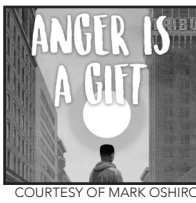




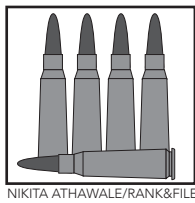
Features:
Juniors Mark Skaggs and Katie Ruess reflect on their Eagle Scout and Gold Award experiences.



In-Depth:
All students will receive laptops next school year through the new FCPSOn initiative.



Arts&Style:
Rank&File features Young Adult author Mark Oshiro on the release of his debut novel, "Anger is a Gift."



Opinion:
Swift law ban after New Zealand mosque massacre spurs discussion of gun legislation in America.



Sports:
Lack of helmets for girls lacrosse demands awareness due to concussion possibilities.

rank&file

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George C. Marshall High School
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newsbrief

Wall abuse results in boys bathroom closure in moduls

The custodial staff closed the boys bathroom in the modular after unidentified students created a hole in the wall.

Though custodians addressed the issue and fixed the wall the first time around, a second hole appeared within days after the repair.

"Somebody destroyed the wall the first time and [custodians] came and fixed it," assistant building supervisor Jesse O'Neal said. "It's been only a couple of days and they destroyed it again. We don't know who did it, so [...] we're going to keep [the bathroom] locked for the foreseeable future."

Junior Austin Campbell said people responsible for the damage should acknowledge the high repair cost.

"I don't think people realize [the hole] could be expensive to fix," Campbell said. "It's blatantly stupid that people just go by, ripping out chunks from the wall."

by hannah levitan



WILL SHIN/RANK&FILE

Left: Before repair. Right: Current damage.

Prom location and theme stir dissatisfaction

by nikita athawale

The recent prom announcement received criticism due to the vagueness of the theme and controversy surrounding its location.

Prom is taking place this year in the InterContinental Hotel at the Wharf in Washington D.C. For the theme, the 2020 Student Government Association (SGA) chose pop-singer Bruno Mars' 2015 hit "24K Magic" for inspiration.

"It's a great theme," class of 2020 sponsor Kristine Elsener said. "It's positive [and] a fun song. Magic implies that prom is a special event. It brings together a piece of the fun and of the classy element."

Junior Angraj Singh said he thinks the prom theme is tacky and could have had a better message.

"[The theme] could have been better in terms of creativity and representing what the Marshall community is all about, which is individuality," Singh said. "This school is very expressive and the prom theme is limited in both its scope and color scheme."

The 2020 SGA board contacted around 10 venues before choosing the Wharf, which also received backlash because of the region's increasing gentrification in recent years.

"We are promoting economic growth in an area of D.C. [...] that's



AMELIA GEE/RANK&FILE

been consistently neglected by the D.C. government," junior and SGA member Soven Bhagat said. "It's becoming a gentrified area, which is something we should all be aware of, [but] us being there is not causing the problem."

Elsener said there were limited location choices that could accommodate a prom for the days the school needed, and there were reasons why certain areas would not have worked.

"If students aren't comfortable with [the location] then I apologize to them," Elsener said. "We were not intending to offend anyone. [...] I just hope students will take the time to enjoy what they have [the] opportunity to experience."

The SGA board revealed the theme and location over a post on their Instagram account, which garnered almost 4,000 interactions.

"We put a lot of hype into that announcement," Bhagat said. "Once you build something up so much, [it] has an equal and opposite reaction."

Senior and 2019 SGA board member Rohan Shah said despite the dissatisfaction, students should acknowledge the hard work that goes into facilitating an event.

"[Not] all students understand how much time and effort go into planning prom," Shah said. "There's a lot of work behind the scenes that most people don't know about."

Hall sweeps cause attendance improvements

Litz: student tardiness record 'over 13,000' in three quarters

by ben harper

An administrator announces over the intercom, 'students, you need to be in class, there will be a hall sweep.' This procedure began in March in an attempt to combat widespread attendance issues.

The hall sweeps are random, so whenever the bell rings teachers have to lock their doors. Anyone still in the halls must go to their nearest administrator to get a hall pass.

"Students have been tardy over 13,000 times this school year in three quarters," principal Jeff Litz said.

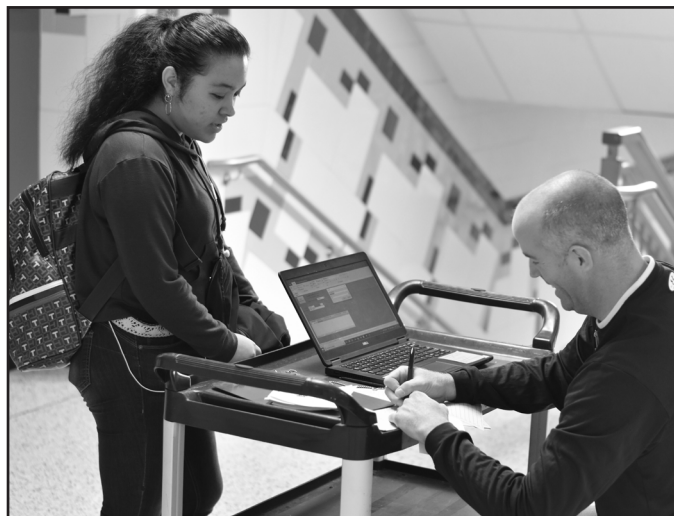
In addition to tardiness, Litz said the school wants to maximize student learning in preparation for the upcoming IB and SOL testing season.

"It's important that students are in class on time,

getting as much instruction as they can in preparation for those exams," Litz said.

While Litz said the sweeps may not fully stop

sweeps] will ever be 100 percent effective," Litz said. "As penalties rise for kids continuing to be tardy, I think in the long run [they]



BEN HARPER/RANK&FILE

Assistant principal Kevin Wallace gives a student a tardy pass, with the outcomes of each time they are late listed.

tardiness, he said he thinks they will help curb it in the long term.

"I don't know if [the

will be a deterrent. There are a lot of FCPS schools that do these and have found them to be effective."

Math teacher Courtney Yatteau said she has seen students who are frequently late to class arrive earlier.

"I definitely have seen students getting here closer to the bell," Yatteau said.

Litz said teachers have expressed their gratitude for this new procedure and said he thinks tardy students can frustrate them.

"Teachers have actually sent me thank you emails," Litz said. "When they have a student that's continuously late to class, sometimes [they] take that personally."

Despite their efficiency, sophomore Nicholas Foster said the hall sweeps end up making students even later to their classes.

"It's an okay system," Foster said. "It makes us late to class because we have to stop and get passes. I just feel seven minutes is enough time to get to class."

newsbrief

FCPS installs solar panels to preserve energy and money

In an attempt to be more energy-efficient, Fairfax County began installing solar panels at a variety of schools.

Elected member of the School Board and representative of the Hunter Mill District Patricia Hynes said she is an advocate of all schools being carbon-free by 2050.

"I hope the Joint Environmental Task Force being created by the school and county board will commit to that goal," Hynes said.

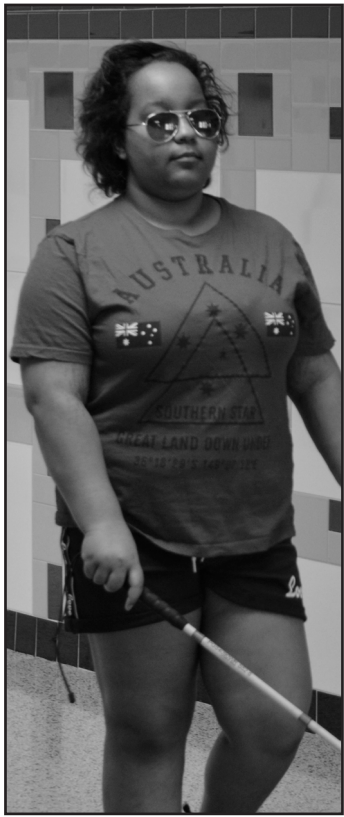
Sophomore Karissa Keehan said solar panels should be a priority because they enable schools to become both more familiar with modern technology and more eco-friendly.

"Installing solar panels is a good idea because the school can become more dependent on its own sources of energy," Keehan said.

In addition to environmental benefits, solar panels are cost-effective.

"The power purchase agreement being developed will produce energy at a lower cost per kilowatt hour than the current electricity cost from Dominion Electric," Hynes said.

by ema baca



NIKITA ATHAWALE/RANK&FILE



Jackson said she currently only delivers passes to the main building's classrooms because she is familiar with the hallways and does not feel ready going to the gym, modulars or academy classes yet. "I usually keep track of where I'm going," Jackson said. "If I ever do get lost, I just move over to where I feel a door with my cane, [...] feel for the room number and go from there."

Jackson navigates halls independently to encourage visually-impaired equality

by nikita athawale

When freshman Jesah Jackson receives a student services pass to deliver, she feels for the hallway and room number in Braille, unfolds her cane and departs, requiring no outside assistance.

Students often become runners for the counselors, social worker or psychologist if they have a free period in their schedules, which was Jackson's circumstance.

Teacher of the blind and visually-impaired Rhode Fernandez said she feels proud of Jackson's

involvement within the school.

"[Jackson] is capable of so much," Fernandez said. "In the beginning, it was very hard. She didn't know what to do, but [...] she's learning to use her hands as her eyes and to rely on the sense[s] of hearing and movement to access her environment. [...] She's regaining confidence in her skill."

When Jackson first became a runner, Fernandez typed the location of the classrooms in Braille for her, but student services receptionist Grace Boinay soon started doing

the task herself.

"[Successfully] handing out a pass makes me feel very content and accomplished," Jackson said. "I want to prove to [others] that people who can't see can do as well as people who can."

Fernandez said there is not enough awareness of how much people with visual impairments can accomplish, which is why Jackson independently delivering the passes surprised some students and teachers.

"I like talking to people," Jackson said. "I know people don't have very

much experience with [those] who can't see and they get [...] stuck up on what to say. But simply saying 'hello' is helpful too."

Jackson said though she gained experience with helping others as a student runner, she won't continue next year since wants to take Culinary Arts.

"[Jackson] is an amazing student runner [and] she's very reliable," Boinay said. "She's a lovely person [with] great disposition and she brightens my day. She makes me happy."

Scouts earn most prestigious award while balancing academic responsibilities

by grady dillon

Achieving the highest honor in Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts is an endeavor that spans over the majority of a scout's childhood and demands a high-level of dedication.

According to Scouting magazine, there were 55,494 Boy Scouts who achieved Eagle Scout rank in 2017, with a combined total of 8,461,760 volunteer hours.

Junior Mark Skaggs said reaching Eagle Scout rank was easier to do during his sophomore year than his junior year.

"I had time to work on my Eagle Scout rank at troop meetings once a week," Skaggs said.

Skaggs said he is

grateful he achieved his Eagle Scout rank while he was still an underclassman.

"Junior year has been a lot more demanding in terms of workload compared to sophomore year, so I'm glad I completed my Eagle rank last year," Skaggs said.

According to Girl Scouts of America, fewer than six percent of Girl Scouts earn the Gold Award annually. Junior Katie Reuss, who earned the Gold, said past recipients inspired her to achieve the high honor when she was a younger Girl Scout, after talking about leadership with them.

"Having those Girl Scouts to look up to when I was younger was what

drove me to stay in Girl Scouts," Reuss said.

Reuss said before she could earn the Gold Award she had to earn the awards below it: the Bronze and Silver Awards.

"The Bronze Award was completed by the whole troop and I completed my Silver Award with one other Girl Scout," Reuss said. "However, for the Gold Award, it had to be individually earned and I was able to achieve the award through my previous experiences in building leadership roles."

Reuss said there were numerous steps she had to complete in order to achieve the Gold Award.

"Once I outlined my plan for the award, I had to submit a form online

describing my award and then I met in D.C. with two representatives from the Girl Scout council to discuss my plan," Reuss said. "Then they gave me suggestions and I resubmitted my ideas while also implementing their suggestions."

Reuss said she had to complete and log a minimum of 80 hours toward the award.

"For my Gold Award I created a website and social media platforms for a youth group called First Time Campers," Reuss said. "The 80 hours consisted of brainstorming the plan for my project, actually creating the website, which took up the majority the time, meeting with peers to give feedback and also



COURTESY OF MARK SKAGGS

Junior Mark Skaggs poses for a photo with his parents after receiving his Eagle Scout rank. Skaggs has earned a total of 34 merit badges, 13 of which are required to receive his Eagle Scout rank.

an outreach component."

Skaggs' mother, Susan Skaggs, said she is proud of his diligence.

"From when he was a Cub Scout all the way to becoming a Boy Scout in

sixth grade, he has learned [...] how to live in the outdoors and serve others," Skaggs said. "I wish everyone could have this practical experience that will benefit them for life."



COURTESY OF PATRICK MOHAN

English teacher Patrick Mohan performs stand-up comedy at Laughing Buddha Comedy in New York. The club promotes new talents with open mic shows, stand-up and comedy workshops.

"The first night I did it I got a drink and as I was walking back," Mohan said.

"The emcee from the comedy club saw me on the street and said 'hey that was a good set, the way you went from this to that. That felt great because that was the first time I did it.'"

Mohan offsets classes with stand-up comedy

by jay kosumi

Everyone knows Patrick Mohan as an English teacher, but a lesser-known fact about him is he is also a stand-up comedian.

Mohan started performing stand-up comedy in August 2015 at Eastville Comedy Club in Brooklyn, New York, and has had a total of eight performances throughout the years since.

"I only do it in New York, [where] I spend pretty much the whole summer," Mohan said. "A lot of stand-up comedy is a scam, like 'come take our comedy classes for 200 dollars and we'll give you 15 minutes [performance time.]' I go to clubs that don't charge much, where it's five dollars and you only get a five-minute set."

Mohan said watching a talent show called "Last Comic Standing" inspired him to try stand-up. The now-cancelled reality TV competition aired on NBC until 2015, and its purpose was to find a promising

comedian from a group of auditionees.

"[It] was like 'American Idol' for stand-up comedians," Mohan said. "I would always comment on how bad some of the comedians were, so I said 'I could probably do as well as that person, so [...] let me just try it,' with no intention of becoming a comedian or getting famous for it."

Mohan said he did not experience stage fright during his first open mic show because he saw how unprepared other people were.

"I came up with more than five minutes of material, and when I got there the first night, I realized how little people prepare for open mics," Mohan said. "Some people don't prepare at all and just ramble up there, [...] so I wasn't too nervous because there weren't really any high stakes to it."

A challenge Mohan said he faced during his first performance was the lack of genuine audience reaction to his material.

"Sometimes what I'll joke about is how little of a reaction people give at open mics," Mohan said. "But you can't go to an open mic expecting a great reaction because the majority of the audience is made up of other [comedians] who are there to do their five minutes, so [...] they're just waiting for their time to come on."

Though Mohan said stand-up comedy is just a hobby to him, he would like to perform in more popular clubs with bigger audiences.

"I'd be curious to see [the reaction] in an unbiased crowd," Mohan said. "Even [with] well-known comedians like Kevin Hart [...], if someone said the material he said, I don't think a lot of people would laugh, but because it's Kevin Hart and you paid money to see him; people feel that they need to."

Mohan even made an appearance on the Netflix special, "Bumping Mics With Jeff Ross & Dave Attell."

"I saw [Ross and Attell]

live," Mohan said. "I was in the audience and you could see the back of my head and the side of my face at one point."

Aside from "Ross and Attell," Mohan also mentioned Norm Macdonald and Brian Regan among his favorite comedians.

"Macdonald is someone I consider to be a comedic genius," Mohan said. "Regan is [also] really good because he's one of the few who is totally clean, [which] I think is hard to do and he's been doing it for probably 30 years."

Though Mohan has only done stand-up in New York, he said he would consider performing in D.C., if his family would not attend his shows.

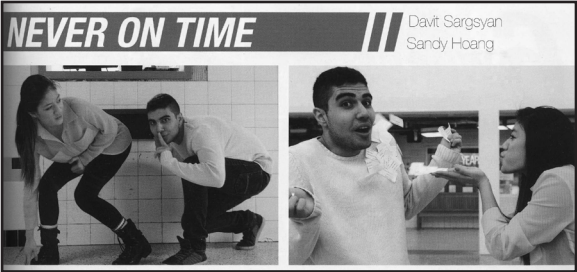
"It just feels like something I want to get out of my system," Mohan said. "I would want to do it in the D.C. area one time, and I wouldn't mind if other teachers came to see me. But with family members, I request they don't come, just because the material is kind of raunchy."

Where are they now?

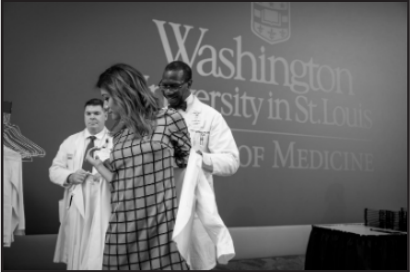
Rank&File followed up with past senior superlative winners to see what they are up to and if their old titles still hold true today.

compiled by gwyneth murphy

before



now



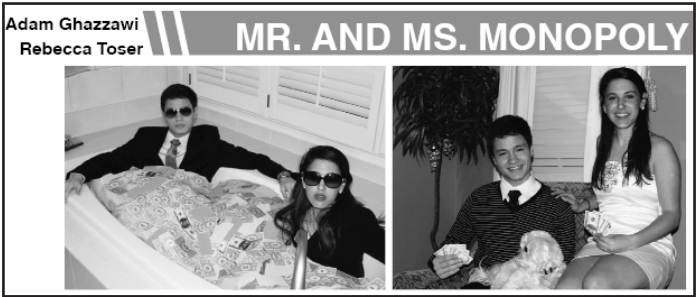
COURTESY OF SANDY HOANG

never on time

I won ‘never on time’ in high school because I was never on time. I was always around 10 minutes late to the first class of the day, and all my teachers expected it. Everyone in the main office knew my name too. It’s been six years since I won that superlative and I still think I’m never on time, although I like to believe that I’ve been better. I’m in medical school right now and timeliness is expected for all students. When I go to class, I always try to give myself extra time to get ready in the morning so that I’m on time. Luckily, there are days in medical school that are so exciting that it makes me want to wake up super early in the morning. Down the road, I hope to find a specialty and practice that I love so much that I wake up excited every morning, on time.

- class of 2013 alumna Sandy Hoang

before



now



COURTESY OF BECCA TOSER

mr. and ms. monopoly

I think I was most likely selected for this superlative because of my involvement with DECA. My friends and I were really involved and I got to attend Nationals three times, placing seventh in my event when I went junior year. I’ve also always had a really driven personality and am pretty dedicated to the things I set out to achieve. I feel really proud of what I’ve been able to accomplish over the last six years. I thrived in college at Virginia Tech and think that the opportunities that I’ve been given continue to amaze me. I currently work in marketing strategy at the Victoria’s Secret headquarters, focused specifically on our mobile app. I’ve been able to have a lot of responsibility at a young age and I’m excited about what the future holds.

- class of 2013 alumna Becca Toser

before



presidential nominee 2032

I think the obvious reason [I recieved this superlative] was my involvement with the class of 2015’s student government board, which I served on all four years of high school. But I think my designation as a future political candidate stemmed more from my leadership style, and my perceived personality. It didn’t hurt that I also spent most of my high school career in business casual attire, and had participated in debate club. I’m not sure if the title ever fit with me in the first place. I always felt that the title reflected my diplomatic nature with people and the image I tried to project, which was someone professional and ready to hold discussions with everyone and anyone from all social or academic standings. My involvement with politics has taken a different direction at William and Mary. I’m not so much interested in crafting student legislation and liaising between the university and students as I was in high school. However, I would say that the diplomatic facet of my superlative is something I have embraced more at university; my main focus is cultural diplomacy and grassroots activism, and less so bureaucratic engagement, like sitting on a student board. I’m actively involved in the Middle Eastern Music Ensemble, Middle Eastern Student Association, IMRAA [...] and research groups such as AidData. My engagement with politics is more global and less institutional than in high school. My language studies illustrate this well. I have been studying Arabic, Russian, and had the opportunity to learn Tajik during a fulbright scholarship to Tajikistan. I think if my peers, or I, had to give me a new superlative, it would be ‘Future Ambassador.’

- class of 2015 alumna Sanam Analouei

now



Senior Luka Gabitsinashvili receives his award and money donation toward a charity of his choice at the FCPS Peace Award Ceremony. “Using your voice, using your freedom of speech, and really being peaceful in your efforts to raise awareness about an issue and then really motivate others to partake in your endeavor really has long term impacts benefiting you,” Gabitsinashvili said.

Key Club President earns peace award by dedicating life to helping community

by nikita athawale

As he scrolled through the College and Career Center’s Google Classroom, senior Luka Gabitsinashvili noticed the 2019 Fairfax County Student Peace Award and decided to apply. On March 10, he accepted both the award and the 100 dollar donation to a non-profit organization of his choice for his work as president of Key Club, through which he volunteered and wrote holiday cards for hospice children. “[The] donation on my behalf [was to] the Falls Church-McLean Children’s Center,” Gabitsinashvili said. “Everyone is very welcoming; [they] love what they’re doing and they’re doing it for the children. Children are the future of our world.” Local politicians, including school board member Ryan McElveen and representative

Gerry Connolly, attended the ceremony at Stacy C. Sherwood Community Center. “I was very grateful and [...] happy that I won the award because I love planning service projects and giving back to my community,” Gabitsinashvili said. “[The award] was a motivator to keep working harder and planning more events in the future.” Gabitsinashvili said he would dedicate the award to anyone in his life who encouraged him to be who he is today, especially Key Club sponsor Mary Cobb-Wittrock for her support and Falls Church-McLean Children’s Center fundraising director Renee Boyle. “[Boyle] was a big influencer in my life because of her passion for sticking with an organization that has a very clear [purpose] for helping others and putting other’s needs first,” Gabitsinashvili said. Gabitsinashvili said his motto is “be the change you want to see in the world” because it shows, how with many passionate people, great change can occur. “My biggest passion in life is environmental activism and humanitarian relief,” Gabitsinashvili said. “[The] quote of being the change you want to see in the world really highlights how every individual has the potential to make a large impact if they want to.” Gabitsinashvili said he encourages other student leaders to apply for the Student Peace Award, but to not use the award as an incentive for doing charity work. “The award is not there to justify what you did, it’s [...] to motivate you,” Gabitsinashvili said. “Even if I didn’t get the award, I would still love what I’m doing and still have that passion for volunteering and helping others.”

Behind the Curtins

Family of teachers discuss road to shared profession

by dmitry butylev

Social studies teacher Kevin Curtin, his wife Julie Curtin and his cousin Richard Resig have been teaching together at Marshall High School for over seven years.

Kevin and Resig both teach social studies while Julie teaches English.

"I love working in the same building as my family members," Resig said. "We have plenty of similar interests and were raised to value similar traits and characteristics, allow[ing] our teaching styles and compatibility to be quite strong."

Prior to working at Marshall, the two Curtins also taught together at Colonial Forge High School as a part of Stafford County Public School System.

From their home in Alexandria, their commute was about an hour, which is one of the reasons they chose to look for a job in Fairfax County Public Schools.

"Both she and I were looking to move north, at least in

terms of our teaching," Kevin said. "We sort of wanted to stay together and Marshall was the place that offered us [...] a great place to teach and an opportunity to teach together."

The school offered the position to Julie in the summer before the 2011-2012 school year, and Kevin came in for an interview a month later. The pair started teaching together that school year.

In addition to teaching, the family members were also involved in other facets of the community.

Julie was the swim and dive coach for three years, and the assistant varsity volleyball coach her first year teaching. Kevin coached basketball and lacrosse, and Resig also coached lacrosse in addition to the debate team.

After about a year of working together, Kevin's cousin Resig said he was looking to move to Virginia from New York, so the couple passed his resume along to the department chair and assistant principal at the time.

Currently, the family members all work in B Hall, though Julie works on the second floor. Resig and Kevin's classrooms are two doors down from each other.

"Mr. Curtin, my actual blood cousin, is an enthusiastic, personable and devoted person both as a professional and as a person of community and family," Resig said. "I am very lucky that we can support each other, work with each other, confide in each other when we need it, relate on certain issues and then bring those shared experiences home when our families get together."

Resig said he did not expect to be working in close vicinity to family when he was studying to become a teacher.

"I never thought when I was getting my teaching license [and] masters degree that I would end up teaching in the same building as family," Resig said. "Now that I am, I would be very sad to lose that. It makes this whole career, passion, and life's work all the more enjoyable with family here too."



DMITRY BUTYLEV/RANK&FILE

Top: English teacher Julie Curtin assists junior Simone Oteri with a self-paced personal finance course assignment during his success prep class.

Left: Social studies teacher Kevin Curtin explains a propaganda topic and presentation techniques during World History 2 class.

Right: Social studies teacher Richard Resig instructs IB History of the Americas students on their upcoming Project Based Learning presentation.

'I couldn't hide it any longer'

LGBTQ+ students discuss their pasts and coming to terms with their sexuality



compiled by
gwyneth murphy



COURTESY OF TIMOTHY HUTCHINSON

Timothy Hutchinson poses with his boyfriend in the Outer Banks over the summer.

I had known about my sexuality since fifth grade. For the rest of elementary and middle school I had passed it on as a phase and ignored it. I had never really understood the idea of sexuality until I had watched GLEE. There was nobody I knew who was queer, and GLEE was the first time I had 'seen' them. I always resonated with characters like Kurt and Blaine but I was never really sure why. I knew that they were gay, but I pushed that aside as why I'd be intrigued by them. Eventually, in sixth grade, I had heard rumors were being spread about me by a couple boys in my grade. It definitely sucked, especially since I hadn't told anyone about anything, and I felt like I had to act a certain way to avoid things like that. During middle school it only got worse, but I had eventually came to terms with how I felt. It was still a long time until I officially came out, and it took six years. I've read a lot about how being 'closeted' impacts someone's mental health, and I'd be lying if I said it didn't impact me. When I was younger I was much more carefree and relaxed, but that whole experience changed my life, and I couldn't find many people I knew I could trust. I told a few people early in high

school, ironically, none of my close friends. I remember [one] year I had a teacher, and when he had mentioned he was gay I was shocked; I'd never met anyone queer in person. Marshall is not the perfect place. You hear words screamed in the hallway from one friend to another, or you see something written on the walls of bathrooms. But fall of my junior year I had gotten tired of it, of rumors spread about me, of my constant anxiety. New Years was coming around and I wanted a resolution, one that was actually meaningful. It was an impulse decision, and I typed an open letter, posting it on Instagram. I got like 100 comments and dozens of texts or snaps from all my friends in support. Life is so different now. I'm never afraid to be who I am, I have an incredible boyfriend and I'm treated just like everyone else. I actually found that the second I came out, people stopped saying snarky things about my sexuality. I'd like to think they were scared or something, that I knew I was stronger or couldn't care less about what they had to say. But life, life is pretty good, and I'm thankful to Marshall and my community for it.

- Timothy Hutchinson, senior

I came out as bisexual for the first time in February of 2017 underneath a tree in my neighbor's yard, to my best friend. Discovering such an intimate part of myself that I'd never thought about before wasn't scary, but the actual act of coming out was utterly terrifying. Before the end of seventh grade I had never really thought about my sexuality. No one had ever told me that being something other than straight was an option, so I just assumed I would marry a boy at some point and that would be that. I also never had any reason to think otherwise given that all of my crushes up until that point were on boys. My first introduction into the possibility of being not straight came when I was watching 'Arrow' after school instead of doing my homework. I was halfway through season two and I watched as Sara Lance and Nyssa Al-Ghul kissed on screen. I didn't think much of it at the time, but I ended up re-watching that scene on YouTube. Of course, my dumb thirteen-year-old brain didn't connect the dots so I pushed away those thoughts and continued on with my life. And as summer ended and school came around again, my friend quietly confessed that she was bisexual and what that meant. That night, the only thing running through my mind was, "am I bisexual?" After that, I turned to the internet. I did as much research as I could on all different kinds of sexualities, reading people's stories and experiences. I learned about the beautiful history of the LGBTQ+ community; I read the stories of all the talented and amazing queer celebrities that used

their voices to promote change. I also learned about the darker side of LGBTQ+ history. I learned about the hatred, the discrimination, the denial of basic rights just because of someone's sexuality or gender identity, and that terrified me. I was quick to accept that I wasn't straight. That yes, maybe the label "bisexual" would work for me. But as I learned that someone could hate me without knowing anything else about me, just because of my sexuality, all I wanted to do was hide. For months I tried to balance the desire to be out and proud about my sexuality and the fear of how my family and friends would treat me. Being in love with my straight best friend didn't help either, but again, that seems to come with the territory. I dropped hints every so often, trying to figure out if it was safe for me to come out. Eventually, I couldn't hide it any longer. So after school I pulled my best friend aside, the same one I was in love with, and I came out to her. It felt like a weight off my chest and suddenly I understood what those people were talking about in their stories. It really is a relief to come out. And when I came out to my parents in a heated argument seven months later, I felt the same relief after they didn't kick me out. We still don't really talk about it, but that's enough for me. Now, my sexuality is something I choose to be open about. Being openly queer at Marshall has never caused me any problems, and I consider myself extremely lucky that I am surrounded by an accepting and tolerant community.

- Joy Gu, sophomore



COURTESY OF JOY GU

Joy Gu poses outside Hayley Kiyoko's concert, who Gu said is a role model of hers due to Kiyoko's LGBTQ+ identity and activism.

From LA to Washington

Teacher recounts life in entertainment industry

by isabella gulick

English teacher Nikita Washington worked for Capitol Records where he collaborated with celebrities and worked at high-profile events before returning to teaching.

Capitol Records is a subsidiary of Universal Music Group, and is a record label that has signed artists such as Pink Floyd, Katy Perry and The Beatles. At Capitol Records, Washington worked in the digital marketing department. He posted on social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and Snapchat.

"I created different graphics for them and I also focused and updated on their actual websites," Washington said.

Through his work, Washington said he was able to make several connections,

giving him the opportunity to meet, work and interact with artists.

"I did meet Halsey once," Washington said. "I remember no one knew she was actually in the building. I went up to the floor above where I was working, and when I went to see one of my friends that worked in the photography department she came out and gave me a hug and she said 'you're fabulous.' It was that simple connection that I realized that she was actually a really cool individual and I really appreciated that."

Not only did his connections give him the opportunity to have more personal interactions with celebrities, they also gave him the chance to work on award shows.

"I did something called freelance where you just kind of do different jobs in different

places," Washington said. "I started to make friends and connections where they needed my background, and the individuals actually wanted me to work on the award shows. [For example, I met] this woman [who] asked me if I wanted to assist, [which is] how I got to work at the BET awards and the American Black Film Festival."

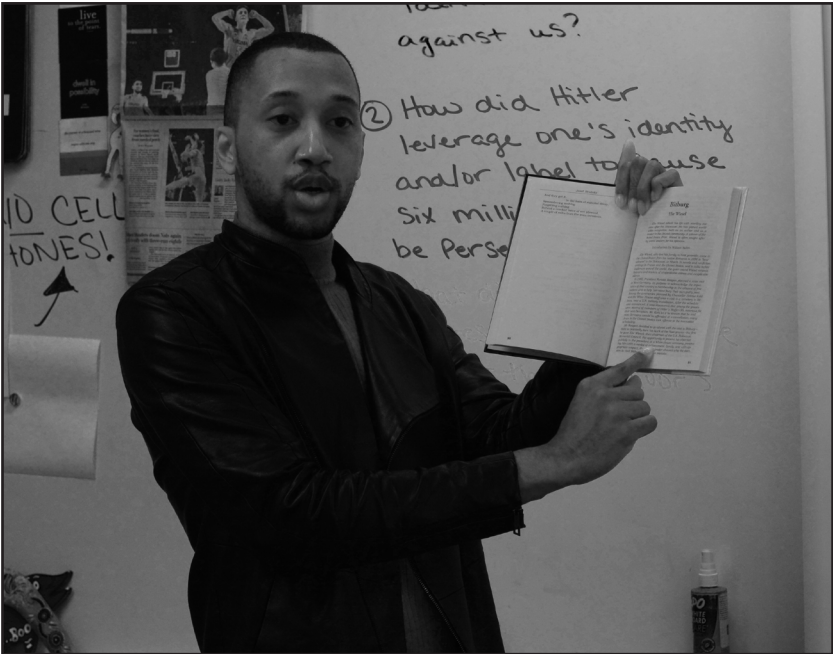
While the connections he made because of his job gave him further work opportunities, he said they also allowed him to connect with individuals on a more personal level.

"One of my friends is the publicist for Yara Shahidi, the young lady from 'Black-ish' and 'Grown-ish,'" Washington said. "I do know a lot of people in the industry and it's just very fun to have some of those people

as my true friends before they were even popular. It's really a humbling experience to see those individuals grow."

Prior to getting a job at Capitol Records in Los Angeles and subsequently teaching English at Marshall, Washington taught English at TC Williams High School, studied at UNC Greensboro to become a nurse and volunteered to take a job for a technology company in the west coast.

"I was actually an English teacher for three years before I decided to stop teaching," Washington said. "I started teaching in 2011 and I just wasn't happy with teaching at the time, so I decided to try and do other things. I ended up getting a job at a tech company and they traveled me all over the United States. I ended up in California [because] they wanted



ISABELLA GULICK/RANK&FILE

English teacher Nikita Washington discusses the book *Night* with his English 9 class. He also teaches IB Literature SL II.

"I realized that teaching was more so my thing and where I felt that I was doing a true service," Washington said.

someone in the west coast, and they asked if any of us wanted to volunteer, so I [did]."

Though he was already in the area for his technology company job, Washington said it took several months to land his job at Capitol Records.

"Now to get into the actual industry it was very hard,"

Washington said. "I applied to many jobs, got many rejections, but I kept being persistent and ended up applying to Capitol Records. I ended up getting the job in July of 2016."

He also said people ask why he would return to teaching, but said he considers the experience more fulfilling.

"What a lot of people don't understand is, yes, it's fun and you meet a lot of different people, but they don't pay anything," Washington said. "I got paid way less working in the entertainment industry than I got paid even as a first year teacher. That was eye-opening to me."



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Financial aid fails to assist middle class families

by will shin

After years of sleepless nights to finish assignments, months of fervently applying to colleges and days of anxious waiting, what makes it all worth it is the acceptance email from your dream college. But even after all of the anticipation, the road to college can still be far from over.

Come college acceptance season, high school seniors prepare to leave home and set off for college, but depending on a family's financial situation, an acceptance email may not be the best news in the world.

Particularly, middle class families face the plight of being

too rich to qualify for financial aid but too poor to afford college.

College bound students calculate their eligibility for financial aid by filling out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Through this form, they calculate their Expected Family Contribution (EFC), which is a formula that predicts how much money a family can spare to pay for college.

While the EFC takes into consideration factors such as income and current assets, it fails to consider others like saving to send a younger child to college in coming years.

The system primarily targets low-income families that have a particularly low EFC,

making middle class families too rich to qualify for aid.

But, because of the factors it ignores, middle class families are also less financially-equipped to pay for college than their EFC may suggest.

There are people I know personally who have gotten into their dream college out of state but had to settle for in-state because they could not afford it.

Not to say Virginia's in-state options are not good, but the sole reasons their literal dream is not coming true is their financial disadvantage and FAFSA's failure to accommodate them.

There is also the option of applying for certain grants and receiving scholarships based on factors like grades and test scores. But the money for this type of aid primarily goes to more wealthy families who can afford a better quality

education and to support a student through college.

One particular grant students can apply for is the Pell Grant, which is based on an individual's EFC, cost of attendance for the school they are applying to, status as a full or part-time student and their plan to attend school for a full academic year or less.

With rising costs of college, middle class families' ability to pay for it has fallen. While there has been more of an effort from private colleges and universities to offer equal opportunities, they are still not meeting the needs of those with lower income and most benefits still go to wealthier families.

Having students graduate college with less debt should be more of a priority, and dismantling the current divisive system of deciding who is worthy of financial aid is the first step.



College admissions scandal ignites fraud flameout

by jay kosumi

The Department of Justice prosecuted 50 people on March 12 in what turned out to be the biggest college admissions bribery scheme in U.S. history.

The scandal involved the creation of a system to help parents cheat their way into high-ranking colleges, revealing wealthy parents' willingness to go to criminal lengths to secure their kids' admission into elite schools.

As disappointing as it is that such prominent schools would enable this scam, it is not surprising people would prioritize the status of a college over the quality of education they offer.

While the parents the Department of Justice exposed for their

participation in this scheme received heavy backlash, I find it hypocritical that people turn a blind eye on similar examples of college bribery.

Schools like Stanford, USC or Yale have a low admission rate because they are highly competitive. Those who dream of attending usually start preparing since ninth grade by going to great lengths to be on top of their work and participating in extracurricular activities and community service.

But what less people talk about is how much easier kids have it to score well in standardized tests when they are in the fortunate financial position to afford SAT or ACT prep courses. Likewise, it certainly gives them an

advantage in the admission process if they have family members or relatives that have donated to the college or are alumni.

What upsets me is hearing my friends have received acceptance to their dream school, yet have to second-guess their enrollment due to their inability to afford tuition. The concept of abandoning their first-choice college for an in-state, more affordable one is not foreign to Marshall students.

So the backlash the public gave to the kids

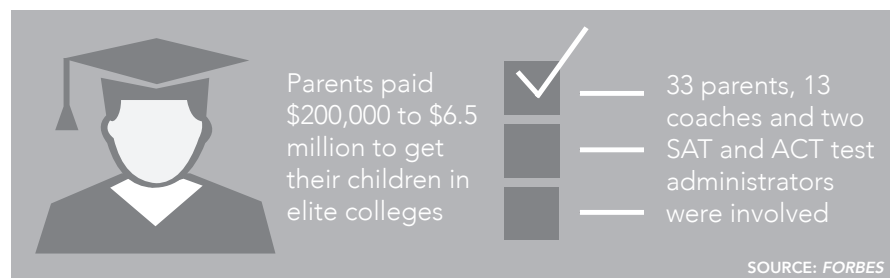
that were part of this scheme is valid. An admission counselor accepting someone who has not put effort into their application is like a slap in the face to hard-working students, who have fought to secure a well-deserved spot, and the only thing standing in their way is money - the factor that enabled these rich kids to get in in the first place.

At the same time, it is important to note that kids with alumni history, whose parents have donated to the school or who can afford

private tutoring to help them maintain a good academic standing in high school have an advantage in admissions people often refuse to acknowledge.

It seems parents prioritize receiving acceptance in an elite college over the means by which their kid does so.

In reality, the idea of school donations is not much different from the bribery of athletic coaches to accept kids with nonexistent athletic abilities into sports teams. The only difference is, one means is



EIC reflects on publication growth after 32 issues

With our April issue being my 32nd and final issue of the *rank&file*, I have been reflecting on my staff's accomplishments and the growth our content, design, communication and digital platforms underwent. The 56th volume of the newspaper has been my pride and joy this year, and I truly feel we have elevated our standards and refined our craft.

In terms of content, my focus has been streamlining the editing process by spending more time teaching AP style and grammar rules to have a clean, consistent product, while at the same time pushing students to develop innovative, original layouts and art concepts.

We also continued to build our social media platform and added a YouTube channel with multimedia content, which feels very fitting to the way students currently prefer to receive their news.

My other primary focus has actually been separate from the newspaper itself. I have learned over the last four years that the ultimate determinant of a great newspaper is whether or not the people making

it feel heard, involved, valued and supported. No matter how tight our edits are or how beautiful our art is on the page, we need to be a team to flourish.

With that in mind, stronger staff communication and building trust has been my biggest goal, and I feel we have all worked hard this year to humanize one another and eliminate ego or hypocrisy from lead-

letter from the editor

ership. For student leaders in particular, it is an incredibly difficult task, therefore I see it as one of our crowning achievements. The success of our publication, at its core, has been a result of constant self and group reflection. This year I implemented 'reflection days' after every issue, which produced more self-aware leaders and minimized repetitive mistakes long term. I also feel the *rank&file* has faced a lot of just and unjust critique this year,

as all publications do, and I believe it has strengthened our integrity by forcing students to own up to their errors while also giving them a chance to defend their journalistic rights.

A speaker at the journalism conference I attended my freshman year gave me advice that has stuck with me every day since. He said the testament of a good editor-in-chief is not the performance of their staff the year they lead it, but rather the year after. My job has definitely been to ensure strong staff morale and product quality, but more importantly it has been to leave everyone well-equipped with knowledge and hands-on experience to be able to run things without me.

I am proud of our growth this year but even more proud to know that this talented, dedicated staff I am leaving behind will continue to elevate the newspaper next year while always keeping the vision and heart of the *rank&file* intact.

Gwyneth Murphy
Editor-in-Chief

Point Counterpoint: New Zealand shooting

U.S. should follow New Zealand's lead after their immediate gun control action

by sophie tedesco

In today's political climate in the U.S., there seems to be a pervasive frustration with the inaction of politicians. It feels as if the same story plays on loop—tragedy, thoughts and prayers, then nothing. Every massacre has become a divisive political battle with empathy and thoughtful action lost in a fight over who and what is to blame.

According to the Gun Violence Archive, there were 340 mass shootings in the U.S. in 2018. New Zealand had zero.

In the midst of the endless cycle that plays in the U.S., it was refreshing to see immediate action in New Zealand after just one mass shooting in the last 22 years.

I am not saying U.S. politicians do not care, but the battle over gun rights has brought progress to a standstill.

New Zealand sidestepped that war and took immediate, decisive action, banning semi-automatic weapons, assault rifles and high capacity magazines. The U.S. would do best to follow suit.

Mental illness can be invisible. Often, we do not know the mental state of a killer until it is too late. It is hard to legislate deeply personal, complicated and individualized issues, but it is not hard to ban military grade weapons for civilians.

Previously, measures preventing citizens from obtaining military grade rifles were not considered controversial.

There was a ban on assault weapons in the

United States, but it expired in 2004. The rapid action of New Zealand politicians further highlights the gross inaction of the U.S. government.

When there were 39,773 deaths from firearms in 2017 alone, according to the New York Times, something must change.

Sandy Hook, Parkland and Las Vegas along with scores of other massacres should have been enough.

Now we can only hope New Zealand's example might spur some productive action.

Constantly blaming firearms for terrorist attacks ignores mental health crisis

by wade devinney

The people of Christchurch, NZ, will forever see March 15 as a day of infamy. It was the day a mentally ill, white supremacist shooter executed a racially-charged attack on two mosques, killing 50 muslims. While the shooting was tragic, guns were not at fault. An apparent insufficiency of mental

health awareness allowed the shooter to live without receiving treatment for his traumatic emotions.

The shooter wrote a deranged, egomaniacal manifesto explaining his motives for the mass murder.

The immediate response was to explore restrictions on firearms, especially since one in four New Zealand residents own a gun. According to the New York Times, New Zealand generally has stricter gun purchasing laws than the United States.

While it is still unclear how

the shooter obtained the weapon he used, officials believe it is unlikely he purchased the weapon by legitimate means, as he would have failed the mandatory background check.

It is likely there were no such responsible gun owners at Christchurch, which probably contributed to the high death toll.

The anti-gun movement has largely focused their criticism toward the National Rifle Association, and has partially blamed the collector culture surrounding assault rifles for the New Zealand attack.

But according to the shooter's manifesto, he was not in any way interested in collecting guns, or even guns at all.

Gun enthusiasts are generally responsible citizens who intend on safely using their firearms, hence their interest. They tend to be people who had parents introduce them to guns at a young age and teach them responsibility.

If we do not address the mental health crisis that is inciting terror attacks, we could create violence on the verge of war.

Quizzes inaccurately measure comprehension

by hannah levitan

A reading quiz is an inefficient way to measure reading comprehension of a book for English class due to the exam's demand for a perfect memory.

In IB English Literature I HL, teachers often assess if students actually read the assigned book through reading quizzes that include a variety of questions focused on specific details throughout the book.

Reading quizzes are formative, meaning the grades do not carry over into the following quarter or determine or affect an individual's final grade. Therefore, the quizzes are a waste of both the student's and teacher's time.

Rather than relying on reading quizzes to ensure all students read

the books, English teachers should lead a discussion or socratic seminar where students can prove they read the book and understood it as a whole.

Seminars show student knowledge and understanding of the text;. They require a more in-depth analysis rather than filling in blanks on a quiz, where students can easily turn to Spark Notes for a summary.

I have read every book for English class front-to-back, yet still manage to receive low reading quiz grades.

Though I am an active participant in class and am able to analyze texts, I do not have the strong memory these quizzes demand.

Students who rely on Spark Notes as opposed to reading the books usually get higher grades

compared to those who take the time to truly read the texts.

Because students can easily find summaries of the books online, asking students to answer questions with a one word response is ineffective.

I have never been good at memory-based tests, and I do not think my ability to remember small details such as the name of a minor character or the opening line of a certain chapter should determine my quarter grade when reading quizzes do not actually matter in the course, long-term.

Instead, English courses should use socratic seminars to see if the students understand what is actually important- the author's stylistic choices and overall message.

comprehension statistics



people do not remember 10% of what they read



65% of teachers think that one-size-fits all tests are not developmentally appropriate

SOURCE: NEA TODAY

Pass distribution causes outrage

by jay kosumi

Driving to school is a necessity for kids who live out of the district and must be in control of their own transportation, which, in a way, is convenient because they do not have to hasten to catch the bus in the morning or after school. But with convenience also come disadvantages.

At the beginning of the school year, seniors had to arrive early in the morning and wait in queues to obtain their much-anticipated parking passes.

The upper lot passes sold fairly quickly, so then seniors had to wait to obtain lower lot passes.

But what has become problematic is how people are now using their lower lot passes to park in the upper parking lot, which, though more convenient, is a privilege they do not have.

When juniors and seniors abuse their

lower lot passes to park where unpermitted, such as the upper parking lot, they disregard those who had to wait for hours to get their passes.

While the administration has claimed they regularly check the student drivers for their passes before permitting them to park, clearly this procedure is not effective as people are still exploiting their lower lot passes to park in the upper lot, with no consequences whatsoever. There are even people who park when they do not have passes to begin with.

Though I do not drive to school, I know that if I did, I would not appreciate undergoing such a tedious process of obtaining a pass, only to face more issues when others would abuse theirs.

With all the parking issues that have arisen this year, I understand why upper-classmen would resort to using prohibited means to park in the school grounds.

VA 72498
APR

VIRGINIA

71% of high school seniors have a driver's license

○ VIRGINIA IS FOR LOVERS ○

SOURCE: WIRED

One argument is that parking passes are too costly, but that reason does not excuse parking without having them.

The addition of classroom modularity at the beginning of the year also decreased available parking space, and students claimed not many passes were available for purchase.

In my opinion, the administration should do a better job of handing out more passes and adding stricter security procedures, in order to make sure that student drivers do not feel the need to find unjust ways to park their vehicles.

tweets

The respiratory discomfort I experienced in China from the pollution was really concerning. Although I loved the trip, it makes me sad to see how destructive humans can be. Beautiful culture, ugly air quality.

Kara-Dove Mutombo junior
@kara_dove01

GCM Trip to China... we made it to Xi'an! @GCMSTEMAcademy @GCMPrincipal

Danielle Schoolcraft assistant principal
@dlschoolcraf

letters

Unnecessary waste halts environmental change

An important issue that has arisen in the world is sustainability in the midst of environmental downfalls. How much longer can we use coal, natural gas, and oil? How much longer can we waste the food that we have, when there may be a day when it's gone? As Marshall Statesmen, we need to find ways where our school can go green and help save energy.

When I saw the Share Table at the cafeteria, I immediately recognized students that are willing to bring our school closer to a green building.

We need to move forward. Many of the bathrooms have paper towel dispensers right next to a hand dryer. We should get rid of the paper towel dispensers when there is an efficient way to dry our hands with the hand dryer. We should open the blinds to reduce the amount of artificial light. We should try to do anything to conserve the beauty of the environment.

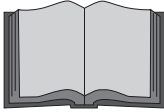
While any transition is hard, I urge you, Marshall Statesmen, to consider small actions to make a greater difference. First, if you are not using a device, turn it off or sign out. Finally, encourage others to be more attentive to their actions. The more people that are aware of their carbon footprint, the greater the effort will be to regain our world back.

Shruti Sekar junior

Send your signed letters (50 to 125 words) to room D211. Letters can also be submitted to letters@gcmnews.net, but will only be considered upon in-person verification. Letters will be published at the editors' discretion. Published letters do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the paper.

Young Adult author Mark Oshiro visits Marshall to discuss and promote new book ‘Anger is a Gift’

Author Mark Oshiro visited Marshall to discuss his debut novel ‘Anger Is A Gift,’ as well as meet aspiring writers on April 10 and 11. Rank&File interviewed Oshiro about his experience of being a Young Adult author and what speaking to high school students means to him.



compiled by
wade devinney

Why are you here at Marshall?

I am here for two reasons. There’s a logistical one, which is that this weekend is the NoVa Teen Book Festival, and something I’ve learned getting into the writing space is a lot of these festivals will book these authors at school visits. We’ll get to visit these local schools that will often usually not have authors come visit them. But I’m here for a more thematic reason, or I guess a more personal reason. This is my actual favorite part of being an author, being able to be in schools and getting to meet the intended audience of your books. I went to a school where we didn’t get visits. This is not a thing that would ever happen, and I think about how great it would have been to see someone like myself who was successful and who made

it, and I want to provide that sort of view and let kids know that you can be creative, and you can be a weirdo, and you can be a bookworm. And there is a path, there is a life for you where you get to be those things. I grew up in a time where being a bookworm and a nerd was not cool, and it’s changed a lot. It’s weird to me that kids are hanging out in this library. When I grew up, the library was the worst place you could be. You were not supposed to hang out there, it wasn’t cool. But I notice now as I’m doing more school visits that this is actually one of the best places to hang out, and it just blows my mind. It’s so strange. So that’s a big reason why I’m here. I love talking to teenagers about writing and what it’s like to be a writer.



COURTESY OF MARKOSHIRO.COM/REPRODUCED UNDER FAIR USE.

Mark Oshiro gives a presentation. Oshiro is about to embark on a tour for his new book “Anger is a Gift,” which offers insight into racism, personal loss and overcoming tragedy through the lens of a teenage boy.

How often do you talk to kids?

Sometimes. It really depends, every school is different. I just came from Justice High School where it wasn’t the library, specifically. It was an avid class, a book club. I’ve done school visits as a part of this program called LGBTQ Writers in Schools through Lambda Literary, with specifically queer authors in schools, so a lot of those have been like Gay Straight Alliance or Queer Straight Alliance, so it’s not really a book club, but you’re there for very specific reasons. And sometimes

it’s just an English teacher who just wants me to speak. I speak to a class where no one knows who I am, no one’s ever heard of my book or read it or anything. I’ve done school visits in D.C. where the kids were assigned my book, which is a trip. It is very very surreal. So it depends. I sort of have to adapt the conversation and what my presentation is based on what sort of environment it is.

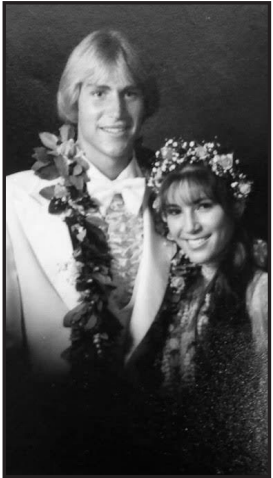
Would you say that your experience on YouTube aides you in public speaking and speaking to teenagers?

Yes. So I did public speaking in high school, and it was actually a way I got over my shyness and feeling uncomfortable speaking to people. And I had a really great coach, Mrs. Alford, who I’m still in contact with. She’s wonderful. So doing Mark Reads helped my writing and it also helped my public speaking because a lot of

the events I would do was speaking to crowds of strangers. It is a very weird thing to have to go into a room, and you don’t know anyone in that room, and you have to somehow be charming, but entertaining, but interesting. And so being someone who has basically read books on the internet, it helps.

Left: Social studies teacher Dan Hale and his wife’s high school prom picture. His son posted it on a Reddit page for a class, and Netflix took it.

Below: Screenshot of the clip where the blurred photos appeared on the Netflix documentary.



COURTESY OF DAN HALE



COURTESY OF NETFLIX/REPRODUCED UNDER FAIR USE.

Netflix uses teacher’s prom photographs in cult documentary without permission

by brynn norwood

Social studies teacher Dan Hale came across his high school prom photos while watching the Emmy award-winning documentary “Wild Wild Country,” which Netflix released in 2018.

The documentary explains the story of the utopian Rajneesh movement, which settled in desolate Oregon from 1970 to 1985. The government considered the group highly controversial because of the attempted murder through a bioterror attack and hostile practices.

Hale said he came across the docu-series after a student recommended it to him.

“One of my students suggested [...] the documentary [when it] came out and asked me to see it,” Hale said. “I remembered when this cult was going on and it sparked my interest.”

As Hale and his wife were watching,

the film began revealing the crimes within the cult, including a federal agent stating the group committed the largest immigration fraud scheme in United States history.

“There was a flash of these people that were supposedly involved in this immigration fraud on the screen,” Hale said. “My wife and I sat straight up in bed and said ‘oh my gosh, that’s our prom picture.’”

Afterward, Hale replayed the scene and paused it when the picture was on the screen. Despite their blurred out faces, the photos were, in fact, their high school prom ones.

“[The photo] was implying that we were part of some scheme to defraud the government,” Hale said. “I said ‘I don’t think so. Those are Hawaii prom pictures.’”

Hale’s son found old pictures of his parents for a class assignment and

posted the photos on a Reddit page after he found them. This is where the producers of the documentary took the photos.

“The photo was obviously ours,” Hale said. “My son actually posted the picture on Reddit and Netflix just lifted the photo from that page.”

Hale said the event upset his wife because of their association to a mass crime.

“[My wife and I] talked and she was really upset because of the portrayal of our photo,” Hale said. “I think it’s really messed up.”

Hale said he and his wife do not intend on taking any further action against Netflix in an attempt to prosecute the company for defamation of character. Hale said the real lesson is to not believe everything you see on television.

“The fact that [Netflix] would do that [makes me wonder] ‘what else have they done in their other documentaries?’” Hale said.

Zhavia Ward’s genre crossover sets her apart

by ema baca

Gaining most of her popularity from her appearance on the singing show “The Four,” Zhavia Ward’s unique voice is extremely underrated.

While participating in the singing competition, Zhavia stood out due to her ability to add style to different songs, unlike her competition who sang covers identical to the original artist.

Though she gained a following while participating on “The Four,” people forgot about how talented she is after the judges eliminated her.

Unlike other contestants the judges voted off, Zhavia took

the show as a learning experience and used it as a platform to begin working on her own music.

She has released three of her own songs, including “Deep Down,” “100 Ways” and “Candlelight.” In addition to writing her own songs, she collaborated with Diplo, French Montana, and Lil Pump for the “Deadpool 2” song track. These songs include a variety of pop, rap and reggae, appealing to a larger audience.

Due to her enormous amount of talent, I thought Zhavia was well-known. After talking to my friends and figuring out they had not heard her name or listened to her music, I

concluded she is underrated.

Since she does not have the largest platform and music streaming applications consider her a rising artist, I think people are critical of giving her a chance.

Listeners might assume her music is not good enough due to the fact that her music is not played on local radio stations.

Though my friends did not know about her at first, they agreed Zhavia is extremely unique and talented after listening to her music.

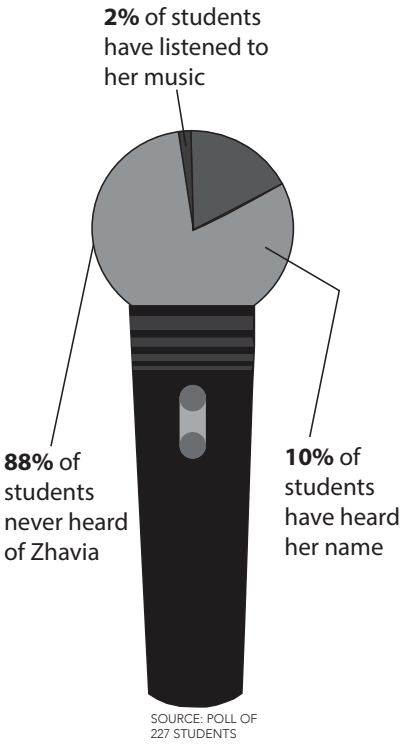
The music industry is very competitive and it takes a lot of talent to succeed. But I think a lot of successful singers have similar voices and songs,

whereas Zhavia’s voice is special.

She has strayed away from the repetitive and boring songs that are most commonly played on the radio, and has produced different songs which encompass a variety of music genres.

Due to her unique voice, Zhavia has the power to attract listeners of all genres of music. By gaining more listeners, Zhavia would have the potential to expand her talent and become a name that music streaming applications recognize as more than just a rising artist.

If more people gave her a chance and listened to her music, they could discover and support an underappreciated artist.



Teacher Netflix recommendations

Faculty discuss their favorite shows and movies to watch and why they recommend them to the student body



compiled by
sahar jiwani



My top recommendation is “Homecoming King.” It’s a comedy special by Hasan Minhaj, and the reason I love it is because it’s the first thing I’ve ever seen where I felt like I was represented. It is hilarious but also I cry every time I watch it and it really is because I felt like I understood for the very first time. I have never watched something where I could relate [to it] so much. [I] highly recommend everyone should watch it. My second show is the show that I watch when I

kind of want to turn off my brain [or] I just want a good story and want to be engaged with the characters, but I know I’m not going to cry or get too excited. I watch this when I’m cooking because I can turn off my brain in a way, but in a good way. It’s called “The Resident” and the main character in it is Logan from “Gilmore Girls,” so if you liked “Gilmore Girls” or his character, “The Resident” [might be or you].

- English teacher Apoorva Johri



Netflix, I recently watched “Triple Frontier” which is one about a heist of a bunch of former special forces that stole a bunch of money from a criminal lord. I would recommend that one. I think most of our students could watch that one. It’s like a military action kind of movie.

- math teacher Michael Carroll



The most recent thing I have watched is “Better Call Saul,” [an] AMC [show]. It’s the prequel to “Breaking Bad.” It follows some of the minor characters from that series, but it flushes out their backstories by making them the major characters in the series. I like it because, like the original “Breaking Bad,” it takes characters that are not really heroes but makes their story interesting and compelling and makes you almost root for them even though they are all terrible people in some ways. It’s

fascinating television in that it twists your sense of who you feel like the hero is when these people should not be heroes. The other thing I watch a lot of is “Dr. Who,” but that season ended a few months ago. [...] It’s one of those things I watch right when the new season comes out [and] I will watch it regularly. My sister got me into it many years ago. As an English teacher, I will always say if you are looking for something entertaining, find a good book to read.

- journalism teacher Daniel Reinish

“Us” improves upon Peele’s past films

by ben harper

When I finished watching “Us” for the first time, the film left me in a state of shock. As the film finished and the credits began to roll, I sat there in my seat with my mouth wide open in awe of what I just saw. As I got up and went home, I thought about “Us” for the next hour trying to make sense of the film.

“Us” is Jordan Peele’s second film. Peele is famous for his sketch comedy show “Key and Peele” with Keegan-Michael Key and his debut film “Get Out.” The movie is about a group of doppelgangers, known as the tethered, who terrorize a family on a beach trip.

“Us” differs from “Get Out.” While both are horror films, “Us” is much more up to interpretation. The film does not have this big metaphor for the African-American experience like there is in “Get Out” with the sunken place. Instead, Peele leaves the film’s biggest questions unanswered.

The film definitely rewards viewers who watch it a second time, especially with the ending in mind, as it allows its viewers to connect the dots from earlier scenes to the twist ending.

“Us” also improves on one of the biggest setbacks

“Get Out” faced - the horror. In “Get Out” I was never on the edge of my seat in anticipation of what happens next. Peele greatly improves on this in “Us.” It baffles me that the man who helped create the substitute teacher skit for “Key and Peele” has the ability to produce such tense horror scenes at the same time.

The acting is phenomenal as well, especially Lupita Nyong’o who plays both the terrifying ring leader of the tethered as well as a terrified mother trying to protect her family. Besides that, Winston Duke plays a likeable father and a terrifying quiet brute. Evan Alex and Shahdi Wright Joseph both play the family’s children well, especially for their age.

While “Us” is mostly stellar, it does have a few problems. The film has a big issue with comedy. Similar to “Get Out,” the film tries to mix horror and comedy in the first half of the film. Unfortunately, the comedy falls flat. It’s very situational and verbal, making it widely fail.

It also has a problem differentiating between the comedy and horror aspects. In one scene, the father is comedically trying to get the tethered off his lawn and in the next scene they completely surround the family and attempt to kill them.

The film has an issue with pacing as well. There is



COURTESY OF VARIETY/REPRODUCED UNDER FAIR USE.

Left to right: Jason Wilson shows his tethered clone Pluto (both played by Evan Alex) a magic trick in the closet. Once the tethered invade the Wilson’s family home in the middle of the film, all of the main cast had to play both a regular and tethered version of their character during the movie.

rarely a point where the audience can catch their breath and cool down.

Despite these problems, “Us” weaves its phenomenal acting and gripping story to create one of the most tense and horror-filled experiences this year.



COURTESY OF EMILY HALVERSON

Sophomores William Baker and Jayden Lawrence work on building a prop for “The Sound of Music.”
“I think the most underrated part of tech theater tends to be that people don’t know it’s a [difficult] class,” theatre director Bernard DeLeo said. “I run it like a work training opportunity. It’s a shop. I’m the boss. There are apprentices who work their way on up through the years and they become sort of mini bosses, running certain departments, running lights, sound, sets, [et cetera.]”
“The Sound of Music” will premiere on April 26 and will also have shows on April 27 and May 1 to 2.

The stage is alive with the sound of tech

by amelia gee

The theatre tech crew began rehearsing for the spring musical “The Sound of Music” on March 11 and continues to practice every day after school leading up to the play. But, as theater director Bernard DeLeo said, they are the unsung heroes of every play.

Senior Emma Smith began her tech journey in her sophomore year as a lighting apprentice.

Smith said the behind-the-scenes process starts during the tech theatre class and the entire period is spent organizing each aspect leading up to the play. An obstacle during rehearsals is the limited workspace, but the temporary inconvenience is minor compared to the final product.

“To ensure things go smoothly, our stage managers keep track of everything that needs to happen prior to [the] show and during the performance,” Smith said. “You can’t really build on the stage while the actors are working, so that’s one challenge in regards to getting more time to finish certain projects. The best feeling is

[...] watching everything you helped build from the ground up finally come together.”

Freshman Abby Brunner’s path in theater started as an assistant stage manager in the winter play “Be More Chill.” When “The Sound of Music” came along, DeLeo promoted her to the manager level. Brunner said she did not expect the promotion.

“It was definitely a surprise since [DeLeo] told me that I would not get to this level [by] freshman year the first time I met him,” Brunner said. “No one cares about seniority in the theatre department.”

Brunner said seeing the final product as well as the community is her favorite part about theatre tech.

“Once you get on stage and see the progression [without] scripts in hand, you see the evolution of all the actors [with] the band [present],” Brunner said. “It’s a really amazing feeling [to say] I was behind this as part of a theatre family. [It] is such a great experience.”

DeLeo said everyone works backstage, not just during the show, but also leading up to the performance.

“The perception is that [tech theatre] is easy, which it isn’t,” DeLeo said. “It’s problem solving [...] all under a tight deadline and a budget as well. It’s a lot of physical labor. It’s very technical [and] hands on.”

DeLeo said the main responsibilities for supporting the performances exist in the production phase building up to the play, as well as running the performance in front of a live audience.

“We have to figure out [first] ‘what’s the play we’re doing,’ and then ‘how do we interpret that visually on stage?’” DeLeo said. “It’s stressful, especially when [...] you’re pulling long hours, in which stuff isn’t ready yet [and] you’re scrambling to try to get this together.”

The theatre tech crew sets the stage for each production and recognizes the role they play is essential to a successful production.

“It’s very challenging,” DeLeo said. “There’s [multiple] moving parts, so that’s why it feels very triumphant when you pull off a show and you can breathe easy. It is an amazing thing when it comes out perfect.”



AMELIA GEE/RANK&FILE

Junior Lena Smith runs with the ball in a game against Westfield High School. Smith said the headgear is preferable to a traditional helmet because it is easier to wear, even though it provides no protection for the player's head or neck. "Though it's common knowledge that helmets do help in preventing concussions, they are uncomfortable to wear," Smith said.

Girls lacrosse teams favors low protection goggles

by amelia gee

Players on girls lacrosse teams wear goggles instead of helmets due to the comfort and general popularity of them, risking potential head injuries.

Boys lacrosse players wear helmets because of different regulations that allow for a more aggressive style of play.

Junior and girls varsity lacrosse player Lena Smith said though helmets prevent concussions, the discomfort of wearing one is a drawback. Instead, using goggles is the current athletic gear standard.

"Most girls have played mainly with goggles for years, and helmets only now

have become common," Smith said. "So many players are simply accustomed to using goggles."

Concussions have lasting effects on and off the field such as headaches, concentration issues and irritability. Smith said requiring players to wear a helmet can prevent these complications.

"These injuries are quite common because players tend to hit each other in the head area and fail to wear proper protection," Smith said.

Girls varsity lacrosse head coach Valerie Gibbons said the players' safety is a huge priority and will continue to be in the future.

"Leading up to

games, it's all about conditioning, playing smart and not taking risks in the game that might put them in danger of getting injured," Gibbons said. "Eventually, I think the sport [will] make everybody wear helmets."

Sophomore and JV girls lacrosse player Jamie Escobar Fonseca said not wearing a helmet is less restrictive during a game because it is easier to see through them.

"I believe it's more comfortable not to wear the helmet [and] you are able to see [more] clearly," Escobar Fonseca said. "I wish there was more awareness to prevent head injuries, but there is not."

Managers afford coaches more practice time to help their teams

by brynn norwood

Despite athletes' effort and dedication to their sports, they are not the only ones working hard. Behind the scenes, team managers are essential to making practices and games more efficient. Seniors Tavia Hale and Brette Chambers were both managers of boys varsity basketball, before Chambers managed soccer.

"[Tavia and I] do what [the team] doesn't have the time to do," Chambers said. "We help [practices and games] run more smoothly and

keep the team more intact."

Despite the managers' devotion to their teams, Hale said fans do not acknowledge the hard work managers do.

"People definitely overlook us," Hale said. "Without us there wouldn't be scores on the website."

Hale has assisted with basketball since before she was in high school because her father, Daniel Hale, is a basketball coach.

"I have managed basketball because of my dad," Hale said. "I grew up really liking it."

Boys varsity basketball coach Daniel Hale said the managers are imperative to efficiency.

"Everything from the day-to-day running the clock and getting the guys water makes for efficiency during practice," Hale said. "From a game standpoint, it's crucial."

The managers also record the players on film during games so that the entire team can reflect the highlights at the end of the season.

"We film the games and post them on [the highlights website] so that we can share them with other teams."



BRYNN NORWOOD/RANK&FILE

Senior and boys varsity soccer manager Brette Chambers watches the game from the sidelines holding brownies for players after the game. Aside from providing post-game snacks, Chambers is responsible for scheduling practices, overseeing and caring for equipment, providing water and updating team statistics.

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sports**brief**

Washington Post selects Deaver for All-Met team

District and school basketball coaches chose senior forward Daniel Deaver for the All-Met fourth boys basketball team.

The All-Met basketball team is a list of the most valuable high school players according to both high school and district coaches in the DMV area.

The Washington Post published the winter All-Met boys basketball teams on March 19, where they placed Daniel Deaver in the boys fourth team.

"Throughout the last three years, Daniel has been a key contributor for Marshall's varsity team and a starter for two of those seasons," Evolution Basketball Training founder and president Alex Harris said.

Harris said he was impressed when Deaver made the varsity team his sophomore year.

Due to Deaver's contribution to his team and his average points per game, head basketball coach Daniel Hale chose him as the most valuable player in the varsity team to be the honoree for fourth boys All-Met team.

"I nominated [Deaver] for multiple reasons," Hale said.

Hale said Deaver's player statistics were 23 points, 15 rebounds, four assists, two steals and two blocks per game.

"These are phenomenal statistics," Hale said. "Additionally, [Deaver] was also voted by the district coaches as Player of the Year and Defensive Player of the Year."

Deaver was the first player to score 1,000 points in the boys basketball program history.

"[Basketball] will always be a big part of my life," Deaver said. "I want to continue coaching when I'm an adult. Of course my career and my family comes first, [but] it's always going to be my favorite game and a huge hobby of mine."

Hale said the region coaches voted Deaver as region player of the year and he made first team all-state for the second time, which helped him to reach his nomination for All-Met fourth team.

by dmitry butylev



PHOTO COURTESY OF COLUMBIAN YEARBOOK

Senior Daniel Deaver prepares to shoot the basketball during a game. High school sports analysts at the Washington Post newspaper selected Deaver for the fourth All-Met team.

On track for the future

Rank&File examines the FCPSOn initiative, which will provide every high schooler with a personal laptop

by sahar jiwani & sophie tedesco

Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) will give personal laptops to all high school students as a part of the FCPSOn initiative, beginning in the 2019-2020 school year.

Each student will be able to use the laptop at school and at home for the duration of the school year. Though schools will require students to turn their laptops in for maintenance and re-imaging over the summer, they will use the same computer for all of high school. Additionally, the county will give students without internet access at home a portable wireless internet device.

"The county is going to be in a four year replacement cycle so every four years all of those laptops will be turned in and new laptops will arrive," principal Jeff Litz said.

While FCPS will not require students to take the school-provided laptop, every student must pay a 50 dollar maintenance fee at the beginning of the school year. County officials expect the fee to generate about 2.2 million dollars in revenue.

"It is not a fee specifically for the laptop," Litz said. "The fee is intended to be utilized to replace broken devices or replace parts on devices that are in disrepair. Students who are on free or reduced lunch will either have a reduced fee or no fee at all."

The proposed budget for 2020 allots 4.3 million dollars for the implementation of FCPSOn. The money funds the laptops, additional county technology personnel and three years of professional development for teachers.

"The budget is a set of priorities and an investment," Superintendent Scott Brabrand said. "We're asking families to support it through the fee. We're asking schools [because] we've taken some school dollars to contribute and we're putting some [money] in the budget. We're really asking schools, families and the central office to chip in to support this."

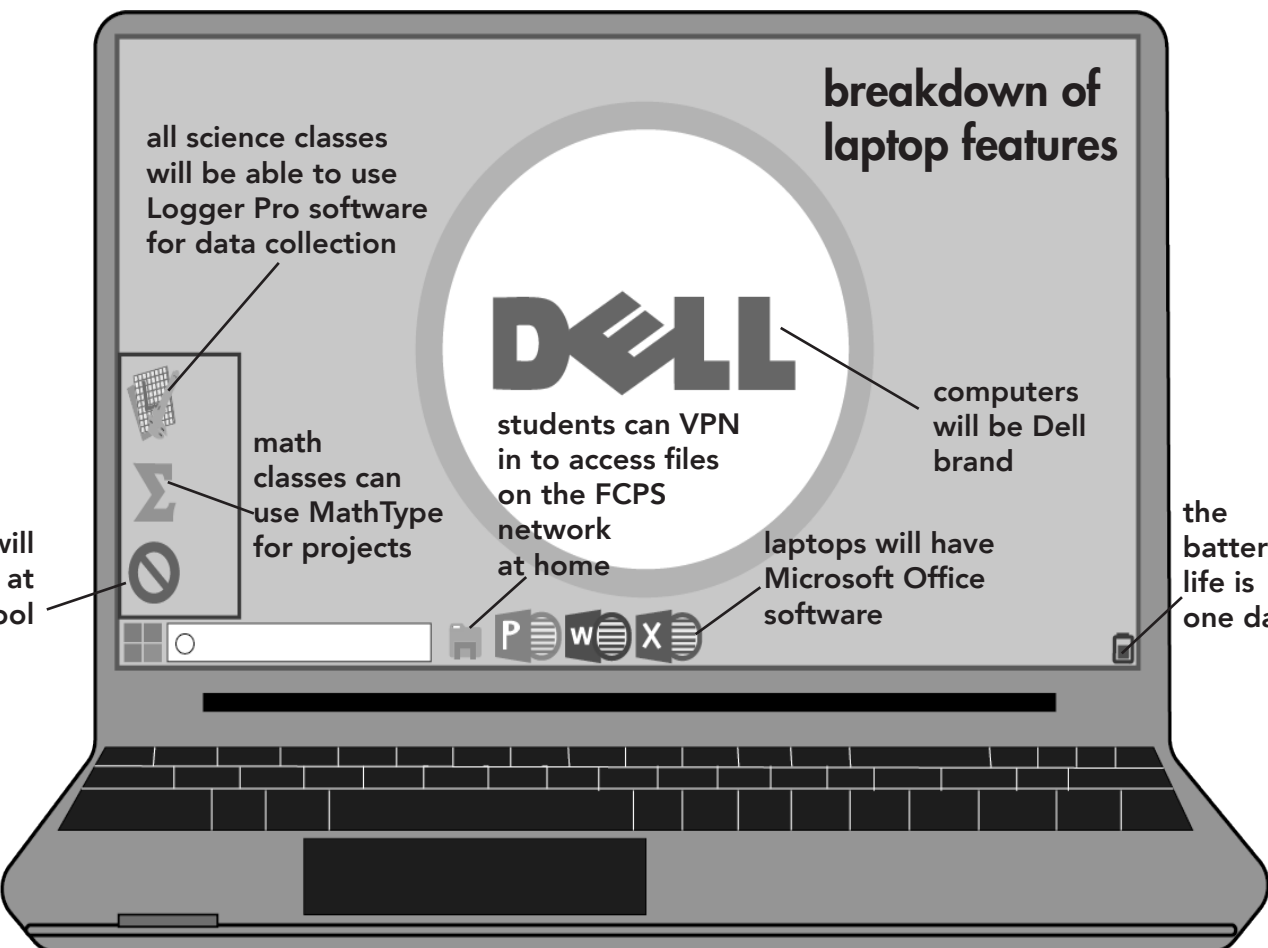
Litz said every student will receive a brand new Dell laptop. The county will then redistribute Marshall's old laptops to middle and elementary schools.

"Middle and particularly elementary schools don't have the money high schools do to be able to put technology throughout their buildings," Litz said. "This is going to get more laptops in their buildings."

The county used grants from the state and some FCPS budget dollars to fund pilot FCPSOn programs in seven high schools before countywide implementation.

Johns Hopkins School of Education has been monitoring the impacts of the FCPSOn initiative in the Chantilly High School pyramid and will continue to conduct annual reviews as the county implements FCPSOn in all high schools.

According to John Hopkins' FCPSOn Phase One Evaluation Report for year two, teachers reported almost daily use of the



laptops as well as increased student engagement and diversified presentation of content. But, there was no conclusive evidence to show students' content knowledge increased. Teachers also expressed concerns about the possibility for distraction the laptops could provide.

"We have seen some positive development around engagement," Brabrand said. "Some people want to know if this is the silver bullet for increased SOL scores and we don't have that data complete. I think there is some initial evidence that it helps, but the purpose of the technology is not to do better on an SOL test, it is to be better prepared for the workforce [with] skills that you need in order to be successful."

Litz said the primary issue students faced at pilot schools was keeping the laptops charged.

"These batteries will last a whole day, but kids have to get in the habit of charging them every night when they go home," Litz said.

As part of FCPSOn, the county is asking teachers to create lesson plans that integrate technology.

"We have been working this school year to help teachers in the area of

professional development as we work to start to create high quality, blended learning environments," Litz said. "The expectation isn't that [students are] facing a laptop all day long every day."


Litz said he expects to see more station-based lessons and individualized content thanks to various software programs in the future.

"I told my teachers this is like a three to five year project," Litz said. "The kids aren't going to show up in August and all of a sudden we are going to have all of these blended learning lessons, but I think [...] we will see these laptops being used in more creative ways with various types of software."

In looking to the future, Litz said the next county debate will center around expanding the FCPSOn initiative beyond high school.


"The next talk that will happen over the next year or two with the school board and county leadership is bringing [FCPSOn] down to middle school, which I think will probably happen in the near future," Litz said. "Then the real talk is do you [implement] it in elementary school."

Onboard? Students and faculty share their thoughts about FCPSOn




- Karen Shahin, technology specialist

"There are some teachers who feel like they have their whole plan in place, their students do well, they are comfortable with what they are doing and they are a little hesitant. [They feel] like 'if things are going well why should I change something that works?'"



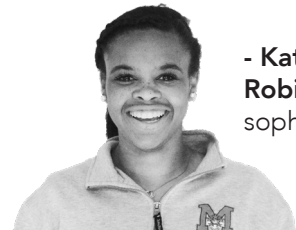
- Jean Hayhurst, science teacher

"I would like to see less issues with cell phones [when we get computers], but I don't know if that [will] be the case. The other benefit is we [won't] have to wait 20 minutes for the computers to fire up. I am looking forward to it. I have to be prepared for it; I am going to prepare this summer."



- Fatimah Salem, freshman


"I have a computer at home, but my other siblings use it a lot, so it would be a lot nicer to have my own computer to work on without any disturbances. I'd be able to finish my assignments faster and I'd be able to study more, so it would help me improve my grades and productivity."




- Katherine Robinson, sophomore

"I think the policy is a good idea, however, [...] my parents bought me a new computer for school [but] now it doesn't really make sense to use my computer next year. I think there should be an option [to] pay some money to have [all school software] downloaded onto your [personal] computer."


onpoint: goals of the FCPSOn initiative, according to Superintendent Scott Brabrand

1 technological equity


"We can't have haves and have nots when it comes to access to technology. In some families kids have had [a] laptop since they were four years old, [but] 29 percent of our students are on free or reduced lunch."

2 career preparation

"Amazon and a lot of companies have headquarters in our area, and they have chosen it for talent. Digital citizenship is going to be one of the 'must have' attributes of a successful worker in the 21st century, and we have to create that environment."

3 technology education

"Technology has exploded in the past 15 years and we have to recognize we have students who are navigating those [areas] without any input from the schools. I think we're going to be able to push out more good information."

4 class engagement

"Technology allows you to differentiate instruction [and have] more small groups where the teacher is not the sage on the stage, but a guide. I hope we see improved attendance and students pulled in a little more."



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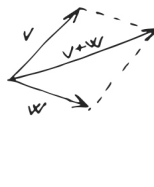
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