

the GLOBE

Mamaroneck High School • Mamaroneck, NY • Volume XXXVIII, Number 5 • Winter 2021

Mamaroneck to Return to Full Capacity After Spring Break

By CAITLYN CARPENTER

Last week, the Mamaroneck School District announced that all its schools, including Mamaroneck High School, will be returning to full capacity on Thursday, April 8. After seven months of hybrid learning, the district confirmed that it is ready to welcome back all of its hybrid students full-time. Students will still be able to attend school virtually should they choose to do so, but there will no longer be a hybrid option.

The decision stemmed from discussions with students, teachers, and administrators which emphasized the benefits of in-person learning and the feasibility of safely returning to 100 percent-- especially with many teachers now vaccinated. MHS Principal Elizabeth Clain stressed how she feels the high school has been able to successfully keep its students safe at both 33 and 50 percent capacity and that, with the proper precautions, she believes this will continue as the school

moves to 100 percent. There have been no confirmed cases of in-school COVID-19 transmission in the high school thus far.

Upon return, school traffic patterns and the eight-period schedule with Focus Fridays will remain the same. However, for lunch, students will be encouraged to eat outside or off campus. If indoor eating is necessary, students will be spaced six-feet apart in larger rooms such as the gym or cafeteria and will be required to keep their masks on when not eating. In classrooms, students will be spaced three to six feet apart, following updated health guidelines, and each desk will be equipped with a plexiglass shield. Should there be an increase in cases, Clain will not hesitate to make changes. In the meantime, she is hopeful the switch will bring a sense of normalcy to MHS.

The *Globe* recently sat down with Clain to discuss the switch. Keep an eye out for the full conversation on MPR's "Discourse." Find it on Spotify and Apple Podcasts.



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE MHS MULTICULTURAL STUDENT UNION
MHS Students (from left to right) Jacinta Smith ('21), Sofia Martinez ('23), Emilia Pantigoso ('21) dance in one of the pre-recorded segments of the assembly.

Black History Month Recognized Throughout the District

By SELA BREEN

Throughout February, Mamaroneck High School, along with the rest of the Mamaroneck Union Free School District, celebrated Black History Month to honor contributions Black communities have made to the country and local community. While it was harder to celebrate during a pandemic, the district still tried its best to integrate education of Black history into the six schools through education of staff members, initiatives to bring anti-racist and diverse curriculum into English and Social Studies classes, and student engagement in a culturally-aware and safe environment. Much of the work done throughout Black History Month was spear-headed by the



PHOTO COURTESY OF @MAMKMSU ON INSTAGRAM
Alina Priya ('21) hangs a Black History Month poster in the overpass.

District Equity Team, a group of 46 teachers, administrators, and members of local, non-profit organizations who are dedicated to developing a more

inclusive curriculum, create equal opportunities for all students, and dismantle inequitable policies in the district...

SEE "MAMARONECK," PAGE 3

MLK Assembly Combats Injustice Through Art

By JADE DECKER

To start the new year, after a year of chaos and a year of fighting back, Mamaroneck High School's Martin Luther King Assembly was a perfect reminder of our nation's empowering past. This past year, the eyes of our nation were opened to the horrors people of color endure daily through discrimination and police brutality. Although society is said to have progressed over time, recently we have been exposed to situations not too different from those of the times of Martin Luther King Jr.

Put together by the Multicultural Student Union (MSU), the first-ever online MLK Assembly referenced events of this past year as well as those that occurred 60 years ago.

Incorporating various art forms, such as art, dance, and literature, students took matters into their own hands as they expressed the importance of this MLK Day through their extraordinary display.

The first act included street art, step dancing, singers, and recited messages that the students of Mamaroneck High School wanted to share with the community. These included excerpts from "The Other America" and more. Art from all over the community was incorporated in the video, bringing color to the issues of racism. Jordan Reilly ('21), who sang "The Climb" by Miley Cyrus, stated, "I thought this song was perfect because it matches well with the theme of the assembly..."

SEE "STUDENTS," PAGE 9

FEATURES

OSR students find mentors in a virtual setting. PAGE 7.

How are local restaurants dealing with social distancing in cold weather? PAGE 8.

NEWS

OCRA students create app for Village of Larchmont. PAGE 2.

Youngest-ever candidate runs for Mamaroneck Board of Education PAGE 3.

EDITORIAL

A new culture of learning emerges with remote learning. PAGE 4.



OPINION

How has 2020 affected our Generation Z? PAGE 6.

Should Mamaroneck Schools be promoting political discussions? PAGE 6.

ARTS & LEISURE

MHS musicians participate in virtual NYSSMA festival. PAGE 10.

How "Drivers License" became a worldwide sensation. PAGE 10.

HEALTH & WELLNESS

Teachers across the district begin to receive vaccinations PAGE 11.

MHS successfully comes back from Holiday break with few cases PAGE 11.

SPOTLIGHT

Pandemic brings some positive change to MHS student life PAGE 9.

SPORTS

The Knicks come back like never before this season. PAGE 12.

FOLLOW US!

@mhsglobe



www.mhsglobe.com

News

OCRA Students Launch Village of Larchmont App

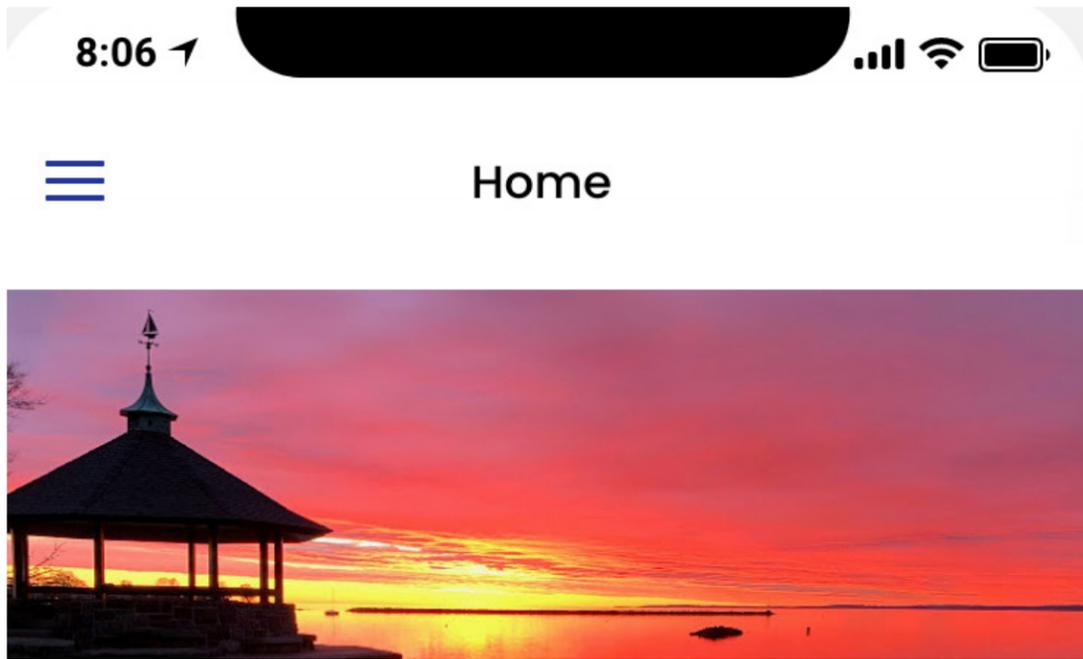
To fill the communication gap between local government and residents, MHS OCRA students utilize technology.

By **REBECCA HERZBERG**

On January 15, 2021, MHS seniors Calle Harwin, Kate Coughlin, Halle Myers, Samantha Murabito, Sydney Grodin, and Jacobi Kandel from the Original Civic Research and Action (OCRA) program released the Village of Larchmont App, the product of three years of development, hard work, and perseverance. The idea for this app came during the students' sophomore year when their OCRA class conducted a community concerns survey that yielded surprising and intriguing results. A significant number of community members felt that the local government did not communicate well with its citizens. Coughlin says that it quickly became clear that "communication between residents and local officials was a very prominent issue in the area." This information inspired these six OCRA students to develop a solution in the form of an app.

**"Communication between residents and local officials was a very prominent issue in this area."
- Kate Coughlin ('21)**

The content of the app is based on the Village's website which includes information about the local government, public ser-



The home page of the new Village of Larchmont app, created by MHS OCRA students. FATIMAH KHAN/THE GLOBE

vices, parking, and other resources relevant to the community. It also includes information collected from a series of meetings with the Village Board and community leaders. Once this information

MHS and Hommocks, to translate their ideas and data directly from Google Sheets to an app using the Glide program - a platform which enables users to build apps quickly. "We could not have made this app without [Mr. Sammartano's] help. He was with us throughout every stage of creating the app - from choosing colors and fonts all the way to launch day," reflects Harwin. All six students are extremely grateful for his guidance throughout this process.

Prior to the creation of the app, the primary means of communication between the local government and community was the Village of Larchmont website.

However, the Village's website can be difficult to navigate, so these students decided that an app would be the perfect remedy. "Apps are handier and more convenient," explains Murabito. The app provides a simpler means of information delivery through a modern platform. Coughlin describes it as a "newer, easier [way] for residents to learn about what's going on in their community." It should not be difficult to find the dates of different town events or basic news updates but, on the Village website, it often is. Fortunately, this new app effectively solves this issue.

Harwin describes a multitude

of reasons why residents should download this app. "It is an easy and informative product about the Village of Larchmont" because it strategically lays out information and resources in an understandable and accessible manner. Also, users will "always be informed on upcoming events and news" within the Village. An additional aspect of the app is that it creates a sense of connection between residents and their local government representatives. If interested, community members can "see who is running the Village government and learn a little more about them." In a time where interaction and connection have become much more appreciated, this part of the app provides a great way to learn about and connect with community members.

Although this app is specific to the Village of Larchmont, it can be useful for residents of nearby municipalities since many programs overlap. The app includes a variety of resources such as a news bulletin, a calendar for town events and meetings, contact information for municipal services, information about Village officials, and more. If you are interested in exploring or downloading the app, go to this website: <https://larchmont.glideapp.io/>. If you would like to watch a quick instructional video on how to download the app, go to this website: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fuG817k4mdg&feature=youtu.be>.

The College Board Cancels SAT Subject Tests

With pandemic changes, standard testing standards are permanently changing for high school students.

By **SYDNEY GIRVIN**

Thousands of students wake up at the crack of dawn several Saturdays throughout the year to sit for daunting standardized tests. Nothing is quite as dreadful as sitting for hours to take a tedious test on a Saturday morning, hoping to do well enough that taking it again becomes unnecessary. After hundreds of hours spent studying and sometimes thousands of dollars spent on tutoring, the test is finally over and students await their score to see if it will satisfy the college of their dreams. Hearts are usually crushed and the process continues.

This January, the College Board sent a belated holiday gift

to prospective college students--the news that SAT Subject Tests will be discontinued. Subject Tests, also known as SAT II's, are multiple choice standardized tests centered around an individual subject such as Biology or World History. Typically, students would take these exams to supplement their qualifications for college admissions, but the tests are not as integral to the process as SATs and ACTs.

The College Board website described the perks of these tests, saying that "SAT Subject Tests can help you see how well you've learned the subject matter compared to other students around the country and the world." The College Board also says that stu-

dents "can send a strong message to colleges about [their] interest in specific majors or programs—and how ready [they] are to tackle the work" through these tests. While this may be true, the website does not acknowledge the stress that these tests added to the already hellish college process, seemingly making this move by the College Board to terminate them a gift.

With the COVID-19 Pandemic throwing a wrench into the already chaotic admissions process, colleges were forced to decide on a new testing policy. Most institutions opted for a test-optional policy due to several cancellations of the SAT, ACT, and Subject Tests as well. Some colleges plan to continue omitting

their testing requirements in the future, beyond this pandemic. Maroneck High School Guidance Counselor Cathy Quackenbush thinks that "all of these circumstances played into the College Board's decision to drop the Subject tests, although reportedly they have been considering this for a while. COVID-19 accelerated their decision making process."

MHS Guidance Counselor Lainie Lichtenstein also provided some insight into the intentions of the College Board. She shares that the College Board feels that the AP Exams will serve the purpose of Subject Tests. She says "AP exams allow for more widespread availability. As a result, the College Board just revamped its

website and now offers students more AP support." Does this put more pressure on students to take AP courses? Time will tell.

For some, this cancellation may be less exciting. Some students may feel that they exceed in a subject or two and a test score to prove it may have helped them along in the college process. In that case, discontinuing these exams may take away that upper hand they might have had otherwise. For many, however, leaving behind Subject Tests means one less stresser that students have to worry about. MHS Guidance Counselor Robert Schwartz exclaims, "I think this is a great move. The less standardized testing the better!"

Mamaroneck Schools Celebrate Black History Month

Mamaroneck students, faculty, and administration take part in Black History Month.



PHOTO COURTESY OF @MAMKMSU ON INSTAGRAM
Melanie Huang ('23) hangs a Black History Month poster in the overpass.

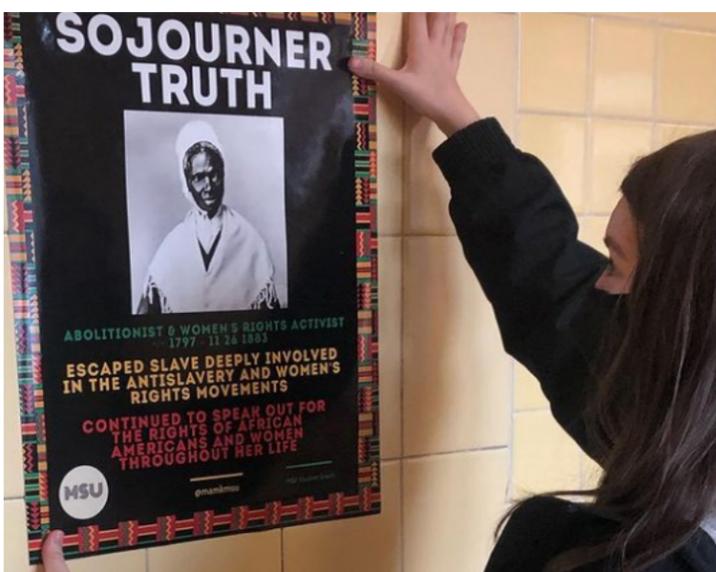


PHOTO COURTESY OF @MAMKMSU ON INSTAGRAM
Emilia Pantigoso ('21) hangs a poster honoring Sojourner Truth in the overpass.

By SELA BREEN

"BLACK", FROM FRONT

...At MHS, students from the Multicultural Student Union, previously known as the Multicultural Club, planned several activities for Black History Month, most notably the hanging of large posters in the hallways. These posters highlighted important, historical figures who were/are Black, including Kobe Bryant, Frederick Douglass, and Vice President Kamala Harris, and educated passing students and faculty on the impact Black community has had on the country. Additionally, several posts were shared on the MSU's instagram, @mamkmsu, that informed students of resources and opportunities available to learn more about Black History Month. All of the work done by the MSU for Black History Month was organized by Emilia Pantigoso ('21) and Jacinta Smith ('21), two of the co-founders and Presidents of the MSU.

MHS has also emphasized the ongoing racial equity work being done at the school in celebration of Black History Month. It is the twentieth year of the school's partnership with Facing History and Ourselves and the second year of integrating content about privilege, bias, and black history into ninth grade curriculums. Members of the District Equity Team and MHS English teachers have been leading staff members from across the district in a discussion group about changes that can be

made to individually, curricularly, and organizationally shift towards social justice and equity.

Additionally, MHS English teacher MaryBeth Jordan, recently concluded a unit introduced to her Freshman classes this year focusing on "Change Makers." The unit is inspired by her time at The New York Times Teaching Project and taught students how individuals can be agents for social change.

Paisley Flammenbaum ('24),

**"It was necessary to talk about change makers at a time when we needed them most."
- Paisley Flammenbaum ('24)**

a student in Jordan's English class, explained how, after seeing so many people speak up and call for change at Black Lives Matter protests this summer in response to the death of George Floyd and other Black Americans, she "really enjoyed getting to hear about the minds behind setting up rallies." She found it, "super inspiring to see so many change makers come together to fight for such an important movement" and felt it was, "necessary to talk about change makers at a time when we needed them most."

At other schools in the district, Black History Month has also been celebrated. At Hommocks Middle School, there have been morning announcements that recognize Black figures and students groups, and posters similar to those of the MSU were hung in the commons. Chatsworth Elementary School has introduced Books of the Month highlighting diverse characters and Murray Avenue School engaged in an all grades celebration of local Black history and created a traditional Adrinka quilt with pieces from the entire community. At Mamaroneck Avenue School, staff has been working to understand and unpack Sharon Ravitch's work on "Flux Pedagogy and Leadership" and diversity, equity, and inclusion in anticipation of her upcoming visit to the school (Ravitch is a professor at the Graduate School of Education at University of Pennsylvania and is known for her work in these areas).

Kayla Yan, a local activist and another co-founder and President of the MSU, believes this celebration of Black History month is "very vital to the Black community" because it is "important for white allies to be aware of the history of Black History Month and where we are going with it." She hopes the work done throughout the month and during the district's ongoing work in terms of diversity and inclusion will lead to a "future for both black students and for white students to collaborate and work together" more harmoniously.

Board of Education Candidate Makes History

By CAITLYN CARPENTER

In three months, two new members will be voted into the Mamaroneck Board of Education (BOE) - one of the most important bodies within the Mamaroneck School District. Made up of seven elected volunteers, the board serves to create the district's budget, define the priorities of the district, oversee progress, and establish policy to run the six different schools. While its members typically consist of parents of students or alumni of the district, this year, a new candidate stands to make history as the board's youngest ever member: Leela Mitra.

Mitra is a product of the Mamaroneck School District; having graduated from Mamaroneck High School in 2015 after ten years in the district, she knows what it is like to be a student. She has two younger brothers, one who is a recent MHS graduate and another who is currently attending Hommocks Middle School. Since leaving MHS, Mitra studied at and received a degree from Fordham

University then worked on immigration aide and child foster care in New York City. However, after the pandemic put the world on pause last year, she moved back to Mamaroneck. Now, she seeks to widen her impact within the schools she and her family call home by running for a spot on the BOE.

The "Mitra for Mamaroneck" campaign has several goals, the primary one being transparency. Mitra recalls that for "as long as [she could] remember, [she always had] a sense of recklessness and impatience when it came to the board." She places the source of that feeling on a lack of communication between the board and families of the district. In her opinion, the thinking behind how certain members vote is "a really big fog," and she feels "a lot of people don't feel comfortable [with the board's decisions] because they don't know what happens behind closed doors."

All BOE meetings are streamed and available on LMC Media for the community to view, but these meetings often last for three or more hours-- a length

that many people don't have time to commit to. Mitra brings another tool to the table to deal with this disconnect: social media. On her campaign Instagram, @mitraformamaroneck, followers can find a twenty-second "reel" summary of the most recent board meeting, highlighting what the Mitra campaign believes to be the most important points of the meeting that community members would most benefit from hearing. Moving forward, Mitra wants to do regular board meeting recaps similar to this one, but as a board member herself. She aims to use social media as part of her transparency as well as a means to build her connection with the students (and teachers and parents) who she plans to advocate for if elected to the board.

Mitra has adopted the campaign slogan, "A New Advocacy" on her social media because she wants to use her unique perspective to focus on connecting with students. She describes how the current board meetings and board members often feel inaccessible to some students, not only because of the length of the board meet-



PHOTO COURTESY OF LEELE MITRA
Leela Mitra, the Mamaroneck High School graduate currently running for Board of Education.

ings but because of the age and business-like-conduct of its members. Mitra says that she "wants to use how young [she is] compared to the others as an advantage," and that she hopes "that [she] can bring a more accessible attitude to the board."

Even if she doesn't win, Mitra hopes that her campaign will help to make students more aware of the decisions that are made by the board. She tells students to "pay attention to these meetings

because they determine a lot of the things that come into play in your years in this district."

Mitra is currently going door-to-door to collect the necessary number of signatures from eligible voters around the district in order to get her name on the ballot. The deadline for these signatures is April 28 and the election is May 18. If you would like to get in contact with Mitra's campaign, you can reach her at mitraformamaroneck@gmail.com.

Editors-In-Chief

Mark Yukelis
Caitlyn Carpenter
Sela Breen

Managing Editors

Rebecca Herzberg
Brandi Ritter
Kate Solomon
Sydney Girvin

Editorial Directors

Chris Ciulla
Tess Lepelstat

Multimedia Directors

Lulu Tantillo
Hannah Rogoff
Sascha Melamed
Anna Daum

Art and Photography Directors

Fatimah Kahn
Kim Wei

Business Managers

Vincent Jacobe de Naurois
Sam Rosuck

Copy Editors

Taylor Ferrarone
William Anderson
Emma Kearney

Arts and Leisure

Henry Bova
Lulu Tantillo, Kira Walter

Features

Tista Goswami
Emma Kearney, Taylor Ferrarone

News

Abby Tucker
Spencer Wolff
William Anderson, Sam Young

Opinion

Nadia Suben
Jamie Soropolous
Sarah Colbert, Hannah Macrone

Sports

Sydney Susswein
Evan Epstein
Simon Worth

Spotlight

Madison Rosen
Michaela Loughran
Felix Zebe, Hannah Rogoff

Health and Wellness

Maia Glazer
Olivia Daly
Sascha Melamed

Faculty Advisors

Darren Bosch
Craig Goldberg
Evan Madin

Editorial**How has Remote Learning Changed Education?**

Mamaroneck High School, like many of the other high schools in our region, made the decision to reopen for optional and limited in-person instruction in the Fall of 2020. Despite the robust safety protocols enacted by our district, a sizable contingent of students elected, or have since elected, to continue fully remote education during the ongoing school year. It is yet to be seen how many more will go remote with the upcoming move to full capacity in April. Members of the *Globe* staff met and discussed the motivations behind fully-remote learning, as well as the cultural implications of this contemporary medium.

For many students, opting to go fully-virtual was more of a necessity than a preference. Family health situations, as well as broad concerns about transmission risks amidst a pandemic mean that many students did not feel as if hybrid learning was a viable option. For most of the fully-remote students on the *Globe* staff, parental health concerns were the primary reason they chose completely virtual learning. Clearly, the creation of a synchronous, integrated virtual experience was a “must-do” for the district, as there is ample demand for low-risk learning alternatives, especially amongst families with certain health circumstances.

A remote learning option was an imperative; there is no debate around that, however there are aspects of the experience that are less than ideal.

Remote learning has totally changed the concept of a “class”. Unfortunately, “class discussions” are often abridged or modified to fit the parameters of a hybrid lesson. “Breakout rooms” are insufficient alternatives for lively classroom exchanges, and many students have indicated that remote classmates often turn off cameras and do not participate if the teacher is not in the breakout room. This makes it hard to fully engage oneself in the material. Additionally, students have indicated that the ability to participate varies wildly from class to class. In some classrooms, remote students are required to participate frequently in class discussions. In others, remote learners are merely an afterthought, observing the in-person cohort discuss the material.

Generally, students agree that adequately comprehending the lessons is more difficult at home than in person, yet many remote students feel as remote assessments are often extremely manageable, due to the “open-note” nature of most virtual tests. This means that a lapse in learning may not be reflected by a lapse in grades, perpetuat-

ing a cycle of falling behind on material, and “learning for the test” as opposed to total comprehension. Conversely, some students feel that many remote assessment apparatus are substantially more difficult, as they lack the ability to “mark up” a physical test like they otherwise would be able to. Despite these problems, remote learners largely feel as if they made the right choice.

There are some fantastic positives associated with remote learning. Students are often getting almost an hour more of sleep, without missing any class time. For many families, not having to drive a child to and from school has been a huge relief in such a difficult time. Remote lessons are also recorded, meaning students have the ability to review lessons in a manner they were previously unable to. Remote learning, broadly speaking, is incredibly convenient. Students can take naps during free periods, enjoy a home cooked meal for lunch, and still receive a high quality education, while protecting their families from any transmission risks. This is a new culture, and only time will tell if virtual learning will be a relic of the COVID 19 pandemic, or a new way that millions of student’s will receive their education for years to come.

Is Hybrid Learning Good for Students?

On the other side of this education debate are the hybrid learners-- who are soon to be non-existent come our full return in after the break. When starting off the discussion with the hybrid learners, they were asked why they chose hybrid education over remote education. Two main reasons dominated the *Globe* Staff’s responses: it creates a feeling of normalcy and the quality of education is better. With these two answers in mind, students responded to more questions about their home life, the difficulties of hybrid learning, and the disconnect they feel with the remote learners.

Opting to be hybrid was not just influenced by the feeling of normalcy or quality of education; the students’ families played an important role in helping them choose hybrid over remote. One student said that “we [Mamaroneck students] have the privilege of physically attending school, unlike other public school’s, so my parents felt like students need to take advantage of that.” Another *Globe* Staff member mentioned that, because of the coronavirus, their parents are working from home now. The constant noise from meetings and zoom calls is distracting to students, so school is easier and better for their education. Although some parents felt that going to school outweighs the potential of their child catching the coronavirus, many parents are skeptical of hybrid learning. As a result, some *Globe* members have transitioned from hybrid learning, to remote learning, and back to

hybrid learning when they feel the school is safe to return to.

For students who chose hybrid learning, they feel that the education quality is much better, but there are still unintended difficulties that they have encountered. Whether it is returning home in time to have lunch and get ready for class or the switching AB schedule, students are still not used to this new form of school. Because of the new schedule, students have had to adapt and become more flexible, but that comes at a cost. Many freshman and sophomores do not have access to or cannot drive cars, which means they have no way to get home or get go to school in the middle of the day if their parents are working. For juniors and seniors as well, someone else in their family might be using the car. In regards to the AB schedule, *Globe* Staff members said that, when they come home from school, it is weird to start school again on Zoom after lunch. Usually when people come home from school, they relax and do homework. Now students transition from one class to another, spending most of their break time preparing for the next class. Of course, many of these hybrid students feel that difficulties with WiFi and the lack of social interaction that would come from being fully remote are worse than these minute scheduling problems.

In many aspects, hybrid learning is good for students; it allows them to communicate with friends, build bonds with

teachers, and have a hands-on learning experience. According to many *Globe* members, teachers who don’t integrate the hybrid students with the Zoom students feel that they don’t have a very good connection with their classmates. One *Globe* member even said that “most of the time students don’t know who is in their class if they are on Zoom.” Despite this being true, the hybrid students still get to interact with other people, something the remote students said is missing from their remote learning. This socialization with other students and teachers is important for students because it helps them make friends and foster relationships within the school. Another benefit of hybrid learning is the quality of education. Students are able to work on projects, participate in labs, study in the library with a group (socially distanced of course!), etc., something that the remote students can’t do. Although breakout rooms allow for some group learning, it is not the same because it is not as interactive. Physical group learning is good because it enables students to think critically and bounce ideas off of one another in a more natural, relaxed fashion.

As students become more accustomed to their new form of learning, the school will continue to change as vaccines get distributed. In that same sense, the school’s and students’ flexibility has allowed us to create new modes of education that are tailored to each student.

Send a Letter to the Editor to The *Globe*!

Share your thoughts about recent *Globe* articles by sending a note to mamaroneckglobe@gmail.com
Your letter could be published in *The Globe*’s next issue!

Op-Ed

Recognizing the Effects of Socialization

By THOMAS GELLES

Socialization is the process by which each of us is initiated into what it means to be a member of our society. This process begins the moment we are born. Studies show that female babies tend to be held more gently than male babies. Mothers tend to talk to their little girls more than to their little boys. The end result of years of this kind of socializing is that gender roles begin to feel not just normal, but inevitable.

But socialization goes beyond inculcating a binary conception of gender. Our families may teach us that certain kinds of people are more acceptable than others, because of their profession, or their appearance, or their ethnicity or race. Our peer groups may shun those they perceive as awkward or different. Our religions may teach us that only certain kinds of love are okay. Our political parties may assure us that all children should be tenderly cared for, unless those children are fleeing the violence that persists in another country.

How can we separate who we really are, from what we've been socialized to believe that we are? How can we even figure out what the other possibilities are out there, about who we can be, and what we can do? How do we take those first steps toward living as our authentic selves?

Several people recently spoke

with the Globe on the issue of socialization. The common strand through their remarks is this: stay open. Take the values that are useful and kind from those around you, and then - be brave. Dare to make mistakes. Dare to be different.

Greg Cuddy, one of the guidance counselors here at MHS, observes that one of the most important things we students can do to broaden our understanding of the world around us, is to engage in extracurricular activities. Even though many clubs can't meet in person due to COVID, he still believes that there is much to be gained through participating in Zoom-based opportunities to interact. "Giving students and young people exposure to things that might be outside of their immediate circle helps a lot," says

"How do we take those first steps toward living as our authentic selves?"

Mr. Cuddy. He adds that, through extracurriculars, students can "gain a sense of self, build character, and have that excitement and passion come out." He recalls his own sports experiences at White Plains High School as essential in making it possible for him to meet other students of varied backgrounds.

Part of what that experience left him with was the desire to help build diverse communities, which is what he does now as a guidance counselor.

Being exposed to different kinds of people while growing up was also important to Karen Graubart, a historian at the University of Notre Dame. She says that her family, her peers, and her hometown all shaped who she became, noting, "My politics were partly formed by my parents, obviously. My mother was pretty liberal, and I was formed by liberal politics." Her childhood in Queens affected her, too. Dr. Graubart explains, "Growing up in New York meant that I was exposed to people who were really different from me all the time." She adds, "I grew up sort of thinking that I had things in common with people who weren't like me." Finding the commonalities she shares with others is no doubt part of why Dr. Graubart, a white atheist of Jewish heritage from New York City, now finds herself teaching at a Catholic university in Indiana about gender, ethnicity, race, and slavery in colonial Latin America.

Cliff Thompson, a Brooklyn-based writer and painter, similarly confirms the influence of place and family. In his case, though, a lack of diversity in his neighborhood may have paradoxically helped to make him a more accepting adult. Mr. Thompson recalls growing up in Washington,

D.C., where, he says, "My neighborhood was all black." There, he did not experience being targeted on the basis of being an African-American male. He feels his up-

grounds different from our own. Moreover, we are all within a short MetroNorth ride of midtown Manhattan and the many opportunities that are there.

"The end result of years of this kind of socialization is that gender roles begin to feel not just normal, but inevitable."

bringing made it so that he is more receptive to all kinds of people, and states, "I feel that I'm probably more open to different kinds of people than I might be if I had had experiences where somebody was making fun of me because of my skin color or my hair texture or something like that." Also, he explains how simply having an older brother who collected comic books and cartoons changed his life. Mr. Thompson adds, "I think I'm still on the path that those comic books sent me on, because I became a writer." Like Mr. Cuddy, both Dr. Graubart and Mr. Thompson agree that their early influences shaped their receptiveness to accepting differences in others.

Mamaroneck is not nearly as diverse as New York City, or Washington, D.C., or White Plains. But neither is it monolithic in any respect. All of us have the opportunity in this town and in this school to meet people from back-

We can take what's best from our socialization and reject the rest, but first we must dare to question what we've subconsciously learned. To do that, it helps, as Mr. Cuddy suggested, to try new experiences with new people. We can also set ourselves the task of studying peoples who, at first glance, might seem quite different from us, as Dr. Graubart did. If we're lucky, we can participate in a supportive community that gives us the strength to find our own path, as Mr. Thompson has.

All of these tactics for self-awareness are available to us here at MHS. We can try out new activities. We can open ourselves to new ideas and new people. We can strengthen the ties we have with those who support us.

We don't have to live according to someone else's conception of who we're supposed to be. Such is the challenge, and the **promise, of acknowledging our own socialization.**

Students Need Off-Screen Hobbies Now More than **Ever**

By NADIA SUBEN

The Covid-19 pandemic has radically altered the way today's students learn. According to Forbes, students' screen time has surged by as much as 50-60% since the start of the pandemic. The detrimental effects of such excessive technology use are well-documented. According to The Guardian, worsening eyesight and increased difficulty sleeping are just a few of the harms prolonged screen time can be linked to. And while Mamaroneck students used technology for school before the pandemic struck, they are now fully reliant on their devices to navigate their classes; spending hours upon hours a day on screens is now an academic requirement. This makes it more important than ever for students to find off-screen hobbies.

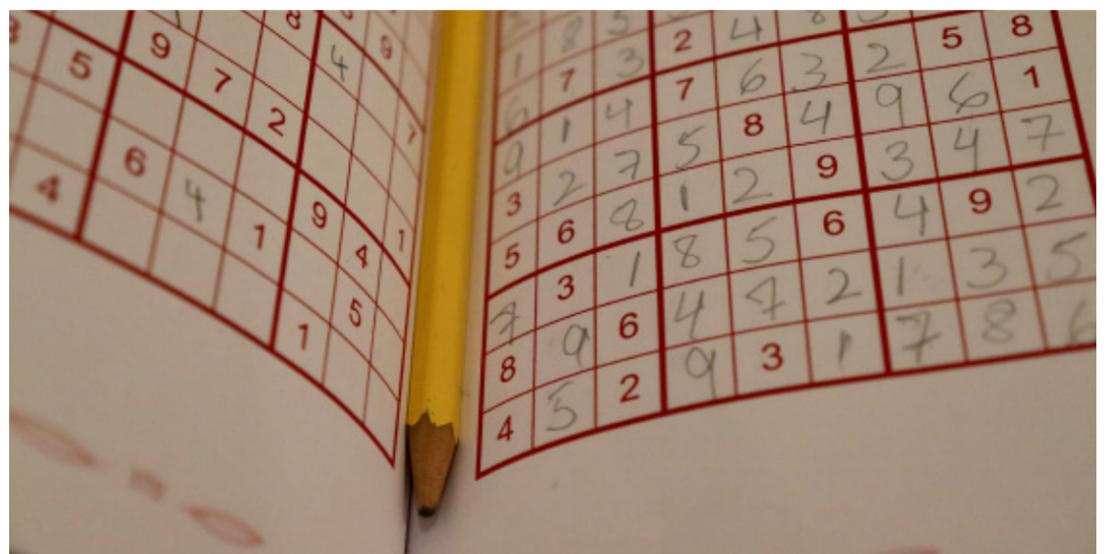
Naomi Azoulay (23) says she has expanded on a number of her hobbies amidst the pandemic, and that doing so has revealed some

pertinent lessons about technology use.

"I've been getting more into reading and sudoku. These hobbies have helped me realize how we desperately need to get away from screens after a long day of schoolwork," Azoulay explains. "I think a break from the screen...can be...just as important as getting your work done."

Finding moments to step away from screens has always been crucial. But now, students are spending anywhere from three to six hours on screen per day for synchronous class alone. Having off-screen hobbies can provide a helpful excuse to take a break from staring at devices. In Azoulay's case, reading and doing sudoku means that she has a reason to take a break from working, and as a result, a break from screens.

Not only do off-screen hobbies provide reasons to take breaks from some of the strain of online schoolwork, they also optimize the critical time students get to unwind during the day.



FATIMAH KHAN/THE GLOBE

"[Quarantine] gave me a lot of time to expand on my...hobbies. I [got] better at instruments and [had] more time to practice," says sophomore Will Tucker. "They've been helpful because they give me something to do besides sitting around all day."

Hobbies can fill students' rare moments of rest with a sense of

meaning and direction, which can be difficult to find in often monotonous pandemic life. Having something fun and relaxing to do that breaks up the stress of juggling classes during a global health crisis is extraordinarily helpful.

Between skyrocketing screen time, navigating an entirely new way of going to school, and cop-

ing with a pandemic, students are currently confronting a number of unprecedented challenges. It is necessary for today's youth to find some sort of reprieve from the strain that these challenges can place on them. Finding off-screen hobbies has never been so important.

In 2021, Leaders No Longer have Gen Z's Trust

By **FATIMAH KHAN**

We've all seen the primary source tweets, the political cartoon memes, and the first hand account TikToks; the evidence which future history classes will use to learn about and judge this time of great historical importance- a pandemic, economic hardship, a turbulent election, and a moral awakening regarding racism and climate change. This period in time has truly humanized the figures whose journals and letters we read in order to better understand the events of their time; they were just ordinary people trying to weather a rough situation as best as possible. However, when we study previous generations who endured monumental, and sometimes traumatic, events like the Great Depression, World Wars I and II, the Civil Rights movement, and the 9/11 attacks, we can see how it impacted their psyche, future decisions, and worldview.

According to Pew Research Center, the events which occur during a generation's teenage years can influence their decisions regarding marriage, religion, political affiliation, and general philosophical outlook on life. This is called the cohort effect, which attributes generational differences to unique historical circumstances that members of a similar age group experience. The cohort ef-



PHOTO COURTESY OF @NYTIMES ON INSTAGRAM
Protestors in Washington D.C. during the January 6th raid on the Capitol get pushed out by officers.

fect increases exponentially when these events take place during one's formative years, the time between ages 11-19 when they are forming their opinions and views about the world.

The cohort nicknamed the "lost" generation, who grew up during the prosperous 1920s, were unimpressed with wealth and grandeur and searched for greater meaning and satisfaction in life. Those whose formative years were troubled by the Great Depression and WWII grew up to be frugal, conformist, and civic minded- coined the "Silent" generation. Teenagers who saw the impacts of Roosevelt's New Deal believed that the government should have

a larger role in daily life. Those who grew up during the Vietnam War and Watergate scandal had much less trust in government than previous generations - which still impacts the level of public trust in government today. The 9/11 attacks caused an increase in patriotism and unity, which has made millennials more civically engaged and globally aware later on in life.

All this to say- how will the events of the past year impact our generation?

Our generation, Generation Z, includes anyone born in 1997 and later, while the millennial generation spans those born from 1981 to 1996. A survey conducted

by Morning Consult of 1,000 Americans, ages 13-23, tracked many variables over the course of April to June of 2020. During that window, the number of Gen Z participants who believed that the Black Lives Matter movement had a major impact on their worldview increased by 21 points to 68 percent. Trust in institutions such as the police, U.S government, the criminal justice system, and news media has dropped dramatically over those two months, from around 56 to 45 percent on average. Interestingly, trust in police dropped 24 points to about 44 percent after the Black Lives Matter protests of June.

As a result of the coronavi-

rus pandemic, which 75 percent of Gen Z participants believe has had a major impact on their worldview, trust in the U.S. health-care system has dropped from 68 to 59 percent.

The survey even managed to discover our generation's skepticism and idealism- contradicting qualities essential to our identity. While our generation is now less optimistic about the future (from 58 to 56 percent of Gen Z participants saying they are generally optimistic about the future of the country), we increasingly believe we can change the world positively (from 56 to 62 percent) significantly more than millennial participants.

The last statistic is the most revealing and meaningful clue about the future of our generation. Upon reflecting on the turmoil, pain, anger, chaos, and violence we have witnessed throughout the last year, we believe we can leave a positive legacy. Despite seeing the dark side of humanity, we believe we can improve society. Despite the uncertainty of the future, despite having no idea what each day will bring- we are certain that we can make a difference. Despite having little trust in the leaders, organizations, and governments of today, we have enormous trust in ourselves and in the power of tomorrow.

Our School System Should Encourage Activism

By **KIRA WALTER**

Between the Presidential Election, the recent riots at Capitol Hill, the Black Lives Matter movement, and a plethora of other recent political controversies, it isn't hard to see current events around the country leaking into student life. And, as Mamaroneck students debate their political opinions inside and outside the classroom, one has to balance the extent to which politics should be discussed at school.

For a long time, it seems the district has provided us with ample information to formulate our own opinions based on historical information and governmental order. But as we approach voting age, should we be allowed to advocate for our stances frequently within the classroom? Or should such controversial conversations take place outside of school premises?

In the opinion of most students, politics should be a prevalent topic of debate at Mamaroneck. A poll answered by 450 MHS students revealed that 70 percent of students stand strongly behind this opinion and a minor 30 percent of them claim otherwise. Meanwhile, an impressive 75 percent of students claimed they are politically active while a mere 25 percent of them disagreed with this statement. The results

of these numbers can be seen through involvement in protests, the spread of petitions, participation in OCRA, civically and politically associated clubs, and many other organizations in which Mamaroneck's youth not only assert their political beliefs but also fight for them, spurring change in our local community and at times, even across the state.

Despite these accomplishments, students do face a fair amount of restrictions in advocating for their beliefs, some of them necessary, some of them flexible. One of the most restrictive yet unknown constraints of politics in the classroom is actually a strict curriculum, which often leaves little time for debate. In History and English classes, controversial subjects might arise, but student debate is almost never prioritized above ensuring that classes stay up to schedule with annual curricula.

The concept of politics in the classroom is far more complicated for MHS teachers and staff. Whereas other schools are more rigid about introducing politics into the classroom, Mamaroneck does afford teachers the right to introduce students to an early form of democracy, to grant them free speech. Beginning at an elementary level, teachers hold four corner debates and socratic seminars in Humanities classes, slowly expanding these exercises into more complex

social and political discussions. In AP courses, such as U.S. History, Language and Composition, and U.S. Government, controversial texts and topics are discussed and classrooms often provide for open floor debates.

While students may face some restrictions in discussing politics in the classroom, teachers can fall into much more trouble for what takes place during political conversation in their classrooms. The New York State School Boards Association has insisted time and time again that all students deserve the right to attend a school free of partisan political influence. Thus, teachers must not force their political opinions on those they are teaching. However, this raises the question, when it is appropriate for a teacher to insert their own ideas and when isn't it?

Sometimes, teachers' ideas can help a child to develop his or her stance but, at other times, it can be seen as a form of indoctrination. As a result, many schools ban teachers from wearing badges in support of political candidates and from bringing unprompted political debate into the classroom. In certain cases, it is also difficult for teachers to express their political views at all when what they believe is not supported by the community. According to the Pacific Research Institute, most teachers within the United

States are liberal, and not by a small percentage. Thus, depending on where a teacher is applying for a job, they may need to exaggerate or hide their political views. In addition, while many students disapprove of strict curriculum, it often isn't very popular among educators either. It seems despite however much freedom we have, we always want more.

Opinions on whether politics should be introduced into school can not be solely determined by numbers as there are many influential factors in the decision. When confronted with this topic, MHS Junior Donnie Gomez replied, "It depends if you're in [history], then yes. If you're in any other class, then I don't think it's necessary."

Mackenzie Minguillo ('21) also has a mixed opinion about this, describing how she encounters politics in the classroom.. "I take macro right now," she says, "and usually we incorporate politics in our studies and debate... government systems. But, we get assigned into different groups to defend socialism and capitalism and I feel like if the groups were divided among our terms [based on students beliefs] and not the teachers, there'd be some division with students," she says.

Maya Gadlin ('22) also made the point that, "Human rights now fall under political opinions rather than natural rights, so it has to

be discussed if we want to study what it means to be American or to be Patriotic" in the classroom.

"Often, talking about human rights or political differences can make people (adults AND students) uncomfortable," Ms. Silverman, an English teacher at MHS, says. "Sometimes that discomfort comes from a good place; we don't want to risk offending anyone or hurting someone. However, discomfort can be a sign of learning or being challenged. Practice in this kind of conversation can help youth be more equipped to have knowledgeable, respectful conversations as future college students and job-seekers."

In the end, despite the tension or discomfort politics may bring into the classroom, it is important that students feel free to express their ideas. Developing political identity at an early age is very important and whether or not controversial topics are allowed into the classroom will also play a very big role in how students learn to see the world.

With so much responsibility, it is important that the Mamaroneck High School administration don't ignore this and make an effort to discuss politics in the classroom. Helping young adults build their own opinions and stances is one of the best things that educators can do for the future.

Features

OSR Students Seek Pandemic-Friendly Mentorship Opportunities

By TISTA GOSWAMI

In light of the pandemic, many extracurricular opportunities for students have been brought to a harsh stop. The Original Science Research (OSR) internships are no exception. OSR is an elective class at MHS that guides students through the process of conducting research in a specific field of science. Much of the first two years of the program consists of in-depth study about a desired field of research and outreach to potential scientists to work within that field.

Last summer, all in-person laboratory internships were cancelled due to the lockdown. Some lucky students were able to participate in virtual research projects, however, this year, OSR has a new approach to landing internships during the pandemic. Guido Garbarino, one of the OSR teachers commented that they, 'have been telling mentors that [they] are open to having a virtual or data analysis based experience for students if an in-person laboratory internship proves to be impossible.' With this approach, students are seeing some success. With the new option of virtual internships, mentors do not have to consider institutional permissions in hosting students, most

of which remain uncertain due to the course of the pandemic. Thus, most students who have successfully arranged an internship will be participating virtually.

A virtual internship typically would entail a data analysis project of some kind. Garbarino described how, "In some cases, students may be looking at images for cellular and molecular biology projects, or MRI images for neuroscience projects, and other types of images for astronomy. [He] thinks some mentors may give students opportunities to watch some procedures over Zoom, and participate in laboratory meetings." Despite the unconventional

"The most important goal of the program is for students to learn to work and think like scientists."
- Guido Garbarino

arrangements, students will still be able to take part in meaningful and legitimate research, which is one of the primary objectives of the OSR program. "The most



What OSR students could have been doing in the lab had COVID-19 not forced them out of the lab. PHOTO COURTESY OF UNSPLASH

important goal of the program is for students to learn to work and think like scientists, so [the program is] hoping that those skills are still taught. Most students finish their internships with projects that they can use to write research papers and present at research competitions," Garbarino continues.

Unfortunately, other OSR students haven't been quite as successful in the search for a mentor. Sasha Bilik ('22) had an internship arranged for last summer that was sadly cancelled due to the pandemic. Bilik, who wishes to

study neurodegenerative diseases, specifically multiple sclerosis, has been reading up on this field and sending mentor emails since the beginning of her sophomore year in 2019. Unfortunately, many mentors are experiencing challenges of their own in hosting students, both in-person and virtually. "Many scientists have taken a break from researching due to the pandemic, and others simply won't take interns for the same reason," says Bilik. The pandemic has caused numerous institutions and academic laboratories to wind down their work. Deemed

"non-critical," most non-COVID related research was put on pause. Bilik recognizes that, "This is a challenging time and scientists have a lot more to worry about."

Despite the added challenge to an already difficult process, OSR students are persisting in their mentor search. With the alternative virtual internship option, students continue to reach certain levels of success. Over the course of the semester, other students will continue to work toward securing an internship in whatever form is practical during this difficult time.

Half-way through the Year, How are Virtual Students Feeling?

By JULIET ZUCKER

The 2020-2021 school year is halfway complete, but the question still remains: which is better, hybrid or remote? Starting in September, education systems all over the world were going to take a different approach. In the beginning of the Mamaroneck District school year, families were given the choice for their student to be remote (fully online) or hybrid, a model that allows learning to be online and in person. Students were also split up into two cohorts, A and B, by last name. Those who chose to be hybrid would have to fill out a "Daily Health Form," a pre-screening questionnaire built to ensure the safety of everyone entering the building. The district took precautions to map out the hallways, making the overpass a one-way hallway while guiding others to use the track to go from Post to Palmer or vice versa. There is mandatory mask wearing and a

strict rule of not being allowed to leave campus. All of these regulations were put in place for hybrid learning, but what about those who are virtual?

Going into the first quarter,

"Because remote learning is an endless cycle of Zoom classes, the social aspect of school cannot be felt through the screen."

a majority of students were urged to choose hybrid learning as the rate for the coronavirus had gone down. However, by the time the second quarter had come around, many students shifted to remote learning for multiple reasons. One said that they "they want[ed] my family to stay healthy" after it was brought to their attention that their 'classmates were partying or still going to big group hangouts'

(Anonymous '22). Jared Sherman ('22) had a more personal reason, stating he had an, "ACT coming up and [his] sister's bat mitzvah." Whether students had switched for their health and safety or they had a special event coming up, learning had dramatically changed. While making the switch, Lindsay Holton ('22) has felt she has "more free time," and can "focus better on work" knowing she isn't at risk. However, Holton felt it did prove to be "a lot harder to stay present and active" in classes since she was missing out on "being in

an endless cycle of Zoom classes, the social aspect of school cannot be felt through the screen. There is a kind of "solitude" and "isolation" being remote, sitting in your room at a desk, alone, adds Sherman. Walking through the halls, free periods with friends, going off campus for lunch—it's not the same anymore.

Hybrid students feel that there is still some kind of connection, even if it is just for 40 minute periods. Ava Samson ('22) has heavily considered making the switch to remote learning, how-

"There is a kind of 'solitude' and 'isolation' being remote, sitting in your room at a desk, alone. Walking through the halls, free periods with friends, going off-campus for lunch – it's not the same anymore."

person and surrounded by [her] peers." Because remote learning is

ever, it came down to her "quality of education," which she felt

was better in the hybrid model. She was asked to quarantine in the beginning of November and was forced to learn remotely. She found she could "stay in pajamas all day" and it was tempting to "go on [her] phone." Though these two weeks were difficult, it did provide a good representation to Samson of what remote learning is like in comparison to hybrid. Samson has continued to stay in the hybrid model going into the third quarter because the education, sense of routine, and connection felt stronger.

Understanding the two types of learning styles has boiled down to personal preference for students at Mamaroneck High School. Whether learning has become easier or more difficult, the choice of learning is up to the student — something students have never had. Learning during this challenging time has been a different school experience for everyone, and a school year that will go down in history.

The MHS Library Gains a New Purpose

By **TAYLOR FERRARONE**

Every MHS student has been in the library for some reason or another. Teachers require book sources as a project requirement or need a paper printed out. Others visit during a free period, or as part of a school event. Lessons from the librarians showing students how to navigate the library database have been a staple in classrooms for years. While few parts of MHS entered the 2020-2021 school year unaltered, the library has undergone some of the greatest changes.

The 2020-2021 school year has certainly transcended the traditional use of the library. The library acts not only as a study hall for free periods and those with athletic option, but as a backup location when substitutes are spread thin. "Even though the desks were spaced out, the library still felt busy," said Marissa Lazarus ('22), who attended several classes from the library. She also noted that the energy of the library was still calm enough to allow her to attend Zoom class with few distractions. Some students have worried about the risk of large groups of students getting exposed to COVID-19 via library study halls. "When it is very crowded, I get concerned with possibly getting exposed [to COVID-19] again," said Brennan Vincent ('21). Though Vincent and others have questioned the practicality and safety of the situation, she otherwise agreed that

the space has provided a quiet space for her to be more productive. Kira Walter ('22), who took her athletic option study hall in the library, admitted that while the space could pose a risk to expose students across several grades to COVID-19, "students tend to distance themselves naturally and there are a lot of seating options." Indeed, the traditional communal tables of the library have been replaced with desks the standard six feet apart, which can seat large portions of the student body due to the large space.

To Tina Pantginis, head librarian, one of the most difficult things to adapt to has been the reduced number of students in the library. With few students in the building and in the library, the ebb and flow of students through the library decreased, and the librarians have missed the "energy and heartbeat" of the space that comes from their presence. While it has been "surreal" to see the library turned into a study hall, Pantginis applauds the cooperation she has received from the students. "They have been amazing," says Pantginis. "We are asking them to use the space in such a different way, and they totally understand the need to follow the protocols."

One of the biggest changes to the library this year has been students' inability to physically browse the endless shelves of books due to COVID-19 restrictions. While the database isn't open for browsing this year, the



CAITLYN CARPENTER/THE GLOBE

The MHS Library is one of many places at MHS that no longer are the hubs they used to be.

library is still circulating books! By using the new MHS Reads app (<https://mhsreads.glideapp.io>), students can submit requests for physical books and browse the selection virtually. Ms. Vetere, the library clerk, collects the books in bags for contact-free delivery, which is carried out by 'runners' from the Transition Academy. "Returned books do have to be quarantined," Pantginis explained, elaborating on the new system.

MHS students can also access the library's robust collection of ebooks and audiobooks on Sora, and request new additions via the MHS Reads app. Through the app, "we can make requests available the same day!" Pantginis commented. In addition to the online database, a new feature

on the library page includes a 'carousel' of magazines and other online publications which students can freely access. Pantginis commended the work of Miyuki Oblitas ('23), in helping the library staff update the app's list of suggested titles each week. MHS students can help develop the app too by requesting titles, browsing, and recommending titles on the platform.

"There is no way I could have pulled this off alone," Pantginis remarked, citing the aid she has received from students and teachers alike in being integral pieces to the library's daily operation. Through Mr. Sarmartano's aid with the new app, the library staff's tireless work in keeping the space running as a study hall and book reposi-

tory, the aid of Ms. Petersen and her students in the delivery and recovery of books, and countless more volunteers, the space is an engine with dozens of moving pieces. While Pantginis and her staff have modestly downplayed their achievements this year, their work has not gone unappreciated. Even with the occasionally inflated number of students in the library, the staff has been extremely patient and accommodating under the circumstances they are facing, and the student body has benefited greatly from their hard work. So next time you see Ms. Pantginis or Ms. Vetere at the circulation desk, know that their work has continued to bring a sense of stability to MHS.

Local Restaurants Adapt to Winter Dining

By **KATE BOSWELL**

Throughout the pandemic, restaurants have struggled with the challenges of staying open and finding a safe way to operate while considering the safety of customers. It was somewhat easier in the summer when outdoor dining was common and preferred by many. However, as the weather started to get colder, the comfort level of many people decreased. There were many questions as to whether or not restaurants would be able to function and continue to be a safe environment for members of the community. Many restaurants were able to work with the town to create a safe environment that fitted the requirements and kept dining safe and warm for guests. It is easy to notice the greenhouses, igloos and heaters spread throughout town creating warm spaces for people to enjoy their food.

Restaurants have taken different approaches to facing the harsh realities of winter outdoor dining. The owner of Tequila Sunrise, Rob Gorsline, explained

how "The mayor and Village Administrators have made it easy for the restaurants to adapt and in turn Larchmont has become a year round outdoor dining destination. There really is nothing like it in any other Westchester town!" Tequila Sunrise is just one of the many restaurants working tirelessly to follow state guidelines and create a special place for customers. Larchmont has taken great strides to ensure safety and enjoyment for everyone.

However, no matter how easy restaurants have made the changes look, there were many challenges to overcome. Both older businesses and newer ones alike struggled; from delayed openings, not enough outdoor spaces, and strict guidelines, it is amazing how well restaurants have adapted. Billy Bishop, the owner of the new Billy & Pete's Social, explained how their opening was delayed due to the lockdown but they were able to find a way to offer take out and eventually open their sit-down dining to the community. Bishop explained that the "Town of

Mamaroneck worked closely with us to enable us to use the parking spaces in front and on the side and put tables outside." His, like many other restaurant owners, main concern was finding a balance between efficiency, safety, and providing a good time for customers.

The igloos and heaters acted

"There really is nothing like it in any other Westchester town!"
- Rob Gorsline

as a perfect solution for winter dining. Indoor dining was only allowed at fifty percent capacity, so finding outdoor space was critical for restaurants who wanted to keep business high. By keeping the igloos clean and sanitary between uses, restaurants have been quite successful with the new dining norms. Though

the outdoor dining has been an overall success, there are still obstacles that restaurants are working to overcome. It is challenging for servers to transport hot food outside to the igloos without it getting cold en route, Bishop explained. Adapting to serving people within the igloos was also a new situation for servers. Different restaurants are being creative to find new solutions as new challenges present themselves. For example, Tequila Sunrise has turned unused indoor seating space into a serving station, "so instead of the servers having to walk all the way to the kitchen to get those items they can just grab them there, saving time and energy."

Regardless of the challenges that the winter outdoor dining spaces may present, people seem to love the igloos and greenhouses. Bishop says "people like the opportunity to still dine outdoors in winter months!" At Tequila Sunrise, the response to the igloos has also been positive, Gorsline explained that "guests have loved the igloos, it's warm

and private, they feel safe while also being able to enjoy a night out. We take reservations for them and they have been getting completely booked up several days in advance." Many members of the community are eager to try out the igloos and support local businesses in any way they can.

As for the future and what's to come, it is likely the igloos will continue to return for future winters based upon all of the positive feedback. Gorsline says "I think this pandemic has forever changed the restaurant business and not all for the bad. Having new outdoor dining options will be the norm for many years even after the pandemic has ended." Bishop had similar thoughts, explaining that "they look good, especially at night time. I think we will continue to use them for years to come." Tequila Sunrise and Billy & Pete's are just two of the many restaurants that have adapted with the new outdoor winter dining bubbles and are proof of just how successful they can be.

Spotlight

Students Create Virtual MLK Day Assembly

The Student Multicultural Union continues the Martin Luther King Day tradition in hybrid model.

By **JADE DECKER**

"MLK", FROM FRONT

...‘Breakthrough.’ The Climb is all about that - even though we all have a long way to go, we should enjoy the journey and keep faith that there is light at the end of the tunnel.” “The Climb” was a moving performance that reminded viewers that there will always be tough times ahead but it is what we do to solve those problems that really counts.

The Assembly continued with clips of the performance by the Philadelphia Team at Brave New Voices 2015 Finals, “Emmet.” This chilling performance brought awareness to the gruesome death of Emmet Till, a fourteen year old boy brutally murdered by two white men, for allegedly flirting with a white woman.

Brittney Urritia (‘21), who performed as a step-dancer with a few other students in front of murals across the community, said that the work took a lot of time on Zoom calls, and student performers, such as the step-dancers, met outside of their classes to prepare for the big day. MSU had students sign up for their respective roles and each performer was given a set due date for them to complete their respective parts. Despite the circumstances, this year’s assembly was the perfect opportunity to see a different but exciting new version of a traditional assembly and let the creativ-



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE MULTICULTURAL STUDENT UNION
A shot of Black Lives Matter activists painting from the MLK Day virtual assembly video.

ity of Mamaroneck High School students flow. “The thought behind the creation was to incorporate all elements of what MLK means to us, but most importantly the idea of a breakthrough. We wanted to demonstrate that there are various ways of being bold and breaking through barriers, whether that be through music, dance, historical figures, spoken word, art, etc.,” mentioned Urritia.

From musicians to images of the Black Lives Matter protests and the Civil Rights Movement, students saw a variety of art forms. Some students even performed original poems, adding to the heartache of what this

year has been. Thomas Gelles (‘23) who wrote an original poem said, “I wanted as much creative

on to say that he believes we are going through the “biggest social upheaval in decades” and if we

“I wanted...to write something that would act as a microcosm for the entire assembly and... paint the entire picture of both the problem and how we can solve it.”

- Thomas Gelles (‘23)

freedom as possible to write something that would act as a microcosm for the entire assembly and thoroughly paint the entire picture of both the problem and how we can solve it.” He went

want to see progress as a country, we need to participate in that upheaval.

MSU wrapped up the presentation by calling back to important leaders in Mamaroneck. Mr. Yizar

and Mrs. Turner-Porter, who retired last year, were both inspiring figures who pushed people to fight back against oppression. Mr. Yizar was an inspirational member of our school, working as a Youth Services Worker. He also worked in Mamaroneck athletics and Westchester Basketball. His efforts did not go unnoticed as he was recognized as a, “pillar of this community.” Yet, his efforts were not the only ones to be noticed. Mrs. Turner-Porter was a key figure in our school who students looked up to in times of need. Most known for her leadership in the MLK Assembly, producing the event without her this year was very different. Inspired by her past efforts in the MLK assembly, students were able to create a whole new project pertaining to this year. With the support of the video students, administration, and the MSU members, this eye-opening assembly touched the hearts of all who watched it.

Empowered and driven to make change in their community, MSU members took the opportunity to make this assembly more powerful than ever. To get involved, join MSU at their next meeting, on Focus Fridays from 1:30-2:10 pm. Also, do not hesitate to look at their website for more information: <https://mamkmsu.wixsite.com/mamkmsu>. The club is always looking for students to join them and help make our community a better place for everyone.

COVID Challenges Bring Positive Changes to MHS

A lot has changed, but many students think that not all of the changes have been bad.

By **BEN KULISH**

So far, the 2020-21 school year has been unlike any other year at MHS. Although everyone is anxious to get back to “normal” (whatever that may look like), the pandemic has pushed the school to try innovative approaches that may wind up improving students’ academic experience. In fact, there are some COVID-19 related changes that students might prefer MHS to continue in future years.

The new weekly schedule has been popular with MHS students. Jack Master (‘23) thinks Focus Fridays are helpful and should be kept, “but maybe less often.” He likes being able to discuss important ideas with his classmates and thinks that it is

helpful to have one designated day to meet with clubs. Master is not alone; other students also see the value in having just one club-meeting-day, as they felt it was easy to forget club meetings at lunch in the past. Andrew Sacks (‘21) expressed that he enjoyed another part of this new schedule: having all eight classes every day, with gym as a free period every other day. He commented that his favorite aspect of this schedule was that all of his classes are forty minutes-long now.

Advances in technology and layout changes in classrooms have also been well-liked among students. It can be helpful to have a smaller group of students in the classroom with the teacher. Liv Bobby (‘22) also thinks that keep-

ing desks apart is a smart idea to prevent cheating. Sarah Fitzgerald (‘24) explained that Zoom recordings have been helpful when she had to miss class. This year overall, the school has been forward-thinking in its use of technology,

person. The school has benefited from these technological changes and could continue to when MHS is back in school full time.

Laura Kearon, a guidance counselor, looked beyond just the high school, giving insight into

“Each system has had no choice but to think deeply and evaluate how they operate, including..colleges.”

- Laura Kearon

introducing things like the MHS Club Hub and Zoom meetings with counselors. In the future, students could stop by virtual office hours if they can’t make it in

how the pandemic has impacted college admissions. She commented that “each system has had no choice but to think deeply and evaluate how they operate,

including American colleges and universities.” She explained that COVID-19 has forced colleges to look deeper into each student’s application, especially because many schools have gone test-optional. This allows for more equity in the college admissions process. Kearon hopes that this will continue after the pandemic dies down.

COVID-19 has presented enormous challenges for many members of the MHS community. However, it has prompted some changes that seem to be improvements. This pandemic has provided MHS, as well as schools around the country, to rethink aspects of school. Though most students may prefer “normal” school, there are definitely some positives to COVID-19 schooling.

Arts & Leisure

MHS Musicians Prepare for Virtual NYSSMA

By MICHAELA LOUGRAN

Anyone who is a member of the MHS Music Department has probably heard of the annual NYSSMA (New York State School Music Association) festival, if not having directly participated in it themselves. For non-music students who may not have, NYSSMA is perhaps the biggest music festival New York State has to offer for elementary to high school students looking to be evaluated on their musicianship in any of the following areas: vocal, orchestral, band, jazz, and piano. Many high school students who choose to participate will spend several months preparing a piece in hopes of getting a target score they've set their mind on, and the most ambitious ones strive to earn a spot in one of the All-State ensembles. These All-State ensembles are highly selective honors groups made up of the top students from school music departments throughout New York State. In other words, the NYSSMA festival is a pretty big deal. Every year, a large portion of the MHS music department chooses to embrace its challenge and participate.

Unfortunately, for these students, last year's festival, which was meant to take place at some point in May, was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The virus had first spread to the U.S. just a couple months before, leaving very little time for potential alternative arrangements to be



PHOTO COURTESY OF @JAKERUNESTAD ON INSTAGRAM

made for the large in-person festival. Some MHS students opted to send in recordings to be evaluated via a Mock NYSSMA audition offered by the Larchmont Music Academy, but this was obviously not an ideal alternative, especially for juniors who would be missing out on their last shot at auditioning for All-State.

Now, fast-forward almost a year later, there remains the looming threat of the coronavirus, making it highly impractical to hold a large festival like NYSSMA. As it turns out, the 2021 festival is going to happen. It's just going to look a bit different this year. The New York State School Music Association, for which the festival

is named, has announced that the festival will be held virtually. Students will have to record videos of themselves playing their pieces and then submit them for adjudication. This is definitely a step up from last year's cancellation, but it's obviously not an entirely perfect arrangement.

Sasha Bilik ('22), who has been participating in NYSSMA since fourth grade, is auditioning for the All-State ensemble in this year's virtual festival on violin. She sees both advantages and disadvantages in the format of the festival, commenting that "If you mess up, you can try again! [But] it's going to be more challenging because [everyone] can do mul-

tipl takes of their piece, so it will most likely be more competitive." In other words, a virtual festival is advantageous for individuals, but with every individual being afforded that advantage, it sets playing to a much higher standard, making an already competitive audition that much more competitive.

Melanie Huang ('23) will also be auditioning for All-State but on both flute and piccolo. She agrees with Bilik that the multiple takes are an advantage, but says, "On the other hand, [she's] going to be putting an extreme amount of time into my recording process this year that I usually wouldn't have to." In regard to the accompanist that she is required to

play both pieces with (at a safe distance), she jokes that to make matters worse she, "now [has] to drag another person down with [her]!"

Not all participants in the festival will have to worry about dragging anyone down with them, though, because according to chorus teacher Mrs. Gundling, "Many students will be bound to a pre-recorded accompaniment." Gundling is rather disappointed about this, mentioning that, "Part of what [they] prepare [their] students for is the collaboration between soloist and pianist." She also believes that for those who will have to deal with the lack of live accompaniment in this format, it will be "tougher to fully express the piece." Overall, Gundling is grateful for NYSSMA's pivot to a remote platform, especially after last year's cancellation. "Actually having a festival to work towards and knowing it will occur regardless of the state of the world is exciting," she says. "It gives [her] musicians a performance goal to work towards."

Over the next two weeks before the festival, these musicians will pour hours into the goals that they're working towards. Though it may be up for debate whether a virtual NYSSMA festival is more favorable to students than a regular in-person festival, one thing is certain: MHS has a sizable population of dedicated music students who are going to give their auditions their all regardless of the format.

"Drivers License" Tops Charts Worldwide

By ELLIE GUERREIRO

The success that Olivia Rodrigo's "Drivers License" has achieved is unprecedented. Rodrigo's debut single broke Spotify's record for most streams in a week, as well as for most streams in a day for a non-holiday song. As if that wasn't enough, it also ended up hitting No. 1 on the Billboard Hot 100, and according to Amazon Music, it broke the record for being Alexa's top requested song globally in the span of a day. Music-lover and skeptic Salma Bouktam ('24) remarked how she, "really wasn't expecting that from Olivia Rodrigo, it ended up actually being a pretty catchy song."

Yet its records are not the only compelling aspect surrounding the song. The song's backstory, filled with love triangles, intense drama, Disney, and even multiple clapback songs, has captivated millions across the globe. It is rumored that the song is about Rodrigo coping with her heart-

break after her alleged relationship with co-star Joshua Bassett from the popular Disney+ show, "High School Musical: The Musical: The Series."

Nevertheless, the drama is not at all what made this song such a hit. The fact that Rodrigo was able to openly put out her raw feelings and emotions in this piece is what made so many people fall in love with it. At first Sara Zebalos ('24) didn't get the hype over "Drivers License," but after listening to the song for a second time that changed. She commented, "I listened to it again and I found that I could relate to it because I missed my best friend and the lyrics really affected my emotions on how I felt about the whole situation." Zebalos' experience just goes to show how this song appeals to a broad audience. Rodrigo made this song relatable. Even though everyone's situation is different, she was able to encompass the fundamental feelings of heartbreak into just a four minute song.

People have described "Drivers License" as having a mix of Taylor Swift's lyricism, and Lorde's producing, as the bridge is very similar to that of Lorde's Album Melodrama, which came out in 2017. "It ain't Lorde but it's close to it," says Dylan Guerreiro ('21), an avid Lorde listener. "I thought it was going to be another one of those beta pop songs," he recalls, "but I stand corrected. Props to Olivia Rodrigo for actually making a good song."

It is safe to say that the bridge is the most powerful part of the song, where the pent-up emotions that the song had been holding back finally cascade into a waterfall of deep and powerful cries for lost love. The echo surrounding Rodrigo's strong vocals commands the listener's attention, and leaves them hanging onto every last word. The bridge is definitely the highpoint of the song. Both the feelings of Rodrigo and the listener are brought out during those captivating thirty-eight seconds.



PHOTO COURTESY OF @OLIVIA RODRIGO ON INSTAGRAM
The artistic cover of Olivia Rodrigo's hit single, "Drivers License."

"Drivers License" will definitely go down in history, not just because it's her [Olivia Rodrigo] debut or that it reached 'x' amount of plays, but that a girl put her heart out there for the whole world to see, hear, and feel with her- not a lot of professional artists can do that," said Juliet Zucker ('22). She is not wrong. Rodrigo not only connected with her listeners on a musical level but on a personal one too, which is sadly rare to find in the music industry nowadays. She was vulnerable

enough to share her struggles with the world, and that not only says a lot about who she is as an artist, but as a person as well. In a world where everyone seems to sugar coat their true feelings, Rodrigo was able to bring out her genuine feelings as well the feelings of her listeners through "Drivers License." As the old saying goes, good music isn't just supposed to make you listen, it's supposed to make you feel, and that's exactly what this song did.

Health & Wellness

Teachers Reveal Struggles of COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution

By ANATOLI VELIKOV

Since society's shutdown in March of 2020, promises of a COVID-19 vaccine have mounted a hope for one day going back to the 'normal' way of life. Now, with three vaccines being approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), vaccine rollout and distribution has begun its rapid ascent. The allocation of the vaccine has gone on to Phase 1B in New York State, and it is being administered to frontline essential workers, such as the teachers of Mamaroneck High School. As more educators receive the vaccine, various struggles become evident, ranging from the decision to take the shot, to the actual vaccination itself.

A multitude of factors weigh in on the ultimate decision of registering to receive the vaccine. Sure, one may do a bit of research on the process and vaccine, but even that results in certain issues in itself. There is so much differing information out there that, for some, it culminates in a sense of confusion or fear towards the vaccine. To add on to this abundance of varying information, several people have had severe allergic reactions, such as anaphylaxis, a life-threatening reaction involving a skin rash, nausea, vomiting, difficulty breathing, and shock that could result in unconsciousness or death. This possibility of death upon taking the vaccine further fuels the fear against it, discouraging some from taking it. The unknown risks, due in part to its novelty, are also a source of uncertainty, especially for those who aren't knowledgeable on the topic and for those that already don't trust vaccines.

All of this is worsened by the

political atmosphere that seems to be surrounding the vaccine. Those that don't trust the government are more hesitant to receive it. Previously, a Trump endorsement of the vaccine dampened the likelihood that individuals would vaccinate. However, statistics by The Brookings Institution, a nonprofit public policy organization, depict that a current endorsement by Biden fares no better statistically, only bringing a three percent willingness increase. The rush of the vaccine, and the fact that it was brought to market under an FDA Emergency Use Authorization also leads people to perceive this process as politicized and unsafe. These conditions foster the idea that there may not be full transparency when it comes to the vaccine, which can be considerably unnerving.

Nonetheless, numerous teachers have received the vaccine or are currently scheduled to receive it. A common struggle lies in the process of getting an appointment. To get an appointment, one goes to a website where one enters information and the site decides whether or not one is eligible to receive the vaccine. Afterwards, it takes you to a site to find and set up an appointment. Therein lies the struggle. English teacher Ms. Ramirez was among the numerous teachers who "found the website to not be user-friendly" and the amount of required refreshing done on the page was frustrating. Aside from this, the appointments themselves were extremely scarce. Not only were teachers slightly panicked about the sign-up prior to becoming eligible, but the frantic search to book an appointment seemed to be a common experience.

When teachers first became



PHOTO COURTESY OF LOHUD ON FACEBOOK
Westchester residents wait on line to receive a vaccine at Yonkers distribution site.

eligible to receive the vaccine in early January, some signed up to get vaccinated at locations such as the Bronx. When the County Center in White Plains was open for registration not long after on the NYS Covid-19 vaccine site, appointment availability rapidly diminished. Some teachers had signed up prior to the start of the school day that Monday, and others, such as Math teacher Ms. Rinaldi, discovered that "by second period, I was already looking at the end of January for my appointment." In some instances, the search for an appointment spanned numerous days and when one was discovered, it would be the only one within months. However, the nerve-racking experience did not end there as appointments at certain sites had to be cancelled due to a shortage of doses of the vaccine. Teachers like Mr. Garbarino were left hoping that there would be enough doses by the time their appointments came.

The teachers whose appointments were not cancelled found that getting the first dose was a highly-orchestrated process. Beginning at the entrance of the Westchester County Center, National guardsmen were stationed outside ensuring the safety of the vaccination site. Then, prior to going in, teachers were questioned about quarantines and COVID-19 symptoms, among other things. They then headed to a registration table to then wait on a socially-distanced line. Along said line, there were people stationed to bring them around until they could enter the room in which they would be administered the vaccine. When they finally entered the room, the vaccination process was also very organized. A doctor would be overseeing the person administering the vaccine, ensuring all went well. Despite the hysteria and difficulty of getting an appointment, as well as the anxiety felt when first arriving at the ap-

pointment, teachers found some relief and comfort in the fact that there was a process and felt that it was organized.

Concerns over the administration of the vaccine were also prevalent. Teachers felt a sense of guilt over getting it prior to their parents or loved ones that had seniority and were more susceptible and thus in greater need of the vaccine. One educator, Ms. Garcia, said, "It felt wrong that I could get it but my parents couldn't." There were no age parameters within the phases, meaning that younger, healthier people could get it prior to older people in the same eligibility group. The system of distribution itself is seen by many to be faulty.

The COVID-19 vaccine has brought hope to teachers and faculty within the district. However, many teachers believe its distribution was far from ideal. As the pandemic rages on, we can only hope that this process improves.

MUFSD Succeeds in its Response to Holiday Break

By MAIA GLAZER

Mamaroneck High School and the rest of the district's foremost priority this year has been to keep its students safe and to stop the spread of COVID-19—whether that means keeping the schools open, or not. MUFSD uses guidance from NY State Governor Cuomo, the Center for Disease Control (CDC), and the NY State Education and Health Departments for all its planning decisions. In an effort to prevent a spike of district COVID-19 cases following the Holiday break, as experienced after Thanksgiving, MUFSD chose to administer the SalivaClear™ test to its 900+ staff and 4,500+ students. As stated on the Mamaroneck Schools website,

"The goal with testing is to be able to identify individuals who are infected and enable them to take precautions immediately to protect themselves, their friends and families, and the broader community." This testing is the first of its kind for Mamaroneck, but it may not be its last.

MUFSD partnered with Mirimus Clinical Labs in Brooklyn "because their testing is affordable and accurate, with rapid turn-around time," stated Superintendent Dr. Robert Shaps in an email that was sent to all MUFSD students and parents. Mirimus Clinical Labs is primarily involved with new genome editing technologies, especially that of RNAi and CRISPR/Cas9. They orchestrated the at-home saliva-based self-

administered COVID-19 RT-PCR testing launched from January 5 through 8; results were then verified by the end of that weekend. Self-test kits were distributed to each registered student at any of the four elementary schools and then dropped off again once used. There was also the opportunity for on-site testing. Mirimus' same testing method was used to ensure safety at "Bubbleville," the NCAA Division I Basketball Event at Mohegan Sun. On a much larger scale, a similar spit-based test, SalivaDirect from the Yale School of Public Health was used to test the NBA. An article by Scientific American highlights its flexibility, absence of the uncomfortable nasopharyngeal swab, and its simplification or removal of the RNA

extraction step.

At Mamaroneck High School, the spit-based testing was complementary to the fully-remote learning schedule that lasted the week of Tuesday, January 5, 2021. By the following week, "there had not been one case of person to person transmission of COVID-19," Principal Elizabeth Clain stated in an email. This was attributed to the daily temperature checks, completion of the pre-arrival health screening form, wearing masks, social distancing, and constant cleaning. On January 15, one positive case was reported along with the enactment of a new Department of Health regulation that only those within six feet of the positive case (for 20+ minutes) have to quarantine

for ten days. This has led to teachers creating seating charts that are to be cross-referenced in the case of a positive student. Three days later, three more students at MHS tested positive along with two more on January 25th. However, all of these cases have been confirmed by Clain to be the result of out-of-school transmission.

Mirimus' SalivaClear™ test has been proven to be reliable for MUFSD and is considered to be as dependable as nasal swab tests. For the upcoming Spring break and the rest of the school year, it will be interesting to see what MUFSD does as they now have spit-based testing in the back pocket. The administration has yet to specify any plans for future testing.

Sports

Local Fitness Center Powers Through Pandemic

By CHARLIE DIRS

Our whole community has been devastated because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Many local businesses have had financial and mental struggles which have caused the community to slightly collapse. However, we need to remember what Robert Tew once said, "The struggle you're in today is developing the strength you need for tomorrow." REP Athletics is emulating this glorious idea

"They are using this time to learn, grow and develop into a flourishing local business."

and proving it true. They are having their hard times like the rest of the world. But they are using this time to learn, grow and develop into a flourishing local business.

REP Athletics is a local fitness center located along the Boston Post Road, in the Village of Larchmont where customers can participate in a one-on-one session, or be in a small group led by one of their highly qualified trainers. These trainers have gone through vigorous train-



REP Athletics uses fitness to create bonds between young children in their Build 4 Life program.

ing themselves and have been educated through past experience, schooling, and what Geoff Rose has taught them. The young business has had its fair share of struggles due to the pandemic, but has worked hard to supply an outlet for many of our community members.

Once the pandemic first hit the United States, REP Athletics suffered some big financial losses. It is challenging running a personal training session while try-

ing to maintain a six-foot distance, but not impossible. REP Athletics reopened in early June when the whole of Westchester started opening up, but they had to take more precautions than most considering their business relies upon human interaction and physical exercise. Yet, these extra precautions didn't stop them.

REP Athletics has made several adjustments in order to meet New York State Guidelines and keep their customers safe.

They kept their capacity below 33 percent to limit the spread of the virus. They have a state of the art air handling system that filters in new air every fifteen minutes, so previous customers that may have COVID-19 will have the air filtered out keeping them safe. Every client has to fill out a contract saying they have had no contact with someone who has had covid or hasn't experienced any symptoms. All of their equipment is thoroughly cleaned between ap-

pointments and hand sanitizer is a necessity. Not only is their indoor facility extremely safe, but they have also worked together with the Village of Larchmont to free up outside space and were able to hold outside sessions through parts of January. They will be hoping to hold these same classes come springtime.

If you don't feel comfortable working outside or in a public environment, you can always check out their website, <https://repathleticsco.com/>. They offer many training plans that can be completed at any place with wifi, instead of just at their studio. REP Athletics owner and personal trainer Geoff Rose recommends REP Athletics over the big brand gym., saying that, "their gym is safer and better for the current environment." Rose emphasizes how they, "give more time and put in more effort into [their]clients. [They]have clients set goals and push them to their limits so [they] can see them succeed."

REP Athletics has faced many challenges through this global pandemic but, through their adaptation and perseverance, has given the community an escape. They have shown that even in the hardest times businesses can succeed and provided an outlet and a place for many students, parents, and other members of the community to challenge themselves and have a splendid time.

The New-Look Knicks Have MHS Staff Excited For What is to Come

By HENRY BOVA

Greg Cuddy, Tyrone Carver, and Vincent Minotti are three longtime MHS faculty members, as well as three long suffering New York Knicks fans. For the first time in a while, the Knicks are making them, as well as many New Yorkers, proud to support the orange and blue.

At the time of writing this, the Knicks are 5th in the Eastern Conference with a top 3 defensive rating and gritty, inspired play on a night-in night-out basis. The Knicks may not be championship contenders, but it's a start, and the improvement both on the court and within the organization has been a delight to fans, as well as a much needed change of pace.

The Knicks haven't been a good basketball team in recent years, to say the least. Since 2000, they've totaled three winning seasons and five playoff appearances with only one series win. They haven't reached the playoffs since 2013, and since then they've posted two different seasons with just 17 wins.

The Knicks have had some abysmal rosters to work with, but much of the blame for the past few seasons can be attributed to their upper management wanting to rush a winning product, which paradoxically creates a losing team. Cuddy notes that it "didn't feel like we had any patience to rebuild the right way, giving too many dumb contracts to players beyond their prime with the idea that we were going to compete right away."

Carver feels the same way, saying he had no faith in the front office and that they were "always looking for the quick fix or tanking for a superstar that ended up not coming here."

During these losing seasons, Cuddy, as well as most Knicks fans, had become disinterested in the team. "I still watched, but not as heavily because it seemed like losing was becoming ok. We lost that identity we once had and that was hard to watch," he said.

Fortunately, things started to turn around in March 2020 when Leon Rose was brought in as team president to lead the turnaround.

From there, he hired old school Tom Thibodeau as head coach, who created winning cultures through tough defense and intense play in both Chicago and Minnesota.

At this point, Carver's excitement about the team shot back up. He points to that moment as when he knew things were truly looking up. "He was an assistant on those [head coach Jeff] Van Gundy led teams in the 90's. He knew what it would take to win here in New York. You knew his teams would play hard, they would defend and play this game the right way each night."

Minotti also loved the hire, saying "In the NBA, teams that are successful must buy into the head coach. The night I heard of the Thibodeau hire I was thrilled."

Knicks fans who watched the teams of the 90's look to that decade as one of the high points in franchise history. They were notably hard nosed, but also had legitimate success, reaching the finals in 1994 and 1999. "They epitomized what New York basketball should be," said Cuddy.

By hiring Thibodeau, a member of the Knicks coaching staff from the 90's, the front office showed fans that they wanted to bring back that brand of basketball. And that immediately drew people back in.

Of course, coaching and front office moves alone aren't going to make a team competitive, the players needed to step up too. Under coach Thibodeau and a front office that's making smart trades and hires, many players have really shined. Second year RJ Barrett and rookie phenom Immanuel Quickley have delighted fans all year. "I think RJ is unselfish and can create shots for himself and his teammates, and I like Quickley's athletic ability," said Minotti.

Without a doubt, though, the best Knick all year has been 26-year-old Julius Randle, who was recently named an all star. If you told Knicks fans during the 2019 season that would happen, they'd think you were crazy.

"I was not a huge fan of his last year and I wanted him to go," said Carver. Many Knicks fans

would agree, as he played selfishly while turning the ball over at a high rate.

This year, though, with better coaching and training, he has turned into an emerging star. Randle has been perhaps the clearest sign of what can happen if a team has a good culture in place around their players.

This season is just the starting point for something greater, and in the future the team can go in a number of directions. Cuddy wants the Knicks to forget about free agency and just focus on drafting smart players, as does Minotti. Carver feels that now is the time to add a star, confident that with a better culture around the team, someone big will finally bite.

In the end, no matter how it's accomplished, everyone is just thrilled that a sustainable winning product is finally in reach. "I truly feel we are heading in the right direction," said Minotti. "With hard work and little luck, the Knicks can get back on the map and bring championship level basketball back to New York."