo courtesy of @choatewrestling Instagram

Wrestling had a strong showing at the National Prep Wrestling Championships, which was held in Maryland from February 24 to 26. First-year Head Coach Ryan Roddy led the girls to a fifth-place standing, while the boys finished in 37th. Co-Captain Sachi Mehra '23, Elsa Holmes '25, and Leanne La '26 each placed fourth in their respective classes and earned an All-American status, with Mehra becoming a two-time All-American. Pearson Hill '24 placed eighth in his class to become a three-time All-American.

Varsity Softball Showcases Excellence *(Spring 2023)*



Photo courtesy of Choate Flickr

Despite having a small team composed of just 11 athletes, Girls' Varsity Softball had a successful season with a 13-2 record. Co-Captain Jordan Wallace '24 had 36 runs-batted-in (RBI) and nine home runs over the course of the season, becoming Choate's all-time record holder for home runs in both a career and single season. Teammate Bella Hassett '24 and Co-Captain Alex Hassett '23 had a perfect game against Miss Porter's School on April 5, contributing to the team's decisive win. They ended the season with a win against Westminster School at the Western New England Championship Game.

Boys' Varsity Lacrosse Beats Deerfield *(April 15, 2023)*



Photo courtesy of Choate Flickr

For the first time in 17 years, Boys' Varsity Lacrosse won against Choate's biggest rival, Deerfield Academy. A nationally ranked top 25 team, Deerfield was the favorite going into the match. However, with hard work and a robust team culture, the Wild Boars achieved a 14-13 upset. Attacker Alex Krusko '24 and goalkeeper Rafferty Callahan '24 heavily contributed to the win, with Krusko scoring in all four quarters and Callahan saving over 10 goals. Co-Captain Ben Wable '23 said, "We plan to continue to beat [Deerfield] in the future. This is just the start."

ARTS

Music from the Sole *(October 7-8, 2022)*



Photo by Toffy Prakittiphoom '24/The Choate News

In the fall, New York City-based music and dance ensemble Music from the Sole visited the Paul Mellon Arts Center (PMAC). The group performed *I Didn't Come to Stay*, an intricately choreographed work featuring samba, tap, and percussive dance to live funk and jazz music played by a five-piece band. In addition, they held a workshop teaching students in Choate's dance and Arts Concentration programs integral parts of Afro-Brazilian dance. During their visit, Music from the Sole not only gave an exhilarating performance but also challenged students while imparting their valuable knowledge.

Salvation Road *(November 4-5, 2022)*



Photo courtesy of Choate Flickr

This year's fall production on the PMAC Main Stage was *Salvation Road*. The play follows Cliff and his friend Duffy as they search for Cliff's sister, who cuts off her family after joining a religious cult. Focusing on the difficulties that come with making friends in a new social setting, the play spoke to the hardships many boarding students face at Choate. Music by Choate graduate Dora Jar '15 was also featured. A successful run with positive audience feedback, *Salvation Road* hoped to highlight the vulnerabilities that students face in new environments.

Dance Concert *(March 30, April 1-2, 2023)*



Photo courtesy of Lauren Kee '24

Early in the spring term, the annual spring dance concert showcased 16 works choreographed by students, faculty, and dance clubs on the PMAC stage. The concert also consisted of a wide variety of genres, from hip-hop and contemporary to ballet and Indian dance forms. Each piece was introduced by a short video that shared the choreographer's inspiration and glimpses of the rehearsal process. The performance garnered the appreciation of energetic audiences. After a long year of hard work, the show was a culmination of the dedication and passion exhibited by all members of Choate's dance community.

Arts Concentration Trip *(March 22, 2023)*



Photo courtesy of Shawn Yang '24

This spring, students in the Arts Concentration Signature Program spent a day in New Haven for the Arts Concentration field trip. The first stop on the trip was at the Yale Repertory Theater. There, students watched a performance of "Mojada," a play that explores the setbacks and difficulties of crossing the United States-Mexico border. The second stop was at the Yale Art Gallery, where students explored the space in small groups and viewed some of the newest exhibitions. The group ended their trip with a lavish buffet-style meal at the Indian restaurant, Zaroka.

Acapalooza *(May 14, 2023)*



Photo by Toffy Prakittiphoom '24/The Choate News

At the end of the spring term, Choate's five a cappella groups came together in Seymour St. John Chapel to perform at Acapalooza, the biggest a cappella performance of the year. In the past, a cappella groups battled for the title of best performer; in recent years, however, Acapalooza has become a showcase to celebrate the groups. This year, groups performed covers of classic and current hits. Maiyeros performed "Little Lion Man" by Mumford & Sons, while The Whimawehs performed "House of the Rising Sun" by The Animals. The camaraderie and support between the different groups and encouragement from the lively audience made for a spirited night of singing.

Mamma Mia! *(May 18-21, 2023)*



Photo by Toffy Prakittiphoom '24/The Choate News

The cast of *Mamma Mia!* performed four shows after rehearsing and preparing throughout the spring term. The much-anticipated show was directed by Ms. Deighna DeRiu and features songs from the Swedish supergroup ABBA. With a student-led costume team, backstage crew, and set designers, the production highlights both the performing and visual art talents of Choate students. In addition, instead of performing in a depressed area of the stage, the live band was able to play under the stage in a closed-off room to accommodate the musical's larger cast this year.

TRIPS AND SPEAKERS

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TRIPS

Philadelphia



Over Winter Long Weekend, Dr. Rachel Myers and Dr. Yaser Robles accompanied six Choate students on a trip to Philadelphia. Sponsored by Envoys, an organization with the goal of “creating programs that challenge, inspire, and empower students to become better citizens of the world,” students explored the Faith and Liberty Discovery Center, spoke to President of the Korean Adoptees Association Mrs. Liz Wade, and participated in numerous other cultural excursions to develop an understanding of the Korean diaspora.

Washington, D.C.



For the first time in two years, members of the John F. Kennedy '35 (JFK) Program in Government and Public Service and students enrolled in Honors U.S. Government and Politics II took part in the annual Capitol Hill trip to Washington, D.C., from January 29 to 31. Through meetings with officials such as Senators Kirsten Gillibrand, Chris Murphy, and Richard Blumenthal, as well as House Representative Stacey Plaskett '84, and more, students broadened their political horizons and explored the country's capital.

Spain



Accompanied by Spanish teacher Ms. Le'ah Griggs and Director of Student Activities Ms. Alex Long, 14 students visited Seville, Spain from March 3 to 11 to learn about art, identity, and memory. Having been under the rule of many colonial powers, students also gained an understanding of how Seville's occupation shaped local architecture and culture.

Boston



The Choate Symphony Orchestra traveled to Boston over Spring Long Weekend. After a three-year hiatus from touring due to Covid-19, students held a private concert for parents, alumni, admitted students, and donors at the Washington Ballroom of the Courtyard by Marriott Boston Downtown. The event featured the premiere of “Harlem Suite 1958,” a symphonic jazz piece written for the Choate Orchestra. Students also explored Boston through trips to the Museum of Science and Quincy Market and watched a concert by the Boston Symphony Orchestra in the historic Symphony Hall.

Greece



From March 3 to 11, Science Teacher Dr. Selena Gell and Greek, Latin, and English teacher Dr. Scott Davis traveled across Greece with 16 students. Delving into the issue of sustainability and possible solutions, students learned about the intersections between ancient history, Greek mythology, and modern food distribution with the guidance of local and international non-profit organizations.

Egypt



From March 3 to 12, Arabic and French teacher Mr. Yassine Benzanine as well as Mathematics teachers Ms. Kolina Ozay and Mr. Nick Tagge accompanied 16 students to Egypt. The group traveled to various cities and towns around the nation, learning about the country's ancient history and significant mathematical and astronomical contributions. Students also embarked on a Nile River cruise, explore tombs and pyramids, and ride camels.

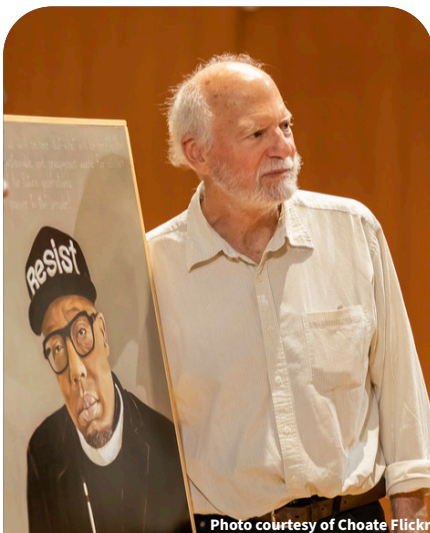
SPEAKERS



Ms. Rachel Khong - Author of *Good-bye, Vitamin*, the 2022 all-School summer reading book

September 20, 2022

Ms. Khong began by reading excerpts from her novel. In a Q&A, she answered the questions about the process of writing the novel and her life as a writer.



Mr. Robert Shetterly - Artist of the “Americans Who Tell the Truth” portrait series

September 30, 2022

On Community Service Day, Mr. Shetterly presented his portraits that highlight notable figures in civil rights and activism. He also showed his works to students.



Dr. Jelani Cobb - Dean and Henry Luce Professor of Journalism at the Columbia Journalism School

October 18, 2022

Dr. Cobb presented the 2022 Thalheimer Lecture on the topic of gun violence and its pressing threat on social stability and public health in the United States.



Mr. Hakeem Rahim

October 25, 2022

Mr. Rahim, a Harvard graduate and former athlete, struggles with battling mental health issues. He urged students to open up about their wellness and learn to be unafraid of reaching out for help.



Ms. Katie Kraschel - Professor at Yale Law School; **Dr. Samira Meh-ta** - Professor of Women and Gender Studies at the University of Colorado, Boulder; **Dr. Jerome Adams** - 20th Surgeon General of the United States

November 4, 2022

The panel discussion, titled “Deepening Understanding Through Intersectional Dialogue: A Panel on Roe v. Wade Pro-Life/Pro-Choice,” featured three expert panelists in the respective fields of law, religion, and healthcare.



Dr. Allison Kessler Vear '03 - Section Chief of Spinal Cord Injury Medicine at the Shirley Ryan Ability Lab

November 15, 2023

Dr. Vear was paralyzed in a skiing accident during her fourth-form year at Choate, and she returned to speak about facing discrimination as a student in a wheelchair. She also educated the student body about the ways that people with disabilities are treated in society.



Dr. Laurie Santos - Professor of Psychology at Yale University

December 6, 2022

Dr. Santos shared ten tips for becoming happier in a shortened version of her popular Science of Well-Being class at Yale. She emphasized the importance of social interactions, self-compassion, and savoring the present moment. She also attended a Q&A session with Choate psychology students.



Mr. Ndaba Mandela and Dr. Ilyasah Shabazz

January 16, 2023

As keynote speakers at Choate's annual Diversity Day, Mr. Ndaba Mandela, grandson of Nelson Mandela, and Dr. Ilyasah Shabazz, daughter of Malcom X, spoke about their work in activism and civil rights. They also shared ways in which the Choate community can help promote their message on campus.



Ms. Toshiko Tanaka and her daughter, **Ms. Reiko Tashiro**

April 4, 2023

Ms. Tanaka shared her experience of surviving the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and highlighted the importance of preventing further use of nuclear weapons. As an activist for disarmament, she emphasized the importance of hearing and sharing the stories of survivors.



Ms. Sharon Pohoryles

April 18, 2023 - Holocaust Remembrance Day/Yom HaShoah

Ms. Pohoryles shared her father's experience of being a Jewish boy who escaped from the Nazi Party during the Holocaust. He faced persecution and was forced to conceal his Jewish identity. Mr. Pohoryles's story served as a reminder of the atrocities committed during the Holocaust.

DEPARTING FACULTY

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MR. JOHN FORD

By **Edwin Tang '25**
Reporter

Biology and Chemistry teacher Mr. John Ford has left a considerable impact on the School throughout the decades. His classes are known not only for its interesting topics and content, but also the personal connection that he builds with his students.

Michael Korvyakov '23, who was in his biology honors class, reminisced, “Mr. Ford infuses every class with humor and a genuine love for his students. He was interested in getting to know who we were beyond the biology classroom.”

Over his 43 years at the School, Mr. Ford has taken up a slew of different positions: providing support as a Form Dean, serving the student body as the Dean of Students, building memories with students as a house adviser in Hill House, West Wing, Carrington, Walsh, Edsall, and Woodhouse,

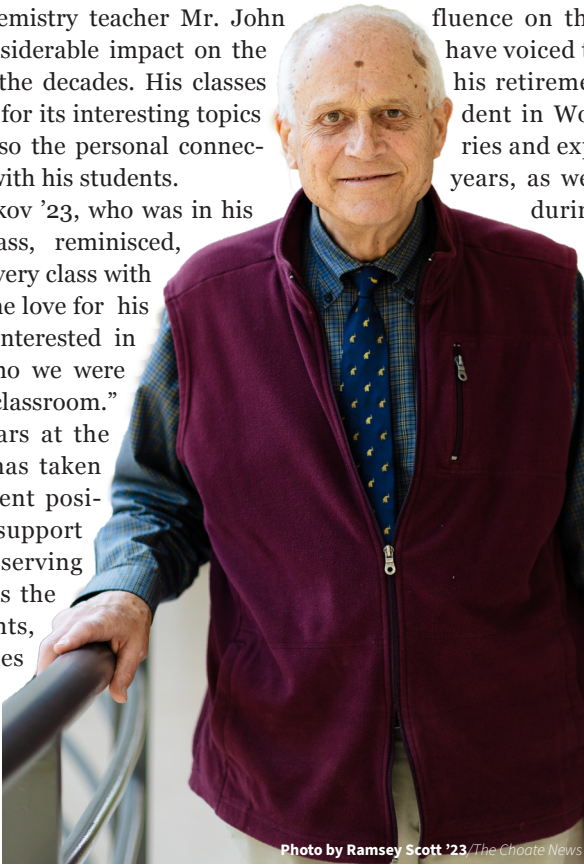


Photo by Ramsey Scott '23 /The Choate News

and ensuring quality education as Head of the Science Department.

As a result of his extensive time at and influence on the School, many students have voiced their disappointment over his retirement. Joe Moon '25, a resident in Woodhouse, reflected, “Stories and experiences of his childhood years, as well as the jokes he shares during our dorm meetings every night, [are] essential to the culture and livelihood of Woodhouse.”

Mr. Ford shared that he will truly miss his students when he leaves. He noted that he has stayed at Choate for over four decades because of his affection for working with and getting to know students throughout the years.

Edwin Tang may be reached at etang25@choate.edu

MR. MICHAEL VELEZ

By **Stan Cho '25**
Opinions Nation/World Section Editor

Dean of Students Mr. Michael Velez '00, lovingly referred to as MAV by students, will be leaving the School at the end of the 2022-2023 academic year. He has made many important contributions over his 19 years at Choate, including, but not limited to, hosting School Meetings, teaching history classes, advising in Combination House, coaching Boys' Varsity Lacrosse, coaching Boy's Varsity Hockey, and overseeing the Judicial Committee.

Mr. Velez's lasting influence on the School's various policies and unique culture stems from his inherent love for the Choate community. Whether it be returning to teach at Choate instead of pursuing a job at the Central Intelligence Agency, making time for constant interviews with *The Choate News*, ensuring student health and wellness during the Covid-19 pandemic, working with Student Council to support student proposals,

or playing Pictionary with students during the Dorm Olympics, Mr. Velez has been an integral part of many students' experiences at Choate.

After nearly two decades at the School, Mr. Velez will assume the position of the new Head of Upper School of Riverdale Country School in the Bronx, New York, this July.

Many members of the community have expressed their gratitude and appreciation for Mr. Velez. 2022-2023 Student Body President Ava Maha '23 commented, “Although I am very excited for Mr. Velez to thrive in a new community, Choate will certainly miss him. MAV truly is the GOAT [Greatest of All Time].”

Stan Cho may be reached at scho25@choate.edu



Photo Courtesy of Choate Flickr



For more on Mr. Velez, read this article from Volume CXVII Issue 3.

MR. PAUL BOZZI

By **Lauren Kee '24**
Editor-in-Chief

As the sound technician and Assistant Technical Director of the Arts Department, Mr. Paul Bozzi handles the media, microphones, slideshows, and videos for meetings and gatherings in Colony Hall and the Paul Mellon Arts Center (PMAC). From choosing microphones to operating the sound board, he also does sound design for theater productions and trains other students in his craft.

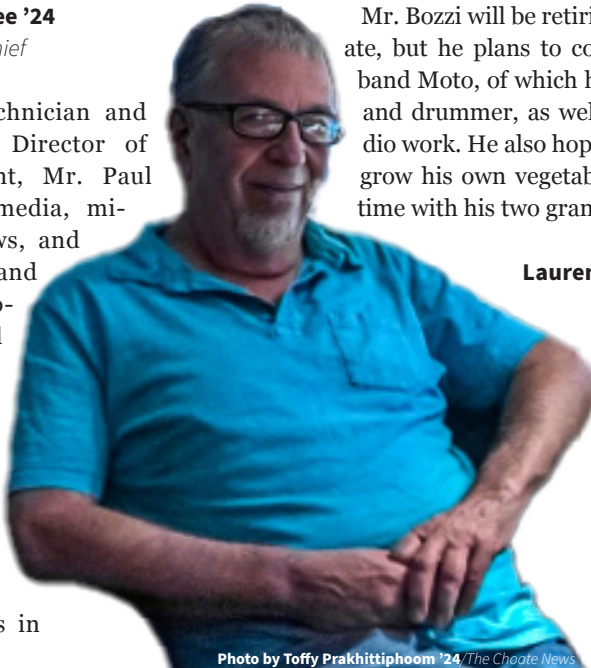


Photo by Toffy Prakhittipoom '24 /The Choate News

Mr. Bozzi will be retiring after 10 years at Choate, but he plans to continue playing with his band Moto, of which he is the founder, leader, and drummer, as well as doing freelance audio work. He also hopes to enjoy the outdoors, grow his own vegetables at home, and spend time with his two granddaughters.

Lauren Kee may be reached at lkee24@choate.edu



For more on Mr. Bozzi, read this article from Volume CXVI Issue 8.

MRS. JUDITH BENDER

By **Stan Cho '25**
Opinions Nation/World Section Editor

Mrs. Judith Bender has been involved with Choate's counseling services for 34 years. During her time at Choate, Mrs. Bender taught psychology classes, designed various Health and Wellness courses, and has been the faculty advisor for the Assessment Team.

Mrs. Bender's dedication to her work is evident in her deep connection with students, and she cherishes the opportunity to provide them with guidance and support.

Mrs. Bender noted, “What I carry with me always is the hon-

or and pleasure to be able to work with so many students in counseling.”

She revealed that the experience of supporting and uplifting others is immensely valuable to her, hence the bitter-sweet departure from the School.

However, Mrs. Bender explained, “not ready to finish the work that I am doing.” After leaving Choate, she will be working in both private practice as well as Branford College at Yale University.



Photo by Toffy Prakhittipoom '24 /The Choate News

MS. SYDNI MARMOR

By **Stan Cho '25**
Opinions Nation/World Section Editor

Ms. Sydni Marmor, a member of Choate's Counseling Team, will be moving to California to work as the Upper School Counselor at The Nueva School. In her one year at Choate, Ms. Marmor has not only provided her counseling services to students at the Health Center but also is the faculty advisor to the By-stander Education Program.



Photo by Emily Ma '25 /The Choate News

During her time at the School, she focused on building connections with students to support them throughout their careers at Choate. Moreover, she hopes that she “brought more compassion and curious self-exploration to campus,” she said.

Ms. Marmor noted that Deerfield Day was her fondest memory of the School, reflecting on how students were able to “express themselves outside of their academic identities.”

MR. MATTHEW FERRARO

By **Stan Cho '25**
Opinions Nation/World Section Editor

Mr. Matthew Ferraro, who teaches two French classes at Choate, will be leaving the School at the end of this school year. During his two years at Choate, he has served as a mentor to newcomers to the French language, the Assistant Coach of Girls' Crew, and resident adviser in Memorial House.

Looking back on his time at Choate, Mr. Ferraro noted that he always



Photo by Toffy Prakhittipoom '24 /The Choate News

strived to cultivate a positive atmosphere among students and faculty.

Mr. Ferraro regarded the various regattas he has participated in as some of his fondest memories, reflecting, “Even if the results aren't necessarily what we wanted, I think people usually have a good experience, have fun with their friends, and have joy in their lives.”

He is reluctant to leave Choate but is looking forward to enrolling in Boston College's graduate school to earn his Master's in French Literature.

CHANTAL WANG

By **Reinah Lee '26**
Copy Editor

Math and Computer Science teacher Chantal Wang is graduating from their two-year teacher-training fellowship at Choate this year.

Right out of college with no prior teaching experience, Wang taught two sections of Geometry in their first year. This year, they taught three classes — two sections of Geometry and a term each of Introduction to Robotics, Introduc-

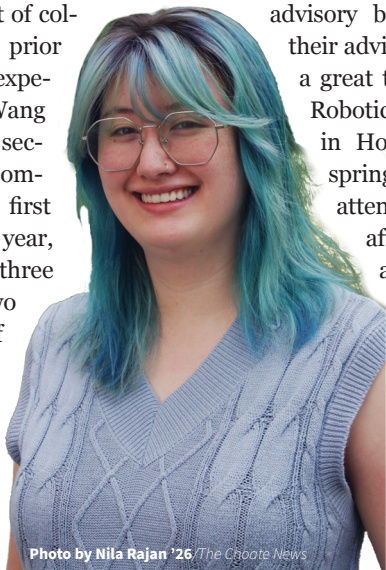


Photo by Nila Rajan '26 /The Choate News

tion to Computer Science, and Honors Programming. Outside of class, they are a house adviser in a freshman girls dorm, Mead, as well as the club adviser to the Neurodivergence Club and Choate Programming Union.

They look back fondly on their advisory blocks baking with their advisees. They also had a great time at the Worlds Robotics Competition in Houston, Texas, this spring. Wang plans to attend graduate school after leaving Choate and gain some more teaching experience before becoming a full-time teacher.

Reinah Lee may be reached at rlee26@choate.edu

MR. RYAN STRANGE

By **Alex Hong '25**
Reporter

Mr. Ryan Strange has been working in the Admission Office as an Assistant Director since 2019. Upon coming to Choate, he took over the duties of overseeing postgraduate applications, working primarily with the Multicultural Recruitment Team.

During his time at the School, Mr. Strange was a house adviser in Clinton Knight, a co-advisor of Choate Afro-Latino Men (CALM), co-leader of the Black Faculty Affinity Group, a member of the Driving Equity at Choate Committee, and an assistant coach of the Junior Varsity Boys' Hockey. He also ran the Choate Admission Instagram account, @choateadmission, which features content and clips highlighting the lives of Choate students.

In his multifaceted role at Choate, Mr. Strange has been a dynamic presence both inside and outside the Admission Office, whether that be in his commitment to fostering inclusion amongst students or the dedication to developing the athletic skills of his players as a valuable mentor.

At Choate, he said that he “especially love[s] seeing a student find their voice and confidence over time.” He found it hard to believe that the first students that he interviewed will be turning seniors in the next year.

Alex Hong may be reached at ahong25@choate.edu



Photo by Toffy Prakhittipoom '24 /The Choate News

MR. JACK FLANAGAN

By **Katherine Chong '25**
Reporter

For the past five years, Mr. Jack Flanagan has been an Assistant Director of Admission and has advised in Hill House, Memorial House, and Atwater House. He has also helped out with the Boys' Varsity Lacrosse program.

In the Admission Office, he has interviewed prospective students, read their applications, and served as a resource for them once they have been enrolled. Moreover, he took the responsibility of traveling around the country, primarily the Western U.S. region, to meet prospective families and to guide them through the process of applying to Choate. For the past two years, Mr. Flanagan also oversaw athletic recruitment in the Admission Of-

fice, assisting Choate's coaches in building their programs and connecting them with prospective players.

Mr. Flanagan recounted his first visit to campus for his interview as his fondest memory, noting that he was “truly struck by the genuine warmth and kindness everyone displayed.” The first impression that he gained of Choate made it clear to Mr. Flanagan that he would enjoy his time at Choate, both as a workplace and home.

After leaving Choate, Mr. Flanagan will be moving to New York City to attend Fordham Law School.

Katherine Chong may be reached at kchong25@choate.edu



Photo by Toffy Prakhittipoom '24 /The Choate News

SENIOR SPEECHES

ANDREW GODDARD



(This is an excerpt of the full speech.)

This past summer, a question was presented to me that would completely change my approach to senior year. It was mid-August, and my dad and I took a trip to see one of his old friends and one of my mentors, Reggie Tucker. Now, Reggie is a typical oldhead: bald with a big beard, always down to talk sports, always asking uncomfortable questions, but, most importantly, always giving advice. One thing Reggie always talks about is setting goals, so as soon as we arrived at his house, he asked about my goals for the upcoming school year. I told him three things: 1. Make Class A Play-offs for soccer; 2. Straight A's throughout the year; and 3. Help increase school spirit with BoarPen. Admittedly, I thought this was a pretty solid list, and Reggie agreed, but he always has a follow-up question locked and loaded. He asked, "Will these goals help create your legacy?"

"Legacy?" I responded. "How can I have a legacy?" Now, you see, I was coming off of my first year at Choate, and a large part of the year was spent battling with and learning about myself. I was only going to be at the school for two years, so how could I possibly have enough time to cement a legacy?

Reggie clapped back, saying something along the lines of, "So you're telling me that you're a part of all these clubs and student organizations, but you don't want to leave the community at least a little better compared to when you came?" I hadn't thought about it like that before, and this ended up being the question that changed my approach to senior year of high school.

Once the school year started, this question from Reggie was always in the back of my head. However, I didn't know what impact I wanted to have on our school community, and if I was even capable of making one in the first place. With that being said, I knew that in order to make an impact, no matter how small it may be, it would only be genuine if it came from my true, authentic self.

Now, authenticity is something that a lot of us strive for, but, in reality, not many of us achieve. Since elementary school, we've been told to "be ourselves" and to "be proud of who we are" by teachers and Disney Channel TV

shows, but for some, hiding who you are is necessary in certain areas of life; as a young black man, I know this feeling quite well. Face-to-face confrontations with racism at a very young age forced me to become ultra aware of not only prejudice, but also my actions. I employed a number of self-defense mechanisms throughout my life, not because I wanted to, but because I needed to in order to ensure my safety. I learned that it was safer to change my "Yo, what's up" into a "Hi, how are you doing?" I learned that it was safer to exchange my pair of J's for a pair of Vans. I learned that it was safer to change the music in my headphones from 80s R&B and Soca hits that I grew up on to the mainstream hip-hop hits that were appropriated by my white peers. I learned that it was safer to change who I was in public.

As a result, when I arrived at Choate last year, I made sure that I never did anything to make anyone uncomfortable. Not only was it safer, but it was easier to assimilate with my classmates given the foreign environment that I was thrown into. In some ways, I was coming from a completely different planet compared to a lot of my fellow students, and I didn't want to step on any toes. I didn't want to put myself in a position where I'd have to explain certain vernacular phrases that were frequent in my vocabulary; or explain why I wore a durag; or explain why I wore the clothes that I wore. However, I was still encountering racism, even though I changed aspects of myself while in public. Making myself more "presentable" didn't stop white women in Wallingford from clutching their purses a little tighter when I walked past them in town; making myself more "presentable" didn't shield me from microaggressions in class; making myself more "presentable" didn't stop me from getting stared down by a motorcyclist with a Confederate flag bandana atop his head when I was walking to the Humanities building. If all of this kept happening, then why should I make myself more "presentable" at all? It wasn't until the middle of winter term when I really settled in on campus, and that was when I started being true to myself. I code-switched less, wore what I wanted to wear, and most importantly, I was happier.

[...]

Have I accomplished my goal and left a positive impact on my school community? I don't know. Only time will tell. But I do know that if even one student of color on campus saw me being me and thus started to be more like themselves, then I have accomplished my goal.

It's hard to believe that in a few days I will be walking across the stage and receiving my diploma, but I thank God for these last two years at Choate. I've grown a lot as a young man, and I will always cherish the great relationships that I have formed here. So, I will leave you all with this: in a very similar fashion as my soon-to-be fellow alumni John F. Kennedy '35, I urge all of you not to ask yourself what impact Choate can have on you, but to ask yourself what impact you can have on Choate. With love, Goddard out.

TIFFANY XIAO



(This is an excerpt of the full speech.)

I quit swimming the second week into this past winter season. If you ask me, I'll say that I regret it. I do. I'll also admit that quitting was necessary and that I should've done it sooner.

When people used to ask me why I swam, I would hesitate and say something along the lines of, "I've done it for so long ... I can't just give it up."

The more I pondered the question, the more the doubt grew in my mind. Why did I swim?

Well, why did I stay up well into the morning editing *The Choate News*? Because I loved how the paper gave me an outlet to connect with the rest of the school and stretch my creativity. Why do I prefect? Because my prefects have always been a core element of my time at Choate and because I love my freshmen, even when they run through the halls screaming. Why do I sing? Because it keeps me grounded and brings me peace. "Why?" is always the key question.

CASON GENOVESE



I am a great statistic, I am one of a few people here at Choate Rosemary Hall that represents such a small number, aka, that great statistic. You may be thinking what statistic are you? Why are you a statistic even? How does a statistic make sense cause you're a human? I am great for colleges, I am great for Choate, and I was not great for public school. I am a transgender student as most know, I came out as transgender here at Choate last year, in 2022.

I had the pleasure of introducing myself as Maddi Genovese, the goalkeeper on the women's soccer team here for the 2020-22' season. I was committed to a Division I school to play soccer on the women's team. I worked my hardest to get to a school like Choate, to get to a D1 school to play soccer and it was a huge accomplishment in my life. I've never had freedom away from soccer and my family, I am one of four kids, and I was the only girl. Picture that, three sons and a daughter? I made my parents proud due to all my accomplishments, gaining the ability to be the only one in my family to go to private school and to commit to play a Division I sport. I got to come to a school where I got to introduce myself as one person and then introduce myself as a whole new one.

Choate Rosemary Hall gave me the freedom to be the true version of myself, to figure out some things about myself that I didn't previously know due to the preconceived ideas my parents and friends had of me. I had new classes, new friends, a new amazing roommate, and a lot of space and time alone. I struggled here at first, feeling alone and different, but I had an amazing soccer team and new friends who had my back all the way. I introduced myself to new people and got to know a lot of individuals with so many different backgrounds, orientations, and genders. I felt like I was in a movie at first, with all these people and I got to be a part of it.

Once winter term came around, I focused again heavily on soccer, adjusting to life without a fall sport, focusing on grades, a social life, and homesickness. My mental health started to tanked a bit, it was going downward and I couldn't understand why. I didn't get why I started feeling so different and excluded from all my female friends. I didn't connect and I thought that was because I was gay at the time? More masculine? Or simply just an outcast? It was all in my head until I started taking a class called Women's Studies. I realized that yeah, I am different and I don't feel like a woman. I don't get why I don't feel like a woman and why I can't connect with the experience of womanhood. All my friends are amazing women but I just was not that.

I challenged myself to force the feeling of masculinity away. To force the fact that I was born a

So, why did I swim? Because I was too scared to ever give it up. It was so much a part of me and my childhood. It was so much of my parents' time and money. And it was so much of how I viewed myself: my resilience, my character, and my accomplishments. I loved the familiarity — even the familiar feeling of anxiety — and the validation of persevering.

No one at Choate ever wants to quit, whether that is quitting an activity, dropping out of a class, or saying "no" to any request. We are, for the most part, quite poor at establishing boundaries. We fear feeling inadequate or of appearing weak — particularly in front of our peers.

However, quitting — contrary to popular belief — does not make you weak. It makes you smart.

Let me clarify that there is a distinct difference between giving up and quitting. Nothing worth doing is easy. Struggling, and sometimes failing, makes you stronger. Yet, nothing is worth doing if you do it without purpose. Quitting is making a deliberate choice: to stop doing something because you know your time and energy can be better spent elsewhere.

Pardon my cliché, but time at Choate is fleeting. Days may seem long, but years fly by. (I can say these things now that I'm graduating.) You will, undoubtedly, come across adversity here. You will be busy and stressed. The least you can do for yourself is choose to be busy with and stressed about things you enjoy and care about. In other words, be intentional about what you do. And, remember: what you do does not need to be what you have always done.

Choate is a place of many paths. Find yours while you are here — not your parents', not your grandparents' or childhood piano teacher's. Ask "why." Let yourself change. Find freedom in opportunity, and grow without any shame.

HELENA GERNHARDT



(This is an excerpt from the full speech.)

So, when thinking about what to write a senior speech about, rather than dazzle you with fantastic jokes and statistics on gas mileage and commute times (which I have come to know by heart), I wanted to leave my fellow peers out there with something more. So, I present to you the 2023 Amazing, Ultimate, 100% Accurate, Complete, Declassified Student Survival Guide to Choate. By, of course, yours truly.

Now, if I had unlimited time to speak, I would rattle off at least 20 points, but in an effort to respect a word limit for the first and last time here at Choate, I have compiled the top four:

1. Starting with the day students: if your parents are dropping you off in the morning and you have to go through the four-way, listen. If you do not make it through the intersection 5 minutes before your class, abandon ship and just start walking. Trust me on this. One day student to another, channel your inner ninja, Olympic sprinter, parkour champion, whatever you need to do, and just get out of the car. Believe me, it saves you many emails to your Deans' Office, so just trust me on this.

2. Now, this next tip applies to everyone, not just day students, so listen up. No matter how many times your mind tells you to get coffee at Lanphy, YOU DO

NOT NEED IT. Trust me, one coffee a day is enough. You can thank me later when you do not have a caffeine addiction, and \$400 is still left in your bank account. If you want to ask where I got this advice, you should take Mr. Kopeikin's stats class — that is all I am going to say.

3. Stop being a hermit. Do not be a SAC gremlin and waste your afternoons away on the weirdly-stained couches. Get out, and have some fun. Put yourself out there, and try something new. Go to form events, plays, musicals, parties, whatever your heart desires even though you don't want to get home until late evening, and, for day students, believe me I know all the excuses. Make plans with boarders and learn to ride a bike with no hands, but don't crash it into a bench as I did. Learn to bake something new, but please don't burn down the SAC kitchen. (FYI, I am not responsible for any insurance claims.)

4. Lastly, most importantly, don't waste a second. And yes, I know this is cliché and sounds as if I am reading off a Hallmark card, but trust me when I tell you that it goes by fast. And no matter how much you take photos, BeReals, Instagram posts, meditate (thanks, Mr. Harris), or whatever you do to capture the moment, time keeps going. I have never had a normal year of high school — that has been the understatement of the century — but even then, I would not have traded my time here for anything. Some, if not most of you, will not notice how much something means to you until it is gone. Here, standing before you, less than a week before graduation, I hope you take one thing from this, other than my gas mileage recommendations: I hope you learn not to spend your Choate experience living to get through the next math test, study group, stressful rehearsal, project, or whatever stands in the way. Take in the time now. The truth is, you are always going to have a test to study for, a paper to write, or a reading to do. In the words of my fantastic adviser whom I will never forget, "You can shoot for an A- instead of an A. You will survive." So, take those extra minutes with those you care about, take a long walk after practice, finish the puzzle outside the College Counseling Office, and smile at those you see on the path.

SENIOR SPEECHES

MICHAEL KORVYAKOV



Photo courtesy of Michael Korvyakov '23

I never wanted to go to boarding school. My few experiences at sleepaway camp didn't exactly turn me on to the idea of living away from home. So, as I applied to high schools, I made sure to avoid anything that was more than 15 minutes away from home. My mom, concerned about my prospects, inconspicuously added every New England prep school to my application list.

Of course, having just begun my angsty teenage years, I was frustrated by this lack of regard for my opinion. So, I began deleting schools from the list out of spite. I don't quite know how I did it. Maybe it was the location, maybe it was a Google Image search of the schools, maybe it was about a boar being a cooler mascot than a door, but Choate made the final list. Still, I spent three months working to ensure that I wouldn't end up living away from home.

But alas, the world works in funny ways. I only got into Choate. So, before I came here in September, I planned the next two months of going home on weekends so that I wouldn't have to spend too much time away at a place I didn't really want to be.

The first night in Memorial House, my dormmates and I stayed up until midnight playing word games in the common room. Over the next few days of orientation, we cracked jokes, had deep conversations, developed a fight ring — only to have it shut down. I got closer to those peers than any other friends I'd ever had. I quickly realized that I'd found the right place.

There are three quotes from *The Office* that I think perfectly encapsulate my time here.

Quote #1: "It all seems so very arbitrary. I applied for a job at this company because they were hiring. I took a desk at the back because it was empty. But, no matter how you get there or where you end up, human beings have this miraculous gift to make that place home."

I ended up here because my mom added those schools to my list. Because I liked what I saw on the Google Image search of the school. Because I didn't get in anywhere else, and because the Admission Department had faith in me. You see, me getting to Choate was all chance. But, me finding a home here was anything but.

First, it was understanding that these brilliant teachers who work with me every day could have any job in the world — and they choose to be here, working with me. Also, the realization that every high schooler's nightmare — running into your teacher outside of school — is my new life

It was every late night in the common room of Spencer, playing every daily online word game we could find. And then a final year in Memorial House, where I realized the ups and downs of being a prefect. It was my shock at realizing that a sport could be painful when I first sat down at a rowing machine freshman year, only to then do that sport for four more years. It was walking into my first Choate humanities classroom and being struck by the fact that I wasn't going to scoot by English class sitting in the back of the classroom — thank you, Harkness method.

Quote #2: "I wish there was a way to know you're in the good old days, before you've actually left them."

What I wouldn't give to go back to those common rooms on the first days, before I met the people who would be my best friends for the rest of my life. And before I realized that meeting such amazing people didn't come free — you had to pay it in hours of homework. Nevertheless, four years of Choate have proven my initial hunch correct.

And quote #3, one of the final lines of the finale episode: "Every day, when I came into work, all I wanted to do was leave. So, then, why in the world does it feel so hard to leave right now?"

All too often, we watch the clock run out the last five minutes of class — the longest five minutes ever. But now, I'm watching the clock run out my last five days at Choate. And I dread the moment next Monday, that I won't be able to look forward to returning to school, to seeing all of you, and to calling Choate Rosemary Hall: my home. Thank you.

LUKE CALLAGHAN



Photo courtesy of Luke Callaghan '23

(This is an excerpt of the full speech.)

Five minutes. That's how much time I have up here. But when I was told I would have to contain four years of experience in 300 seconds, I reflected: What can actually transpire in five minutes? How much can change? How much can we change?

At the same time, I know many of you also know just how interminable five minutes can feel. Let me take you back.

I first encountered the power of five minutes my freshman year, as I am sure many of you did, at a School Meeting. I was seated in the furthest back row of Colony Hall, watching in horror as a team of C-Proctors began to take the stage for the universally dreaded, yet tirelessly resilient game of compost jeopardy. As the screen illuminated a 5x6 table of trivia questions, I took a moment to close my eyes, and sincerely prayed that the seemingly perpetual game would soon be over.

As I reflected on this moment as I took my last shuttle from the Bradley International Airport to Choate just a few weeks ago, I realized how much I regretted wishing away the time in that moment. The grave implications of our imminent graduation and subsequent departure from the Choate community sank in. Thankfully, I was reminded by Ms. Koomson that I need not worry about graduating unless I completed my 10 outstanding community service hours. But, with or without a diploma in hand, the shock of realizing I would be closing out my 4 years remarkably soon was overwhelming. The

one thing I could say for sure about Choate is that I'll never stop being surprised how quickly life at this school can change in 5 minutes. For example...

It's 3:18 pm, and I hide my face in despair, presiding over a pitifully blank Calculus quiz.

At precisely 3:23: I hit the best spikeball shot of my life, finally and definitively asserting my athletic dominance over Finn Lutton.

9:57: The colossal force of 25 raving seniors rock the rusted foundations of Spencer house like never before.

10:02: Mr. Guelakis politely escorts me and my co-culprits outside.

The point is, as Heraclitus once said, "No man ever steps in the same river twice, for it's not the same river and he's not the same man." The way I see it, Choate is like that stream that will never slow, and the only way to appreciate its true kinetic beauty is to flow with the current. So, don't let the unique opportunities and connections flow by you, take the plunge. Let the current take you. Challenge your typical routine and explore the channels that excite you. Allow yourself to be swept away by the age-old wisdom of our faculty, forgotten arts, and thrilling new experiences. Who knows what gems you may discover?

Whatever you end up doing, embrace how you spend your time, whether an extra five minutes or an hour. I know deciding whether to start your paper or go to the football game is challenging, but it is imperative that you find it in yourself to commit fully to an option. Embrace the work, and when you play, let yourself play just to play. Once you've made your choice, I officially give you grace to NOT feel guilty for ditching your academic responsibilities. Who knows, in the extra five minutes you linger at the lacrosse White Out, you may just catch a glimpse of Mr. Eford getting sturdy.

[...]

I hope in my five minutes, I've enlightened you about the true potential of any five minutes, liberated you to embrace each moment, and savor each School Meeting announcement that is 4 minutes and 30 seconds longer than it should be. After all, in the words of Oscar Wilde, some things in life, certainly including your years at Choate, are far too important to be taken seriously. Instead, take it 5 minutes at a time. Thank you. Roll boards!

SENIOR SURVEY

Best Dining Hall Meal

"Pulled pork sandwiches."

- Alyssa Jaster

"R.I.P. meatball subs."

- Jimena Acosta

"Loaded carnitas bowl."

- Nathaniel Rogers

"Salmon and rice; extremely underrated."

- Michael Korvyakov

Someone You Are Grateful For

"Johan Shattuck '23."

- Sam Wheeler

"Mr. Peed."

- Celina Wei

"Grant Koh '23."

- Yujin Kim

"Tanisha Clark!!"

- Adama Sowe

Favorite Class

"Microeconomics."

- Heidi Li

"Acting 350 with Bari Robinson."

- Sofia Muñoz

"Anatomy and Physiology with Dr. Zhao."

- Austin Zhao

"Asian Diaspora Lit."

- Grace Liu

Words of Wisdom

"No one cares; just do what you want!"

- Will Hamann

"Seize every opportunity."

- Jackson Slater

"It's not that deep. Everything feels so important in the moment, but looking back, there was no reason for all that worry and stress."

- Noah Molina

Best Campus Chair

"Humanities Rotunda couches."

- Grace Liu

"Left gray chair outside of the School Store."

- Michael DiCostanzo

"PMAC couches."

- Noah McBride

"The poofy maroon chairs in the library Reading Room."

- Jackson Slater

Best Hangout Spot

"Colony jam room."

- Yujin Kim

"The Black Box Theater."

- Michael DiCostanzo

"Bungalow 2nd floor common room."

- Jackson Slater

"Tree outside of Nichols on Mem lawn."

- Sofia Muñoz

SENIOR COLLEGE COUPLES

Michael Korvyakov

Lex Njomin

(Georgetown University)

"To be honest, I thought he was a bit full of himself freshman year, but so was I."

- Lex Njomin

"It's hard to pick one (best) memory ... however, if I had to choose, it would be belting Katy Perry with him on the way to a debate tournament."

- Lex Njomin

"I'm definitely looking forward to continuing our debate partnership at Georgetown, exploring the D.C. sights, and possibly being roommates."

- Michael Korvyakov

Noah Molina

Nathaniel Rogers

(Northwestern University)

"I actually never even heard Mr. Molina's name until I found him lurking in my BC class this fall ... Oh, turns out we took a picture together freshman year at Hol Ball. There's no way I knew who he was when that was taken."

- Nathaniel Rogers

"My favorite memory is when I was learning how to do a cartwheel on Mem Circle and I was struggling. Nathaniel walked over and did a cartwheel, laughed at me, and left."

- Noah Molina

"At Northwestern, Nathaniel and I plan to rush the frat, Sigma Alpha Epsilon ... Presidents of this frat are in our future!"

- Noah Molina

Ruby Cameron

Sofia Muñoz

(University of St Andrews)

"We first met each other in intramural crew freshmen fall!"

- Sofia Muñoz

"Our favorite memory together is going to spin class Saturday mornings in New Haven."

- Sofia Muñoz

"We look forward to runs together on East Sands Beach! "

- Sofia Muñoz



Photo courtesy of Michael Korvyakov '23

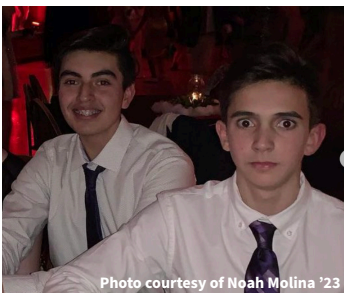


Photo courtesy of Noah Molina '23



Photo courtesy of Noah Molina '23



Photo courtesy of Sofia Muñoz '23

University of
St Andrews



WHAT WE’VE LEARNED FROM SCHOOL MEETINGS

An assortment of bags strewn across couches and floorboards. A steady rhythm of beeps as students line up to (hopefully) sign-in to School Meeting. The “excuse me’s” as they shuffle into the wrong chair. The looks faculty direct towards those who forbiddenly stray from their assigned seats. Then, the hush of the students, accompanied by an occasional cough, as a student performer begins their piece. Finally, thundering ovation as they exit. The first speaker settles onto the podium to officially commence School Meeting.

As much as students like to complain about required attendance, School Meetings are a chance for the entire school community to gather amid the flurried activity of the school week. It is time allotted for students and faculty to retreat from the stresses of daily life, celebrate the accomplishments and achievements of their peers, and hear the voices of those in the community. On a sprawled-out campus with students occupying different pockets of school life, the opportunity to unite as one school body is rare and cherished by the masthead.

Throughout the year, we have gleaned valuable nuggets of wisdom, heeded sound tidbits of advice, and enjoyed memorable moments from our weekly gatherings as a school. Here are some of our favorites:

1. Three crushes

If there’s one thing students look forward to during School Meeting, it’s the chance to spy on their crush, who may be, perhaps, sitting just a few rows in front in seat O102. According to Ms. Elliott, this would be your crush #3, the one you admire from afar to keep your fantasy alive, for they may not be “the one” you believe them to be. You can imagine everything about them, but you may never interact with them. But do not fret: your heart has space for two more crushes. There’s crush #2: the person who brings you joy. They are the one who can light up your day with their warm embrace; the one you would risk enduring the wrath of an angry teacher for to sit next to; or the one you share a chuckle with over a funny meme on your phone before it gets confiscated by said teacher. Then, there’s crush #1. This crush is your romantic crush. They are the one who gets your heart thumping, your face flushing, and your lips pulling up into an involuntary smile. Thank you, Ms. Elliott, for changing the way we think about those around us. To let you all in on our little secret, here are the 117th Masthead’s three crushes:

Crush #3: The Phillippian — Phillips Academy’s beloved independent newspaper, complete with a gorgeous website.

Crush #2: Our masthead — yes, even the Copy Editors.

Crush #1: Our paper — the smell of fresh ink and the sound of turning pages: a testament to our voracious readers, even if it’s more often used as a placemat for messy eaters.

2. You don’t have to, you get to!

Sixth-form Dean Mr. Will Gilyard ’98 imparted on us these wise words: “You don’t have to, you get to!” As Choate students inundated by our workload, we can lose sight of how lucky we are to receive the opportunities we do. Oftentimes, we see our homework assignments, afternoon practices, and late-night rehearsals as obligations forced upon us by the School and our teachers. But, we forget why we chose to enroll in that specific class, why we tried so hard to make it onto that sports team, or why we play our scales and long tones in Colony Hall. We forget that we chose to do all this to experience the joy of being a part of something bigger than ourselves and feel that we belong to a cohort, team, or ensemble. After all, we don’t have to be at Choate, we get to be.


3. Big Daddy MAV

To Big Daddy and Dean of Students Mr. Michael Velez ’00: you are the School Meeting comedian, resident Adam Sandler, and all-powerful email list holder. From answering our never-ending questions to sending us updates about the latest campus events, you will always hold a special place in our hearts and in our inboxes. You have worked hard to make this campus safer and sounder for us, and we appreciate all that you have done. We wish you all the best, and we hope to see you, Ms. Velez, your four beautiful daughters, and your two dogs at our graduations and reunions.

Thank you to all the performers, technicians, speakers, and announcers who make School Meeting a space filled with support, laughter, and, occasionally, tears. School Meeting is where our community shows our love for each other and finds the connection we need as humans. Thank you to Mr. Gilyard, Ms. Elliott, and Mr. Velez for enlightening us with your dazzling presence. Perhaps, one of these phrases will make it to the next presidential elections, when a Choate graduate follows in the footsteps of President John F. Kennedy ’35.

So, the next time you feel like you have to go to School Meeting, just remember how lucky you are to get to!

Yours truly,



THE CHOATE NEWS

117TH MASTHEAD

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