



# GUIDE POST

NORTH HIGH'S STUDENT NEWSPAPER

✉ [GUIDEPOST@GREATNECK.K12.NY.US](mailto:GUIDEPOST@GREATNECK.K12.NY.US)  
 @GNNGUIDEPOST

JOHN L. MILLER – GREAT NECK NORTH HIGH SCHOOL  
 35 POLO ROAD, GREAT NECK, NY 11023

JUNE 2021  
[WWW.GNNGUIDEPOST.ORG](http://WWW.GNNGUIDEPOST.ORG)

## ISRAEL-PALESTINE CONFLICT REIGNITES

JULES SANDERS '24  
 GUIDE POST STAFF

On May 23, a pro-Israel rally was held in Firefighters Park in Great Neck in response to another flare-up of the Israel-Palestine conflict and the recent rise in antisemitic hate crimes across the world.

Organized by locals Adele Tehrani and Irina Amir, this rally was attended by 800 people, including Nassau County Executive Laura Curran, who delivered a speech in which she stated that she would work to keep Great Neck, a town with a very large Jewish population, safe, with a greater police presence if necessary. County Legislator Ellen Bimbaum and Ted Rosen, mayor of Great Neck Plaza, were also in attendance. Many of North High's students attended the rally, and the event thus dominated the talk of the town and the school for several days.

There was another rally on the same day in nearby Garden City in defense of the Palestinian people. Organized by the group Muslims for Progress, this event boasted 400 people. The rally's leaders led a march from U.S. Rep. Kathleen Rice's office across town along Old Country Road, campaigning for clearer stances by local and national politicians on Israel's actions in the Gaza Strip and the then-impending humanitarian crisis in the territory. No major county or local officials attended this demonstration.

The newest bout of hostilities between Israel and Palestine began in early May, when protests commenced in heavily Palestinian neighborhoods of East Jerusalem over Israel's Supreme Court's decision to evict six Palestinian families from Sheikh Jarrah, a neighborhood. In response to the protests and stone-throw-

ing, the Israeli police force took over the Al-Aqsa Mosque on May 7. Tensions rose dramatically once Hamas, the political party in control of the Gaza Strip, ordered Israeli forces to withdraw from

rising for years now, with 2019 recorded by the ADL as the year with the greatest number of harassment, assault, or vandalism against Jewish people since the organization's founding, and 2020



Great Neck protesters gathered in Firefighters Park on May 23 in support of Israel during the Israel-Palestine conflict. Photo: Shari Einhorn

the building's compound on May 10; Israel refused to do so. Between then and May 21, attacks by both sides escalated, leading to the deaths of 12 Israelis and more than 230 Palestinians before an eventual ceasefire agreement.

Both Jewish and Muslim people have suffered antisemitic and Islamophobic attacks at a greater level since the reignition of this conflict. The Anti-Defamation League, a Jewish organization based in the U.S., reported 193 instances of possible antisemitic violence in the week after the new flare-up began, an uptick of 62 reports from the previous week. Antisemitic violence has been

encompassing the third-greatest number of cases, with 2021 on track to be on par with the previous two years. New York reports more antisemitic incidents than any other state, with California, Texas, and New Jersey close behind.

There has also been an dramatic rise in Islamophobic hate crimes internationally, with the number of reports of anti-Muslim prejudice increasing by 430% from May 8 to May 17, according to the Anadolu Agency. In addition, a number of sacred mosques and other buildings were vandalized with hateful mes-

*continued on fourth page*

### NEWS

GRADUATION CEREMONY  
 UNDER RESTRICTIONS (PG. 4)

### EDITORIAL

THE ISSUE WITH  
 INFOGRAPHICS (PG. 5)

### OPINION

TEST-TAKING  
 TRANSFORMATIONS (PG. 8-9)

### FEATURES

STUDENTS RUN SPIRIT WEEK  
 (PG. 10)

### SPORTS

HIGHLIGHTING GNN'S FINEST  
 (PG. 16)

Interested in writing for Guide Post?

Join the Guide Post Writers group on Google Classroom!

**2644u53**

Have an question, comment, or article idea?

Email the editorial staff at  
[GuidePost@greatneck.k12.ny.us](mailto:GuidePost@greatneck.k12.ny.us)

## FASHION SHOW REFASHIONED

JAKI PEARCE '24  
 CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Each year, students of North High are given the opportunity to showcase their talents in creativity, modeling, and clothes design in the annual Fashion Shows. Students gather their thoughts and ideas in order to compile a series of outfits that correspond with the theme they are given. It is no simple task and takes immense effort to organize such an event, especially with new COVID-19 regulations and the number of students who are willing to participate in the event.

The differences in their work and practice methods are inevitable since close physical contact is not recommended during this time. This would likely hinder the process of group or team work. The supervisor and organizer of the event, Mr. Israel Henriquez, answered a few queries, via email, about the Fashion Show taking place with all the new rules that have been set in order to prevent the spread of the virus.

Towards the beginning of the year and much prior to that, the school

had been working on how to keep students safe from the virus and to limit the amount of cases as much as they

possibly could. One of the obvious options was masks and personal space between students and teachers. While this



North High students practice their choreography together at Maya Ben Josef's house while adhering to COVID-19 regulations. Photo: Gili Gavriel

new regulation could have extremely thrown off the process of the Fashion Show, the team of students were able to work things out and continue their work as they would every year, albeit there were quite a few differences.

Mr. Henriquez pointed out that this year's Fashion Show actually started later than it normally would have. In prior years, the preparation for the event started in September and the performance was set for December. The timing for this year's show is much later in comparison, as it runs into the summer and close to the end of the school year, but there is no doubt that it was no less of a performance regardless of the scheduling. He also added that the practices had a variety of different settings as opposed to occurring in the school. Practices and rehearsals took place outdoors in local parks and backyards, and in some cases people's living rooms and basements. Everyone who participated in these meetups was making masks mandatory, and followed the safe-

*continued on fourth page*

# Anti-Abortion Law Sparks Controversy

**KAJAL RAMPHUL '24**  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

On May 19, 2021, the Texas Heartbeat Act, a bill prohibiting women from abortion at the onset of a fetal heartbeat, was signed. It officially comes into effect in September of this year. Now one of the most severe injunctions nationwide, the new law has been met with mixed reactions of support and protest. "Our creator endowed us with the right to life and yet millions of children lose their right to life every year because of abortion," said Texas Gov. Greg Abbott, justifying his decision. "In Texas, we work to save those lives. And that's exactly what the Texas legislature did this session."

Many Texans, and others nationwide, share a similar sentiment, commending the bill and the politicians who signed it into existence for saving innocent lives. Conversely, there is a substantial group of people who believe that the drastic law is a misogynistic atrocity, stripping women of their rights, and overall immoral.

This bill bans abortion the moment the fetal heartbeat can be detected, which is typically within six weeks of a pregnancy, and two weeks after a delayed menstruation. This time limit is perceived to be unreasonable by many. "For a person with a normal menstrual cycle, that is only two weeks after a missed period," explained Planned Parenthood executive director Dylan Limon-Mereado. "When you factor in the time it takes to confirm a pregnancy, consider your options and make a decision, schedule an appoint-

ment and comply with all the restrictions politicians have already put in place for patients and providers, a six-week ban essentially bans abortion outright."

Exceptions are not made for female victims to rape or incest. If the fetal heartbeat is sensed, they are not exempt from this law. The only possible concession is if a physician presumes an existing medical emergency poses a risk to a patient's life, and therefore prevents compliance with the bill.

As a result of the Heartbeat Act, the Supreme Court has opted to hear an appeal from the state of Mississippi concerning the 1973 case of Roe v. Wade. This started as a challenge regulating the right of abortion to only women at risk due to the pregnancy. Alleging that she was a pregnant, single woman, Norma McCorvey (alias Jane Roe) filed a lawsuit against the Dallas County District Attorney, Henry Wade. Unable to get an abortion as she was not high-risk, Roe claimed that the Texas laws prohibiting abortion were a violation of her right to privacy, protected constitutionally by the First, Fourth, Fifth, Ninth, and Fourteenth Amendments.

It was eventually decided that by extension of a mother's right to privacy, the undelivered fetus was entitled to the same confidentiality. The seven to two ruling believed that a first-trimester abortion was no more or less volatile than carrying the child until delivery. A later 1989 case added some limits to the Roe v. Wade precedent, which permitted the regulating of abortion in some circumstances.

This case is significant, as it has blocked many attempts and statewide limitations on abortion—and even outright bans. Currently, Roe v. Wade disallows states from forbidding abortion rights before 23 weeks of pregnancy; opponents of abortion want to make the cut-off 15 weeks. Overturning the precedent creates opportunity to further decrease abortion rights. Republican-dominant states, including Texas, Indiana, Iowa, and Kentucky, have been taking steps towards decreasing the time period in which a woman is legally allowed to undergo abortion procedures, to six weeks, if not less.

The governors of Arizona, Arkansas, Oklahoma and Montana have already moved to ban the delivery of mifepristone pills via mail, which severely hinders many individuals' abilities to procure the treatment. If Roe v. Wade is overturned, it is a near guarantee that re-

sources such as these pills will be difficult to obtain, and impossible to legally use. According to Planned Parenthood, Americans "overwhelmingly" support the initial outcome of Roe v. Wade; an estimate of 77% of Americans do not wish to see the precedent upended. Abortion rights have been defended vehemently by many parties and organizations, who are outraged at both the Texas Heartbeat Act as well as the potential overturning of the Roe v. Wade case. Pro-reproductive health lawmakers and other politicians considered pro-choice have tried to fight this decision. Oppositely to the recent strides made to prevent abortion, measures have been taken to protect this right, as well as make it more easily accessible to those in need or want of treatment.

New York State's Reproductive Health Act affirms that in the event that Roe v. Wade is nullified, and can no longer be used as court-wide precedent, abortion procedures would remain wholly permissible within the state. Furthermore, this act clearly states that even if a mother's life is not in immediate danger, neither the patient or medical practitioner can be legally penalized or threatened with jail time.

The Reproductive Act allows for abortions to occur later in pregnancy if there is no chance or the pregnancy's survival. At every stage of pregnancy, the patient's mental and physical well-being is to be prioritized, according to this act. Other states have followed New York's examples, working to combat the new anti-abortion laws, regardless of the outcome in the upcoming Roe v. Wade appeal.



On May 19, 2021, protestors gathered outside Texas Gov. Greg Abbott's mansion to protest the anti-abortion "heartbeat law" he signed that morning.

Photo: Evan L'Roy

# CHOIR ENDS YEAR ON HIGH NOTE

**CLARA GOLDMAN '24**  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

On May 21, North High's choir won top honors for the Roger Rees Awards for Excellence in Student Performance. The winning song, "The Forest," comes from the musical "Octet" and was suggested by senior Dana Livian.

The Roger Rees Award is given to celebrate performing arts education programs in the greater New York area and to recognize exceptional high school choirs. This honor is the first annual award specifically sponsored by Harmony Helper, a mobile app designed to help singers learn their parts. North High's choir was recognized during the 11th Annual Roger Rees Awards on May 22. The prize for winning also included a free subscription to Harmony Helper for students who participated, \$500 for North High's program to spend on music, and a featured group interview to be shared by Harmony Helper on social media platforms.

In order to be eligible to receive this award, the school applying had to be located in the Greater New York region, and the school's choir had to assemble a virtual ensemble performance featuring a minimum of four singing students. Harmony Helper Founder and CEO Andrew Goren, along with Music Supervisor Josh Tortola reviewed many song submissions from a variety of schools with the assistance of professional theatrical conductor Amanda Morton. After reviewing all applications, the 10 competing schools were narrowed down to the top five.

With the help of Dr. Pamela Levy,

the North High's choir became the first recipient of the first annual Mosaic Award for Group Performance Excellence. On receiving this award, Dr. Levy remarked, "I am very proud of our choir for their en-

thusiasm, their initiative, and, of course, their hard work." She also mentioned that the students "chose the piece and really produced an amazing product." Levy described how honored she feels to have received this award with her choir.



North High's choir won top honors at the Roger Rees Awards for its performance of "The Forest" on May 21, 2021. Photo: Alex Schecter

The song performed by the choir students, "The Forest," comes from the musical "Octet," a chamber choir musical featuring songs about the age of technology and the destructive power of social media. The musical takes place

in a church basement among a group of people trying to limit their exposure to technology, singing songs to express their pain and experiences. "The Forest" is the musical's opening number and de-

scribes the entire group seeking shelter from the stress and anxiety that comes with a socially digital presence. The titular forest is used as a metaphor for a break from technology and social media, and the song details the difficulties faced by those trying to achieve it. This song was chosen by senior Dana Livian and was performed by 15 choir students.

For many of the choir students who participated in recording the song, winning the award had a much deeper

meaning. Sophomore Sara Rafaeil expressed her love of music and appreciation for this award, saying, "Music, in general, is so unifying, it brings people together and that's the point of music! That's exactly what this piece did."

Junior Christopher Yang presented his previous doubts that "in these circumstances, the school year would've felt like a watered down version of a regular school year" but, to Yang's surprise, "it didn't; [he] was amazed with how much the choir overcame and grew."

Rafaeil added to this, explaining that the choir was supposed to perform "The Forest" the year prior but couldn't due to the Covid-19 pandemic. She further explained that this piece is "extra special, because it was chosen by a student, making the award more personal because [they] loved the music and [the students] got to finish what [they] started and were recognized for something that [they] love."

Annually, the orchestra performs in Carnegie Hall and showcases their talents and the hard work they have put in throughout the year. However, this year this event was unfortunately cancelled. This award was a very large honor for North High and the choir students. This marks the beginning of a new era of North High's choir program and sets a new standard for the years to come. This year's choir is filled with a large number of exceptionally talented students, with many of them competing and performing individually outside of the program. This allows them to showcase their skills while constantly improving.



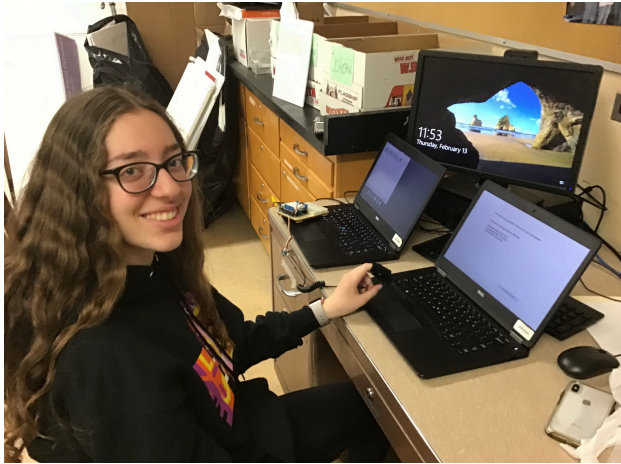
# SCIENCE RESEARCH TESTS NEW OPTION

NICOLE YEROUSHALIMI '24  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

This year, as with every year, North High juniors have been seeking out research opportunities at numerous colleges, universities, and laboratories for the summer. This year, many of them have been found with minimal

projects. In order to combat the difficulties of the current situation, a new opportunity is being offered to rising seniors that will be a part of the science research program's school: in-house projects. This allows senior students to conduct research independent from a professional lab.

Although this in-house research may not be considered a first-choice op-



North High's science researchers complete an in-house experiment, similar to the new option offered for 2021-2022 senior research students. Photo: Leila Bakhshi

success. Due to COVID-19, any opportunities have either completely been shut down or only willing to accept an extremely small pool of applicants. Some research programs which had included lab time in the past have now adjusted their program to become more socially distanced and virus safe. In some cases this meant only switching certain activities, such as a hands-on period to a lecture, while in others this meant completely making their program virtual.

These circumstances left many of North High's Science Research students at a loss, as they sought hands-on research at a major facility. In past years, students have conducted their research at prestigious schools and programs such as Yale, Harvard, and NYU. These have provided students with the opportunity to complete the research and experiments needed for their projects, enrich their knowledge, and develop new extracurriculars to enhance their college applications.

Historically, students at North High have had the ability to conduct summer research. Without having access to labs or being able to self-conduct this research, students have had to resort to projects that are more limited in scope and abandon their original ideas. Some of these options include database-centered projects where all information is derived from resources on the internet and psychological experiments, both of which can be conducted remotely.

North High has been successful in past research fairs, with numerous annual Regeneron Talent Search and ISEF Scholars, displaying students' and teachers' outstanding effort and devotion, in such respects. These science research competitions offer up to \$250,000 worth in scholarships and donations to the schools' research programs, offering major opportunities for students to achieve and fund further education. Losing conventional summer research opportunities may greatly reduce student's chances of winning these prestigious competitions because of a decrease in the quality of students'

tion for many seniors, it may be their only option, especially with the cancellation and increasing selectability of external research programs. Much of the school's past and present opportunities, as well as success, can be credited to Mr. Alan Schorn, a New York State Certified science instructor in biology, physics, chemistry, and earth science. He is overall extremely successful and well-respected, acting as the Director of the Research Project Seminar at North High and always ensuring the students have research opportunities.

Ms. Jessica York, the Science Department Head, says that while in-house research has been technically available to students for a number of years, it is now being further pushed onto students, stating "seniors in our science research program are encouraged to pursue in-house projects if they would like to participate in the Regeneron Science Talent Search." She continued to explain that "students are still able to do research at outside labs if they can find mentors who are willing to take them."

"It is a huge relief to know that I can take part in senior research without having a mentor. Moreover, many research institutions are closed and there are limited spots in labs. All that being said, it is extremely competitive to get a mentor. Thankfully, I can continue to partake in research, a class I truly enjoy. Although I am unsure of what I will be researching this upcoming year, hopefully the in-house senior research will run smoothly," senior Shayla Bakhshi commented on the science research circumstance.

According to Olivia Yeroushalimi, a junior at North High, "this opportunity [to do in-house research] is huge for many students and researchers who need to conduct their own physical research and experimentation for their projects." In-house research at North High is being strongly encouraged for the already highly successful research students, especially with the massive decline in outside research opportunities.



GISELLE MAKANI '23  
COLUMNIST

Russia has been arresting and holding American citizens in jail for political charges, which many view as an ongoing issue. This issue has strained relations between the United States and Russia for years. One prisoner, Paul Whelan, asked President Joe Biden to step in and free him from the jail. Whelan is also an Irish, British, and Canadian citizen. He was arrested at a Moscow hotel back in December 2018 by Russian authorities who professed he was involved in an intelligence operation.

Mr. Whelan remembers being arrested years ago, "I was getting ready and this person turned up, unexpectedly." This person was supposedly his friend, but turned out to work for Russia's FSB security service.

Whelan was arrested on spying charges back in 2018, and his espionage

# AMERICAN IMPRISONMENT IN RUSSIA

president was delivered in an interview with CNN, following President Biden's pledge to hold Russia responsible for its wrongdoings.

During the interview, Whelan called on Biden to take "decisive action" and free prisoners such as himself and Trevor Reed from the Russian jails. Whelan and Reed are both former U.S. Marines, yet because of suspicion, they have not yet been released by the Moscow court. They both maintained a plea of not guilty. Reed has been imprisoned since Aug. 2019.

On May 25, Reed tested positive for COVID-19. The appeal hearing scheduled for May 26 is postponed. The defense team is concerned they might have been exposed to COVID-19 due to the prison's lack of concern for Trevor's complaints and not waiting for the results of the COVID-19 test. The US Embassy requested communications with Trevor, but requests were not answered. Currently, the US Embassy has not been informed of Reed's



During a CNN interview on June 2, 2021 Captive Paul Whelan called on President Biden to "take decisive action" on politically-motivated Russian Imprisonment. Photo: Jennifer Hansler

charge landed him an astounding 16 years in jail. In June 2019, Whelan appealed to former President Donald Trump, saying that the president could "keep America great" by "aggressively" protecting U.S. citizens such as himself. Moreover, the White House was silent on the case.

The United States officially denounced the imprisonment last year, branding it a violation of human rights and international legal norms, considering that there was no evidence from the prosecution proving his guilt. He urged President Biden to resolve the problem of U.S. citizens being imprisoned in Russia for political reasons during his summit with Russian President Vladimir Putin on June 16 in Geneva Switzerland. The summit will also discuss the many other boundaries and controversies between the two powerful countries. The high tensions between both countries make US-Russia relations difficult.

Former President Trump first tried to mend ties with Russia when he first won the presidency in 2016. Moscow's supposed interference in the 2016 U.S. presidential election and what appeared to attempt to affect the 2020 election campaign have made Russia a toxic domestic issue in a way that it has not been since the 1950s. Its annexation of Crimea and launch of an ongoing war in southeastern Ukraine coupled with its support for Syria's Bashar al-Assad and for Venezuela's Nicolas Maduro, have caused the relationship to become troubled.

Whelan's message to the

condition, inciting outrage in Americans.

Whelan continued that he understands that the government is working towards his case, and even called the summit a "step in the right direction." He commented, "It's pretty simple. There was no crime. There was no evidence. The secret trial was a sham. This was done purely for political motive." Whelan repeatedly refers to his condition as an "abduction." "The more people that understand that I'm innocent and that no crime of espionage ever occurred, the better," he explained during his interview.

There are many conditions that require the two countries to cooperate. Russia and the United States are nuclear superpowers and therefore are obligated to maintain peace and stop other countries from using these weapons for harm and war. The U.S. National Security Strategy declares Russia and China the two top threats to United States national security.

The tensions date back to the collapse of the USSR. The United States believed to have stripped communism from the Soviet Union. The United States tried to implement democracy, but Russian and Soviet history persisted. President Vladimir Putin has reinvented Russia as a centralized authoritarian state. The most recent issue arose with the U.S. 2016 presidential election.

The United States' issues with Russia are nothing new, yet the U.S. citizens held in captivity further complicate and prolong the growing discontent and rivalry between the countries.

# Graduation Ceremony Under Restrictions

SYDNEY KANE & RACHEL SUTIN '24  
GUIDE POST STAFF

It is no hidden matter that this school year has been one of extreme differences, especially for the Class of 2021. The graduating class has endured a year like no other. Since graduation is supposed to emulate the high school experience, it is no surprise that this year's ceremony will be like no other, as well. This June, the graduating class will bring masks, along with their gowns and caps, to say farewell to North High and the rest of their classmates. The ceremony will include reduced audience capacity, pre-recorded musical numbers, and an overall air of oddity.

In the past, North High has held large celebrations for the graduating class. COVID-19 has prevented many of these desired celebrations which includes parties or spending time with each other outside of school. State guidelines on how many people can attend graduation have been implemented at North High. In previous graduations, there were parties held to honor the senior class. This year, such celebrations have been strongly discouraged by the school district.

Customarily, the families of the graduating class come in large numbers to support our students' accomplishments. Now, if someone were to have a rather large family, not everyone would be able to attend and watch the ceremony due to number restrictions. Senior Sydney Gilardi, a part of this year's graduation class, stated that "as this year has had its difficulties, I understand that graduation will be affected. The administration has done its best to make graduation as normal as possible, it is still strange not to have a regular graduation."

It is clear that the graduation audience will house a limited number of people per family, even more so than previous years. These restrictions also make it evident that seniors this year will experi-

ence a much different familial dynamic compared to years before, since extended relatives have been cut out of the graduation picture. All of this will allow the seniors' loved ones to attend graduation while following proper safety precautions.

Senior Laruen Victory commented, "After the craziness of the past

pre-recorded performances are taking place. Senior Ilana Cooke stated, "I think it's a good decision because it allows for the band and orchestra to do their personal addition to the ceremony without risking breaking COVID protocol."

The administration has created a dynamic, complete with gathering limi-

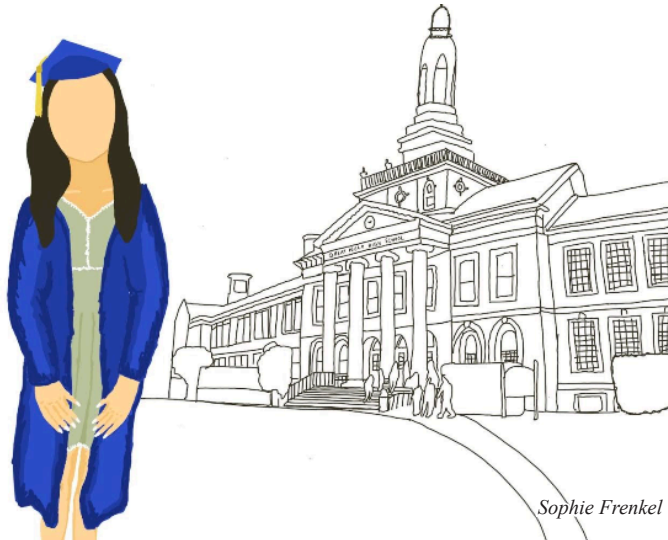
adequate graduation amid a pandemic makes this an even greater challenge.

It is clear that designing graduation was no easy feat, while there is a fine line when balancing safety and fun. If everyone follows protocol and stays safe, all members of the graduating class will be given the means to have a great last moment of senior year.

Moving forward, the summer months will pose new challenges for the graduating class. This summer will be the last time all of North High's seniors will be together in their hometown. This will likely become a "last hurrah" for those accepted into college, where the graduating class will make lasting memories of the friendships they will leave behind in the fall. These gatherings will need to be COVID-19 safe to maintain Great Neck's relatively low infection rates.

Advisor of the yearbook Mrs. Gallagher commented on the difficulties of creating the yearbook this year. With many of the large events of the school year cancelled, such as Battle and pep rallies, many reserved pages of the yearbooks had to be removed. Also, candid pictures in the yearbook had to be checked closely to make sure COVID regulations were being followed. Unfortunately, this year the yearbook is shorter than ever before, but thankfully the year was still filled with unforgettable memories.

For many, the coming summer will also be filled with lots of packing. Shopping for dorms and books is a quintessential college experience that will need to be met with great precaution in the coming months. The summer before college, in its goodbyes and packing, is yet another example of a senior experience that will change this year. Nonetheless, both graduation and the summer before college will prove to be enjoyable as long as seniors stay safe.



15 months, I'm just grateful to have an in person graduation with my family there. During hybrid school I wasn't sure how the end of the year was going to look, but all things considered I think we're lucky with how it's turning out."

In addition, in past years, live performances were held from the band and orchestra. In an attempt to decrease the risk of spreading COVID-19 this year,

tations, capacity caps, and pre-recorded ceremonial music, that will allow the seniors to stay safe. Despite these rules applied, the core parts of graduation are the nuclear family, the completion of an era, and the diploma, making the seniors excited for their graduation. Through the years, creating a cheerful experience for the senior class has been both challenging and important. Having an

## ISRAEL-PALESTINE CONFLICT REIGNITES

*continued from first page*

sages. In New York City, some Muslim families found their doors spray painted with hate graffiti as the holy month of Ramadan ended in the holiday of Eid.

The pro-Israel rally was designed by its organizers to show that Great Neck was not the place for these sorts of hate crimes and that Israel maintained the right to exist and the right to defend itself. Organizer Adele Tehrani believed that the rally was the time to "put everything that usually divides us aside . . . and address the fight against antisemitism," a belief that many North High students shared.

"Long Island, Great Neck, especially, has a really large Jewish population that is closely familiar with persecution and oppression, specifically because of antisemitism," said junior Sahar Tarkak. "I attended the rally because my family history knows persecution well, and my ancestors know Israel as a refuge. To keep Jews safe across the world, if they can't go to Israel, they should be safe where they are at home, and fighting antisemitism contributes to that."

"The speakers were spreading messages that supported the purpose behind the rally, which is combating antisemitism from anti-Israel and anti-Zionist stances," said Sophie Yellis, a senior at North High

who also attended the event. But the rally was more politicized than it should have been. There were Trump flags and Make America Great Again hats worn." Indeed, some attendees of the demonstration came adorned with political paraphernalia, though the organizers of the event did not associate the rally with any political party, stressing bipartisanship in the fight against antisemitism and anti-Zionism.

The rally gave many people around town a voice that could not be ignored, and Great Neck made it clear that antisemitism is not welcome. The rally organizers' intent was to bring awareness to the rise in antisemitism and the threat imposed on our town. Rallies and other events across the world appear to have succeeded in their motive, as the number of prejudice incidents of all kinds have decreased across the U.S. and the world following the ceasefire between Israeli and Palestinian forces on May 21; antisemitic incidents have been reported to have decreased by more than half when comparing the period of May 22-27 with May 13-21.

Since the ceasefire, tensions in the Middle East have declined, though conflict may resume soon, given past patterns and renewed aggression in the Gaza strip in late May. Even now, shrapnel holes are still being repaired and many people on both sides of the border remain in fear.

## FASHION SHOW REFASHIONED

*continued from first page*

ty guidelines to the best of their abilities.

One final change that Mr. Henriquez mentioned was a difference in the formatting and presentation of the Fashion Show. As per the restrictions regarding COVID-19, a large number of people in an enclosed area was not recommended unless they are fully vaccinated, which means the Fashion Show had to be premiered in a different way. Mr. Henriquez was thinking of making the fashion show virtual and in video formatting.

As this form of the show was extremely different from previous years, many participants feel that it negatively affected the experience and excitement for it. Sophomore Gili Gavriel, states that "having done Fashion Show pre-COVID, the experience differed greatly. It had a large audience which brought the energy up a lot more. This year the energy was lost due to the lack of people at the performance."

One of the main focuses for the show is the funding. In past years, funds were made from tickets, which were purchased by students and parents to watch the fashion show. Prior to COVID-19, making a profit to benefit the school was not as difficult, as

number restrictions were not in place. With this past year's difficulties, funding the show was not an easy task.

Additionally, many of the participants had to use their own money, due to the fact that there were no live performances, meaning no tickets were sold. This caused a problem because the students and the school were not able to benefit from this crucial event as they were in past years.

The theme that was assigned to this year's Fashion Show was traveling back through time. This theme allows visuals of clothes from decades ago to be brought back, styled, and displayed.

Per Fashion Show tradition, the designers of the event must take this theme and style outfits of their visions to come up with appealing designs and outfits for the virtual runway. The MCs for this year's Fashion Show were Eden Harel, Natalie Ashirzadeh, Zoe Gilad, Emily Greiff, and Alina Lyakhov.

It is evident that even with all the regulations and setbacks of COVID-19, Mr. Henriquez and the students in the Fashion Show have worked hard to overcome them and proceed with the annual tradition.

Their efforts during these difficult times are encouraging, and we received an amazing performance and showcase of creative designs and creative expression.



**Staff Editorial:**

# The Issue With Infographics

Our current social media culture prompts influencers and average users alike to find a rapid means to demonstrate their political opinions: the easily repostable, aesthetically pleasing infographics that circulate whenever a new movement gains popularity. Users that share these illustrations have been able to further their “advocacy” at the expense of sharing misinformation to susceptible audiences.

“Why Cows Are Racist” read one of the many satirical posts on the Instagram handle @monday, which has been creating their mock-boycott threads since the summer 2020. Besides providing a bit of comic relief to their audiences, these types of posts that ridicule the current era of political correctness demonstrate a deeper truth about social-media movements.

It seems that the more aesthetically pleasing advocacy present online, the less valuable genuine social justice movements become. The funny thing about the Instagram handle @monday was that the real Instagram users began to repost these threads on their stories, seeking to spread awareness and believing that the issues the posts discussed were legitimate. Within our current environment online, everyone is terrified of being perceived as morally inferior, causing them to share an abundance of advocacy posts on the daily. These people, though well-intentioned, are unaware of the harm they are actually inflicting. As they continue to post about issues like racist cows, they take away from the more meaningful movements.

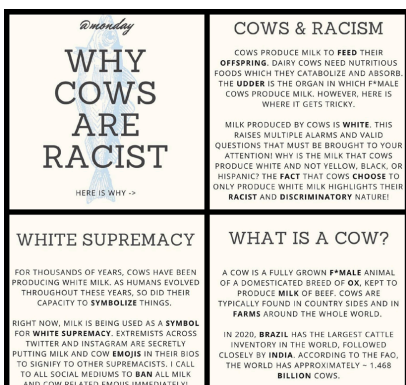
Similarly to these boycott posts, infographics gained popularity because of their simplicity. They usually consist of a colorful visual with a breakdown of the issue at stake, providing the who, what, where, why, and how the viewer can help. The simplicity (which is often viewed by influencers as infographics’ greatest strength) is actually their largest weakness. Striving to create posts mainly focused on fostering easy comprehension forces users to oversimplify complex ideas and issues, often in a way that presents one-sided information in a misleading or simply false manner. The brevity of these posts also requires creators to generalize in order to fit all the “facts” in a singular posting on the social media platform of their choice. Infographics are also flowery with bright text and visuals to catch the attention of viewers, yet this practice

ends up trivializing important issues.

The issues that are addressed on social media span from LGBTQ+ rights to the fight against police brutality. In most cases, the controversies are focused on the fact that people’s lives are in danger. But we as a society are failing to take a step from the tumultuous world of social media and ask a simple question: what are these infographics doing to help? The reality is, nothing. Social media’s most recent focus has been the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which, occurring for over 70 years, is primarily based upon a land dispute in the Middle East. That in itself is a gross oversimplification of a much more complicated issue regarding the conflicted territory, claims of gentrification, missiles, and much more. It is important to note that this unspecific summary is exactly what many are presenting as the sole truth to their social media followers, who are often young viewers with no alternate source of information that will take the “facts” presented before them at face value. Many claim infographics are beneficial as they spread awareness, but how is spreading awareness worth the cost of misinformation?

Take Supermodel Bella Hadid as an example. She posted a since-deleted infographic about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in May of 2021. This infographic depicted two women sitting and drinking coffee, with a text bubble over their heads discussing the conflict in a question and answer format. The post was riddled with historical inaccuracies, one being that the Middle East was peaceful before Israel was created in 1948, although there have been warring periods in this land under the Romans, Ottomans, and others. This infographic was presented to Hadid’s over 40 million followers as the truth, influencing millions of opinions and causing a surge of hate in her comments against not only Israel, but Jewish people as a whole.

As long as social media culture places pressure on stars to speak on matters in which they are uneducated, misinformation will continue to permeate the minds of users. Painting complex issues as simple disagreements as a matter of right versus wrong encourages hate, downplaying the history behind many conflicts. Social media users do not have an obligation to share their voice on every issue, but when they do, independent research must be conducted to ensure that they are speaking out in an educated manner that does not disregard important details and produce misinformation.



Satirical infographics like this one posted by instagram account @monday mock the culture surrounding inefficient advocacy on social media. Photo: @monday

## GUIDE POST • STAFF 2021-22

### EDITORIAL BOARD

#### Editors-in-Chief

Karina Makhani  
Maya Slobin

#### Senior Managing Editor

Sophie Mirro

#### Managing Editors

David Kahan  
Harrison Rich

#### Layout Editor

Shaina Kaidanian  
Tyler Menker

#### Copy Editor

Rebecca Karpel

### NEWS

#### Editors

Leila Bakhshi  
Mia Delijani

#### Associates

Sydney Kane  
Jonathan Sanders  
Rachel Sutin

#### Columnist

Giselle Makani

### OPINION

#### Editors

Zoe Lyakhov  
Nikita Soleymani

#### Associates

Zoe Paisner  
Alina Wang  
Stephany Barbu

#### Columnist

Sophie Frenkel

### FEATURES

#### Editors

Nicole Nazar  
Katharine Tang

#### Associates

Rena Geula  
Elizabeth Paisner

#### Columnist

Vicky Sakhai

### SPORTS

#### Editors

Menash Harooni  
Alexandra Rubin

#### Associates

Jacob Shirazi  
Linda Li  
Katie Ng

#### Columnist

Noah Berkowitz

### Staff Writers

Alexandra Ahdoot  
Samuel Berchansky  
Jack Brenner  
Alexander Geula  
Violet Gordon  
Reyna Kim  
Addison Klebanov

Alexa Nissim  
Nina Phillips  
Jonathan Sanders  
Alicia Sun  
Xiomara Trinidad Perez  
Mia Xu  
Sophie Yellis

### Staff Illustrators

Winnie Chen  
Sophie Frenkel

Paz Wysoki

### Faculty Advisor

Edward Baluyut

### Principal

Daniel Holtzman

Guide Post strives to inform and entertain the student body, provoke conversations and debates, and provide insight on student and community life, while preserving and promoting journalistic integrity.

Questions? Comments? Article ideas?  
Email the editors at [GuidePost@greatneck.k12.ny.us](mailto:GuidePost@greatneck.k12.ny.us)

Visit **Guide Post Daily** at [GNNGuidePost.org](http://GNNGuidePost.org)

Published by the Students of John L. Miller – Great Neck North High School

35 Polo Road  
Great Neck, N.Y. 11023  
(516) 441-4758  
[guidepost@greatneck.k12.ny.us](mailto:guidepost@greatneck.k12.ny.us)

# Asking Influencers to Advocate

SOPHIA ROSENBERG '24  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

As social media and social media influencers become a larger part of our daily lives, it becomes increasingly more difficult to draw the line between what influencers should and should not be using their platforms for. My opinion, like many other young social media users, is that celebrities can and should use their platforms for political and controversial issues. However, everybody has different opinions, and influencers cannot cater to every single one of them. This is why I think political, controversial, or sensitive topics should only be discussed by celebrities when they have well-researched facts to back them up. Freshman Lihie Kalfa believes that the influence celebrities have can be too powerful, and "celebrity influence should not be used when it comes to a sensitive subject." On platforms such as TikTok, the users are much younger and more susceptible to being influenced or educated by these influencers. However, with the help of platforms including Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat, and Tiktok, celebrities' fanbases can be educated on events such as Black Lives Matter, injustice towards the LGBTQ+ community, gender equality, body positivity, and more. I do think celebrities hold the responsibility of promoting issues on their platforms

because of the number of people who look up to them. However, it becomes difficult to know whether celebrities are supporting their posts with real facts. If they are not, it could lead to a huge amount of false or biased information being spread to a large number of people. For instance, Bella Hadid has been lately receiving backlash about her view on the Palestine-Israel conflict. It was discovered that she had openly supported statements of anti-Semitism in advocating for Palestine. Bella Hadid has an enormous fan base, and that comes with responsibility. There may be nothing that can change her opinion, but she should be educating her followers with verified information rather than biased posts. In some recent tweets of hers, she says she "just wants peace, and for Is-

rael and Palestine to co-exist and live as they once did before." After I did some research, it is clear that she has not done her part in educating her followers on what is going on, rather she has chosen to push a biased narrative.

"There are numerous celebrities that will follow the trend of posting for the issue without being educated at all. This not only spreads misinformation," says freshman Mikaela Imani. Imani also explains that "it creates more resentment towards other people or groups. I believe that if you are going to post about an issue you must be educated on both sides of the matter, or maybe you can explain to your viewers that you are not able to speak on the matter and you will continue to educate yourself." Another example of how celebrities turned important issues into a trend is the Black Lives Matter movement that occurred over the summer. After the death of George Floyd, many influencers and celebrities started posting on the matter. The death of George Floyd was so impactful that it spread more awareness for black lives in danger than ever. However, how many of the influencers' posts were about advocating for change, and how many were posted just to "fit in"? At the time, so many influencers and celebrities educated their fans on this matter, which was lovely to see. However, as soon as the #BLM" stopped trending on Instagram,

the talk about the injustices towards the black community died down. This leads some followers to suspect that they may have only posted for George Floyd because everyone else was.

I believe celebrities should be using their platforms to bring awareness to large issues in our world. While no one can necessarily control what news they spread, it is the role of a celebrity to really influence their fan bases in a positive way with fact-checked evidence. When it comes to politics,

celebrities should make sure they are spreading their thoughts to fans who can grasp a better understanding of the issue, rather than blindly posting any information they can find on the topic. However, no matter the celebrity, he or she should always be properly educating their fans while voicing their opinion.



Following the initial rocket-launching in Gaza, Bella Hadid emphasized her support of the #freepalestine movement to her social media fanbase. Photo: Instagram

## Sophie's Seminar

SOPHIE FRENKEL '23  
COLUMNIST

What do you think of when you hear the phrase "wearable technology"? Most people think of Apple Watches, Fitbit, or AirPods. These forms of wearable technology make daily tasks easier and more efficient such as making a phone call, sending a text message, listening to music, or monitoring exercise. By simplifying daily activities, these technologies allow us to focus on other successes for society. As a result, many people are considering in-

# Wearing the Future

nisms may bring multiple benefits to the people, including an increase in productivity, efficiency, and potency to both the medical field and to the general public.

Despite all wearable technology's positives, not every person is comfortable with the idea of having a gadget that constantly emits carcinogenic radiation close to their brain. Some people would argue that other mobile devices emit the same radiation, but people wear glasses on their heads for up to 10 hours a day, and direct contact with your skin at all times is more harmful. Furthermore, the built-in camera raised privacy and piracy con-



Wearable technology, like the Apple watch, are regularly used by fitness enthusiasts to track their workouts, heart rate, and number of steps throughout the day. Photo: Locomote

vesting in these portable advancements.

According to eMarketer, the percentage of the population using "Smart Wearables" has been estimated to grow from 24 percent to 27.1 percent from 2020 to 2024. One example of Smart Wearables are smartwatches. The demand for these wristwatches increases rapidly due to the demand for consumers to monitor their vital signs. However, many worries have been raised regarding the safety features and possibly harmful side effects of this machinery. Nausea, memory issues, and body dysmorphia are all potential aftermaths from these technology "wonders." Yet, these smartwatches aren't the only things that draw awareness into modern society.

Google Glass, a pair of highly advanced eyewear was released on Apr. 15, 2013, and made available to the public on May 15, 2014. Also known as Project Glass, it was developed by Google and sold for \$1,500. Although many may regard it as a normal pair of glasses, Google Glass was more than that.

In 2013, research was conducted on the usability and impact of Google Glass in the healthcare field. Lucien Engelen, Dr. Phil Haslam, and Dr. Sebastian Mafeld found that the glasses could assist a liver biopsy and fistulaplasty. Additionally, Google Glass may aid in improving patient safety, operator comfort, and procedure efficiency in the field of interventional radiology. In fact, on Jun. 20, 2013, Venezuelan doctor Rafael J. Grossmann was the first surgeon to demonstrate the use of Google Glass during a live surgical procedure. Google Glass has high-quality video recording and transmission from the point of view, which helps plastic surgeons. Moreover, Google Glass is hands-free, voice-controlled, and enables real-time communication of video, audio, text, and voice. These beneficial mecha-

cerns due to the fact that the Google Glass could be recording or taking a photo at any time. These forms of risky and possibly illegal actions may be a disastrous turning point in modern technology. There was no clear function for the product, and developers cannot expect people to be interested after the product is already made. The main functions of the product were to quickly capture photos and videos and to search the internet at a glance away. Nonetheless, all abilities listed above were not exclusive to the product since the majority of people have a cell phone.

Some companies have used wearable technology to monitor social issues. Schweppes, a sparkling water company, worked with Ogilvy Brazil on The Dress for Respect campaign in 2018 to encourage men to rethink their behavior and approach women with more respect. Since 86 percent of Brazilian women have been harassed in nightclubs, Schweppes experimented by designing a touch-sensitive dress and invited three women to wear the dress to a nightclub in Sao Paulo. Several sensors on the fabric registered in real-time each time the women were touched without their consent.

Another instance where wearable technology is present is when the company Duoskin collaborated with Microsoft Research to create temporary metallic tattoos out of gold metal leaves. The tattoos are devices that have three purposes: turn your skin into a trackpad to control or adjust music players, change color based on body temperature or emotion, and show data with cell phone scanning.

Connecting humans so closely to technology is a high-risk business, and could result in unthinkable consequences and failures. On the other hand, wearable technology has rapidly introduced humans to a safer, worry-free, and more productive mindset.



# Masks: Here to Stay

MAYA MENASHE '24  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

People are sick and tired of wearing masks all day long; whether it's at work, social gatherings, or even just for running errands. As the number of vaccinated individuals throughout the United States starts to increase, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is shifting its mask mandate and has completely dropped the mandate in most areas. However, people are still hesitant to get the COVID-19 vaccine because of the uncertain long-term effects. Many are still questioning whether or not they should wear masks, although the CDC has deemed it appropriate, in some cases, to stop wearing them.

The New York Times reports that the number of cases a day has dropped from nearly 250,000 cases per week on average in January of 2021 to about 30,000 per week in May. Since the first group of administered vaccines was released in December of 2020, these dramatically different numbers indicate that the vaccines are highly effective in protecting people. Therefore, the mask requirements for people who are fully vaccinated have been lifted when near other fully vaccinated people. On the other hand, some people have still not developed antibodies. If someone is not yet fully vaccinated, they are not yet immune from COVID, so they should not be walking around without

a mask. With masks, a layer of external protection is present and can make up for the internal protection that is not yet present, such as the antibodies.

Taking these precautionary measures will help us get to a "post-COVID-19" era, but we must consider a few

more steps that must be taken. Masks are still needed in select situations even if one is vaccinated. The CDC suggests that masks should still be worn where it is certain that there are people with health risks, like hospitals and nursing homes. This suggestion not only slows the spread of the coronavirus but also the spread of other illnesses. Furthermore, wearing a mask would protect the people in these types of settings because they are immunocompromised. Wearing masks are not only encouraged because of their ability to protect you, but also because of the

mask's ability to protect those around you.

Many people have endorsed their concerns about mask safety at schools. "Personally, I think that in a school setting it still makes sense [to wear a mask]," said science teacher Ms. Lerner. We don't know who is or isn't vaccinated. When in an environment where there are many people, it is better to be safe and not put any lives at risk by wearing a mask, because of the uncertainty of who is or is not vaccinated. However, a question is raised: When do we say enough with the masks? Well, once we get to the point where schools require students to be vaccinated, masks should not have to be worn, due to the fact that the COVID-19 vaccines are high in efficacy.

Many locations have lifted their mask requirements completely, but many still require individuals to be vaccinated

in order to be maskless. However, asking for a person's vaccination card can be tough at times. "[People may lie about being vaccinated, which] not only hurts themselves but also hurts other people," said freshman Gabriella Kohan. Not only is lying unethical, but in this situation, it is also life-threatening, since you do not know what the consequences will be. However, people may feel that their lie is acceptable in the sense that it would be extremely difficult for them to get caught, because of a store's inability to request a proof of vaccination from their customers. No one wants to be in a position in which they are responsible for someone's potential death. During these difficult times, this may happen without you even knowing, if the proper precautions are not taken.

Some people may feel a sense of discomfort with people lying if they are vaccinated. Whether or not someone is comfortable with wearing masks, everyone should be careful about their surroundings and responsible for their own safety. If someone is specifically asked to wear a mask, even if they are vaccinated, they should wear it to avoid confusion and to demonstrate respect.

At the end of the day, it's up to you whether or not you want to wear a mask or take any other precautionary measures towards COVID-19. You must keep in mind, however, that you are part of a bigger picture that is responsible for stopping the spread of COVID-19.



Students Iyana Kaiman and Abby Nassimi pictured before school continuing to abide by CDC mask guidelines. Photo: Audery Bichoupan

# Our Shot at Normalcy

ZOE PAISNER '24  
GUIDE POST STAFF

After waiting several months for the COVID-19 vaccine to be approved for the teenagers, it is finally available. This means that students at Great Neck North High have the opportunity to be vaccinated.

Getting the vaccine is the most effective way to fight back against the virus that has flipped our world upside down for the past year and a half. It has been suspected that the vaccine will be made

a requirement for the 2021-22 school year. Those who choose not to get the vaccine may put their education into question.

I believe that everyone eligible to get the vaccine should; the COVID-19 vaccine is our only hope of returning to a sense of normalcy.

As much as I encourage everyone to get vaccinated, not everybody wants to, which is understandable. The newness and unknown information about the vaccine scares a lot of people, which is why I believe that parents should have the right to choose whether or not to vac-

inate their children. "It should be a personal choice to get vaccinated or to not get vaccinated for the upcoming school year," said freshman Esther Aminian.

Parents have control over their children's health, and the opinions of parents should not be changed by demand. If parents are fearful about future health issues for her child, then no one should force them to bury their fears. I believe that the COVID-19 vaccine is truly what the world needs right now, but it is also not right to take away people's abilities to make free choices. "The vaccine is important in allowing us to move forward from this pandemic, but students should not be forced into getting the vaccine against their will," freshman Lihie Kalfa believes. Schools should encourage vaccination mandates, especially the COVID-19 vaccine. Without the mandates of vaccines for school, many people may feel that they are being exposed to extreme illnesses regularly. If the measles vaccine was never mandated for school, many people would still be suffering from measles today. The creation of the COVID-19 vaccine helps to terminate the spread of the virus that

people suffered from for so long. If it is not mandated for school, students will have more of a chance of getting the virus. The more people that are not vaccinated and protected, the more people that are vulnerable to the virus. "The COVID vaccine should not yet be mandated in schools as it is very new, but I encourage everyone who wants to get the vaccine, to get it in effort to decrease infection rates," said freshman Chloe Hedvat.

Guardians must understand that if it is their belief to not vaccinate their child, they may be putting his or her education at risk. If parents fail or refuse to work with certain rules regarding the COVID-19 vaccine, then it is very likely that their child will not be allowed in school, and be forced to resort to remote learning, which lowers a child's learning opportunity.

The COVID-19 vaccine was created under emergency circumstances, and that is what frightens a lot of families about

getting the vaccine. People think that the vaccine was rushed, and may not have all of the kinks worked out. Also, other vaccines have been around for decades and that has allowed people to see their long-term effects. With the COVID vaccine, the long-term effects are in question. Some guardians believe that the vaccine could cause fertility issues in the future, or other harmful diseases. It was also theorized by some that a tracking device

could be implemented into people's bodies via the vaccine shot. I believe that these ideas are not "selfish" but they are not justified; they are just conspiracies. I understand the idea of being frightened and wanting to protect your family, but in this situation where COVID has negatively changed our lives, people have to be brave and willing to take risks. In reality, the most outstanding, top-notch scientists worked on making the vaccine for months, and all anyone wants is for the world to return to normalcy.



Over 50% of the entire U.S. population has received at least a single dose of the vaccination, and 40% of the entire U.S. population is double vaccinated. Photo: CNBC

# Test-Taking Transformations



## Post-AP Time Off

EMILY HYMAN '24  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Many students that go to North High take Advanced Placement (AP) classes, which all require an AP exam at the end of the year. In past years, a student who took the AP exam would be allowed to go home. Now, if a student was to leave after taking their test, they would be marked as cutting the classes they had after the test.

Test-taking is a stressful experience, and a two to three hour cumulative AP exam is no exception. After taking a stressful test for such a prolonged period of time, students may no longer have the energy or mental capacity to return back to school and finish off the rest of the day. A student should not be thrown right back into a long day of school after taking such a stress-inducing test. "I don't think that a precedent should be set that a student should be dismissed from other classes after taking an exam," said Spanish teacher Ms. Silk. She then went on to say that students choose to take the AP course and that they are still responsible for all their other classes after completing the exam. Although students are responsible for all the classes they take, they deserve to rest for the day once they finish their AP exam. Mental health is just as, if not more, important than a class lesson.

Taking a break for the day will let the students focus on their mental health

instead of worrying about other homework and classes. "[I wish I could] go home after taking the AP test because I was exhausted after finishing [it]," said AP student Chris Yang. A mental-health break is also important because many students probably would not be able to focus on their other classes for the rest of the day. Instead, students should be able to go home and take a nap, take a bath, or spend time with their friends.

Many students view AP exams as a representation of their intelligence, and their potential score stays on their minds for the remainder of the day. As someone who cares greatly about her grades, I would be way too distracted by my performance on the test to pay attention in school for the rest of the day. I would love to be able to go home, take my mind off the test and de-stress once I am dismissed from the testing room.

Since students are being told to stay the entire day following their exam, the least the school could do is give the stu-

dents a free period during the AP class for which they just took the test. There

The extra pressure can lead to students overworking themselves, which only harms the students' mental health further. "Poor mental health in adolescence is more than feeling blue. It can impact many areas of a teen's life. Youth with poor mental health may struggle with school and grades, decision-making, and their health," says the Central for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Many students become extremely anxious about just a project or homework and appreciate any break our teachers give them. A break from classwork or homework allows students to use those 40 minutes of class time to catch up on missing work, along with the time they would have spent on homework. Having even less than an hour of catch-up time can help a student's grade.

Ultimately, just like many other schools, the students at North High need a break after they finish an AP test. They should be sent home for the rest of the day, rather than be put right back into a busy day of school, where they probably won't pay attention in class anyway. If students cannot be sent home, they should at least get a break from the AP class they just took the test for.



is no point in getting homework and classwork from that class because everything that would have been taught in that class would have been taught before taking the AP test. Getting work from an AP class following the exam can be seen as useless and puts extra pressure on the student. Students should now be focusing on preparing for other class finals, AP exams, or end-of-the-year projects.

## Remote Testing Limitations

MOLLY NASIRI '24  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, schools have gone fully remote for the past year and are now slowly reopening. Although many students are returning back to school, there are still those who opt to stay fully remote or hybrid students. This raises concerns on testing days, as the students at home have access to more resources than the in-person students. I think that remote students have an unfair advantage over in-person students when it comes to test-taking.

Remote students have many resources around them that could promote cheating: their phones, their notes, and even their siblings at home. Many teachers have concerns about increased cheating for students taking tests at home. If students are not being properly monitored during these assessments, more cheating could occur. Although it is easier for students to cheat at home, it does not necessarily mean that students are cheating. If there is no proof that students have cheated, all tests should be graded under the same circumstances. After all, if everyone is taking the same assessment, and all are trusted to not cheat, they should be graded the same way.

People who believe that remote students have no advantage over in-person students regarding tests have a few legiti-

mate reasons. It is common for technical difficulties to play a huge conflict in testing remotely. Countless times, students have had to face the barrier of technology. At any time, testing devices or monitoring devices could crash. When there are technological issues, it makes it challenging for teachers and students to know how to proceed with the assessment. This is a time where students taking tests online would have to be graded differently. Perhaps if this challenge occurs, students should be graded only on the part of the assessment that they were able to complete. However, I think the fact that students have access to anything at home outweighs the possibility of technical difficulties, giving them an unfair advantage.

To try to prevent cheating, teachers require that students on Zoom turn their cameras on. When cameras are on, teach-

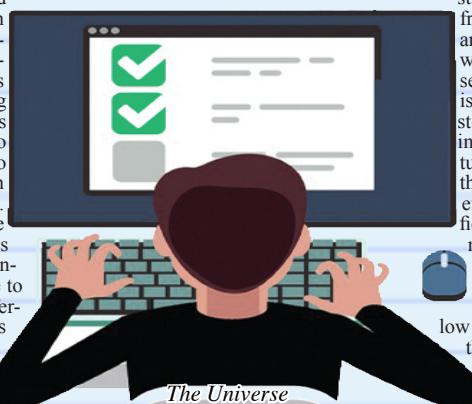
ers can essentially see most of the students' environment. Even with this, cheating could still occur: students can purposely face their camera to the ceiling. If a camera is facing the ceiling, students still have the freedom to look anything up without being seen, and that is unethical. Instead of requiring students to turn on cameras, there are more effective and efficient ways to monitor them.

Teachers can use applications that allow them to watch the screens of students who are at home while they are taking tests. This would eliminate the distraction of turning on cameras during assessments while still being an effective way to watch students taking tests, as well as the possibility of cheating; it would ensure that students at home do not leave the test browser to cheat.

Stress levels between students taking tests remotely and students taking

tests in person are a big factor on test performance. Ultimately, students at home have more resources than students taking tests in person. This can create less stress for them because they might have the impression that it is acceptable to study less. However, contrary to my belief, taking tests at home can be stress-inducing for students. Most teachers make it mandatory for students to have their cameras on during tests. Some students believe that they should not be required to turn on their cameras or microphones. Turning on cameras could be very distracting for many students while taking assessments. Students should not have to worry about doing well on their assessments along with making sure their environment is appropriate for Zoom. "With my camera on, I often feel the need to look up and watch other students instead of completing my own test," states freshman Chloe Hedvat. Since taking tests in person is an accustomed policy for many students, I think that this feels more normal for students. When I take a test in person, I do not feel as pressured as I do not have to worry about my teacher monitoring me virtually.

Overall, testing online may not be an accurate representation of a student's knowledge, but considering the circumstances regarding COVID-19, the best course of action is to make sure students feel comfortable while being tested online while trying to eliminate cheating.





# Test-Taking Transformations



## Replacing Regents

LIHIE KALFA '24

CONTRIBUTING WRITER

As a result of the ongoing pandemic, New York State Regents were canceled this year, so many teachers have been administering course finals in replacement of the regents. However, this should not be the case because the cancellation of the Regents has had detrimental impacts on both teachers and students. In particular, it has negatively impacted the efficiency of a teacher's ability to understand where their students are, academically. Specifically, many teachers use the Regents as an insight into the student's knowledge regarding the class material.

Although it is important for the teachers to understand where their students are at, it is also important to consider the impact a Regents exam may have on the students. This year, students have been deeply affected by the sudden transition to online learning. With a newly adjusted curriculum, students have been required to adjust to an unfamiliar pace of learning. "Many teachers along with students had to go through the process of Zoom malfunctions and bugs which lead me and my peers to miss out on some crucial information during class," says freshman Sue Zheng.

While some students adapted quickly, others had several challenges transitioning. For successful performance with on-

line learning, students must possess strong self-motivation, communication skills, time management skills, etc. It would be unfair to assume that all students strongly possess all of these fitting characteristics because students vary in the ways they learn.

Just as online learning doesn't allow for equal education among all students, administering a final test doesn't allow for an equal measuring field as the Regents. Especially this year, the results of a final would not offer a correct portrayal of a student's potential, because a teacher knows what they have taught throughout the year, which may differ from the state's requirements. The Regents were canceled for multiple,

valid reasons, such as students' inability to access a normal education in full in-person school. In administering finals, the reasons for canceling the Regents would apply as well, because the Regents are a type of final test. The unprecedented conditions

that students have learned under give them a justifiable cause to not take finals because the students have

not learned in a traditional classroom environment for most of the school year. If the Regents were canceled because

online learning was proven to not have the same quality education as in-person learning, students shouldn't need to take finals for the same reason. The cancellations of the Regents should be applied to the questioning of administering finals. Having a cumulative assessment worth a major portion of a student's grade is incredibly unfair to them. As Zheng previously mentioned, this year's circumstances provide various reasons as to why students have not learned as well compared to previous years.

Many students have put in large amounts of effort as they devoted time to complete their tasks within each class. Even as students have had to face the

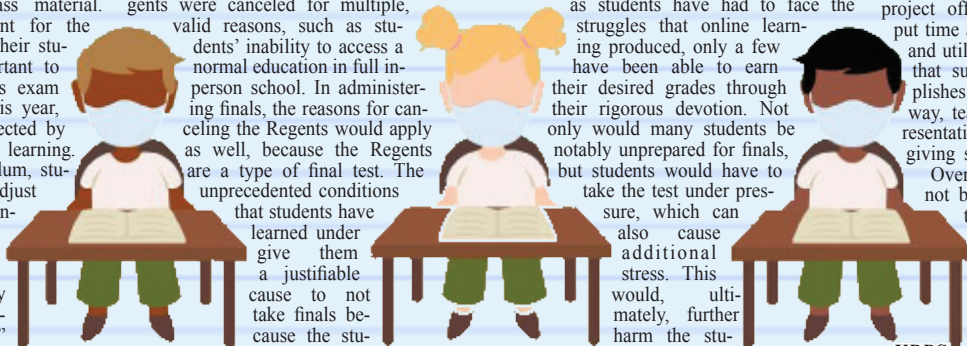
struggles that online learning produced, only a few have been able to earn their desired grades through their rigorous devotion. Not only would many students be notably unprepared for finals, but students would have to take the test under pressure, which can also cause additional stress. This would, ultimately, further harm the student's grades,

making it highly difficult for students to earn the grades they deserve. The grades that students have worked tirelessly for would

be negatively affected because of the lack of appropriate learning they have received.

Although it is understandable teachers may rely on a final test to calculate an accurate course grade for their students, overall, due to these logical reasons, teachers should find other methods to make up for the regents without administering finals. Students could create projects that constructively cause students to consider previous topics. Projects that require students to involve previous material would still allow teachers to effectively analyze the student's knowledge while still giving the student a fair opportunity to reflect their comprehension. A project offers students the opportunity to put time and effort into reviewing material and utilizing it to produce a final product that substantially analyzes and accomplishes the aim of the assignment. This way, teachers can have a beneficial representation of a student's knowledge while giving students a fair way to display it.

Overall, it is clear that teachers should not be administering finals to replace the regents since there are numerous other ways to represent final grades while still giving students an equitable way to achieve their desired achievements. Instead of giving students timed tests of everything done in the school year, teachers should give projects or classwork that allows students to engage in the material without the stress of memorizing a load of topics at once.



KPBS

## Projects Over Tests

LIANA KAFIERAD, STEPHANY BARBU, ALINA WANG '24

CONTRIBUTING WRITER, ASSOCIATE EDITORS

For the past year, the pandemic has changed our lives in many different ways. For instance, the Regents being canceled forced teachers to find new ways to assess their students' knowledge. Two of the most popular methods are a final exam or a final project. Controversies regarding which assessment to administer have led many to question which one of these two is more effective. Many teachers are in a dilemma of deciding what works best for students.

The sudden shift to remote learning caught many students and teachers off guard. The "buggy" Zoom options and disturbingly low wifi signals were only a few of the mechanics that haunted us all. With the uncertainty of online learning, many students haven't retained the information as well as they could have compared to pre-Covid times. Consequently, many students may be underprepared for major assessments, such as the Regents. By considering those setbacks, the New York State Board of Education has canceled these state exams. Yet a new problem arises with finals. Should final testing be an option, or should students take on a project instead?

A widely disputed topic this past year has been whether or not final exams are an accurate representation of one's

grade. Typically, finals cover all the material given to students from the beginning of the year. Many aspects of these tests can be huge stressors for students. Starting to study weeks before to refresh their minds and retain as much of the information as possible are a few examples. Also, teachers making finals worth a big chunk of a student's grade causes a lot of strain on students. On the contrary, finals can help in wrapping up the curriculum of the school year and possibly boosting some students' grades. Although finals are not the most popular amongst students, some classes still require them. Ms. Silk, a Spanish teacher, believes that being assigned "cumulative, local assessments" and "final projects" may or may not be appropriate, depending on the course it's for. She explains that "a final project would not be appropriate for language courses because of the ease of using a translator" and "is not a true assessment of a student's ability in the target language because of the availability of Google Translate and other platforms of that nature." For these reasons, Ms. Silk still administers a final exam, like many other teachers. Mr. Cesar, a physics teacher in our school, agrees with Ms. Silk, saying, "An end-of-the-year test is a more accurate assessment of the knowl-

edge gained by a student throughout the year, so I would rather [administer] a final test. However, teachers know what their specific class should be capable of doing, [but] I do think end-of-the-year tests are extremely important. If [a teacher] know[s] [these] test[s] [are] appropriate for their class, I am in complete support".

Another possibility for the end-of-year evaluations is final projects. Right off the bat, this choice is more appealing to most students. Although this is seen as the "easier" choice, there are also many other reasons as to why we should be given projects rather than tests. The COVID-19 situation has forced the

majority of students into remote learning, and it has been "hard to understand the material" said Sara Keypour, freshman.

Unlike previous years, the curriculum has changed because of this unprecedented pandemic. Some topics were skipped over, while extra information was added to others. Therefore, many

students may feel pressured and stressed while studying for the final exam. By conducting a final project, a lot less stress is put on the students. However, keeping in mind, a final project is drastically different from a final exam. The former allows for direct access to the previous material. The latter, on the other hand, requires extensive studying and preparation. As always, there are difficulties with working on projects. To many students, group work can cause undue stress. You have to watch out for people not contributing equally to the project and slacking off, hoping for an easy grade.

This past year has been a complicated one filled with many unplanned obstacles. Despite this, students and teachers alike have been able to work through the pressure and find a middle ground. Whether a teacher administers a final test or project, I am confident that the choice has been thought through, and the decision they came to is the right one.



FreePik

# 2021 AP TESTING WRAP-UP

"I did study for my APs but not as much as junior year. I was not stressed about taking these exams because my college did not accept more than two of these exams."

ALEX GEULA '21

"The quality of education over Zoom was lacking because it was hard to stay focused and engaged from home. I felt like I really had to cram for my tests and lacked motivation."

SOFIA BUZIASHVILI '22

"The tests went well but for most tests I wasn't shooting for a 5."

NICOLETTE KOBRICK '21

"Taking the exam was less stressful than expected, and I found that I had a sufficient amount of time to complete each section."

REBECCA BERNSTEIN '23

"It was stressful taking the AP exam for the first time... once the exam was over I felt very relieved."

LIORA KAYA '23

"Teachers overly prepared us to the point where the APs felt the exactly the same as the practice, but I do fear that it will be much harder when I am not able to focus all of my studying on only two subjects."

RACHEL TAVAZO '23

"I didn't feel too prepared for the APUSH exam but I felt really prepared for the AP Chem test. Since both of these classes have been preparing for only the AP. After the AP was over, classes have become more mundane and boring."

STANLEY CHAN '23

"As a senior whose college does not have many distribution requirements, I did not study outside of class for the APs."

NINA PHILLIPS '21

"The AP Bio exam had a much harder multiple-choice section than anything we had ever seen... I also think that despite the the online AP exams having effective anti-cheat methods...it somewhat invalidates the test...and the results are inaccurate and unfair to a degree."

WILLIAM WU '22

"I don't know how fair it was to students who were deprived of a proper education due to remote or hybrid learning to have the full-scale exam."

DYLAN HAKIMIAN '23

## Students Run Spirit Week

NICOLE YEROUSHALMI '24  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

This year, COVID-19 put numerous school and student celebrations on hold. Graduations, proms, and even Spirit Weeks have been delayed, changed, or even completely canceled. During the last week of May, North High seniors decided to host their own Spirit Week. They took it upon themselves to create a schedule for the week and send out fliers with each day having a special theme: Monday was 'Merica Monday, Tuesday was Blazer Day, Wednesday was Summer Day, Thursday was Blackout Day, and finally, Friday was College Day, a day specifically reserved for seniors to wear the gear of the colleges they are committed to. The fliers of each day's theme were spread around the school through grade chats and by members of the student organization. There was no in-

volvement of school staff or the student organization as a whole in the planning and implementation of the week's plans.

According to Ms. Silk, a major organizer of most school events, "The past Spirit Week was set up by seniors without any knowledge on the teachers' part." Caileen Makani, a student officer, said, "While the student council was not directly involved with the recent Spirit Week, [the school] still saw a massive success." On each day of the week, students could be seen around every corner dressed in the day's theme, ranging from stars and stripes to just a completely black outfit. Most days were successful as they gained recognition and support from students around the school.

This is one of the first school events that the school's staff and organizations have not been involved in and may even serve as a major turning point in the school's way of celebrating new events. Without the use of school-run apps such as Google Classroom in a widespread event, it is increasingly important to understand how quickly ideas throughout the school are spreading and the real

influence that students can have simply through the power of their phones.

With the cancellation of so many celebratory events throughout this past year, students have lost many of the things they typically love to celebrate throughout the year. But the slow return of such celebrations including Senior Prom, graduation, and college nights have brought new things for students to look forward to. Andrew Suh said, "School events can make class just a little bit more exciting and give students something to look for throughout the day."

Bringing students together for this Spirit Week has helped to bring people together in a safe manner, such as through its silent sign of unification of students. However, because this was set up by students using social media, WhatsApp, and other chats, it becomes near impossible to send the message out to every student, potentially leaving a number of students discluded from the week. This potential issue may

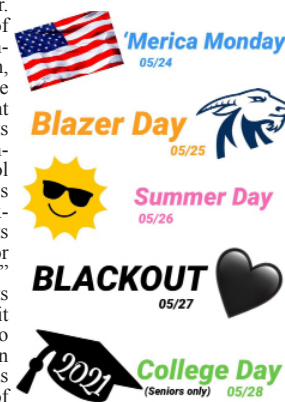
have taken away from the festivities and is a major flaw, which may be so major that this way of planning may have to be abandoned in the future. Freshman Dhruv Bagchi said, "There were many students who did not even know that Spirit Week

was happening." Students and children are becoming more independent in planning major events and occasions for themselves and their peers, making it increasingly important for people to be aware of the new events and information that sprout around at every corner. Zachary Hyman said, "Social media apps such as Instagram, iMessage, and WhatsApp are so commonly used now that other mediums have proven to not be nearly as productive in spreading information or events."

With all that in mind, though this Spirit Week was unprecedented in terms of no administration present in the seniors' planning of the event, it still achieved major success and served to pioneer a new way of planning school-wide events at North High.



Spirit Week ended with College Day, which was reserved for seniors to rep clothing from colleges they recently committed to. Photo: Audrey Bichoupan



The flyer sent out by student officers to all grade levels summarizes the different themes for each day of North High's most recent Spirit Week. Photo: Dylan Moradof





# TEACHER SPOTLIGHT: MR. BARBACH

ASHLEY AMINZADEH '23  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

After five careers, Mr. Barbach finally decided to pursue a career as a science teacher and high-school coach at North High. Once a student at North High himself, Mr. Barbach has now been teaching here for four years. During this interview, Mr. Barbach shares how his five careers and defining life moments got him to where he is today.

**Q: Discuss your experience from being a student at North High versus teaching at North High.**

A: Personally, going from a student thinking I wanted a career in music to coming back and teaching biology is a different perspective on things, not to mention the student-teacher aspect. But to come back to where I grew up is a very homey feeling...

A lot of the teachers that taught me are still here, and it's been really cool to have them turn into not just teachers, but now mentors and friends. It's been a lot of fun.

**Q: How did you become interested in teaching?**

A: Believe it or not, Dr. Krauz gets a lot of the credit for that one. I've been coaching

sports since I was 12 or 13 years old and working with kids. Facilitating development has always been a passion, so when I left music and went to my career in fitness and training, I spoke to Dr. Krauz and he said, "Come teach, it's like coaching but with walls," and he was completely right. It's been so similar, but there's so much more to gain from spending more time and developing kids academically. So, the love for science in terms of fitness and performance and training just flowed perfectly with developing kids and talent.

**Q: What did you do before you got into teaching?**

A: Well, I tell my students that they're never set on one path in life. I think students in high school... like to focus on what they see in front of them, and I tell them that this is my fifth career. I started out as a music business major at Northeastern, went into the music business recruiting and signing new artists and working on album development and marketing. Then I transitioned out of that into personal training, sports performance, and running facilities. I eventually got into coaching college sports and college-ranked conditioning before I got into teaching. So, it's been a wide variety of experiences that have re-

ally made me appreciate what it is to help people learn and to teach and to guide them through certain areas of their life.

**Q: Do you have any career regrets?**

A: Never, no regrets ever. I pursued what really interests me, and I pursued it to the fullest, and I am appreciative of all the support from my friends, family and others that have allowed me to walk through these multiple paths. But no regrets, I've been lucky enough to find success in each one of those paths.

**Q: What are your hobbies outside of teaching?**

A: I am still very passionate about music, listening to music, and learning about new music. I play the piano, drums, guitar, and I sing. On top of that, I am also learning to be a chef and developing food.

**Q: What role has your family and friends played throughout your life?**

A: My family has been incredible and supportive, and my friends have been the same way. My friends are my family... They are so supportive. I've met many incredible people who have

become like family along the way, and I've been lucky enough to have such tremendous support... My family has been tremendous throughout it all.

**Q: Did a family member inspire your teaching career or any other of your careers?**

A: My grandmother was a teacher; she taught preschool and pre-education. No-

body else was really a teacher in that aspect; I guess it just came from Doc saying "get into the classroom, and see what it's like." My first experience was watching Mrs. Knacke. I observed Mrs. Knacke—I knew she was a coach as well—and I saw her teach. I was so blown away that I said I had to do it. Not to mention Behar who was also a coach and an athlete; she was my teacher as well.



Mr. Barbach teaching Biology class at North High. After many career changes and uncertainties, he found this to be one of his main passions.

Photo: greatneck.k12.ny.us



Mr. Barbach coaching the boys varsity soccer team at North High. His interest in coaching blossomed when he started doing so as a young teen.

Photo: Mr. Barbach

## Keeping Artfest Alive

XIOMARA TRINIDAD PEREZ '21  
STAFF WRITER

Artfest is one of the major events that the Fine Arts department looks forward to at the end of each school year. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19, such an event will not take place in-person this year, but will instead take place online.

All artwork that used to be displayed in the Little Theater will now be displayed in "virtual galleries" on June 14. Students of AP Studio Art and Design have been creating their own websites as a means by which to showcase their artwork. This new presentation style represents a stark contrast to the traditional wall designation for each AP artist in past years.

In comparing the website exhibit to conventional, physical exhibits, art teacher Ms. Man said, "While putting on a gallery show in person has its own challenges, organizing a show virtually also requires more time and effort than one

realizes." She continued, "Figuring out how to organize all the content and planning was important. Also, because a website is more permanent, there is a level of awareness and sensitivity that goes into creating something that will live online." Another art teacher, Mr. Giacalone, further expressed the added challenges in how the "most difficult aspect of working on the virtual galleries is creating the Google Sites and making sure they are easy to navigate and that all students are showcased and their work valued." Besides artwork, Artfest is characterized by live music brought by the student musicians of North High. This year, all pieces performed by the students had to be pre-recorded.

However, the participation for the recording of these pieces was voluntary, whereas in past years, involvement was mandatory for music students. Music teacher Mr. Rutkowski said, "I had to make the participation completely voluntary because I did not want any student or her/his family to feel uncomfortable about being outside

of home [to record the piece in-person at school]." He continued, "In my first 28 years in Great Neck, every student was required to participate in the Artfest concert. This year, there were only 19 band students and 21 string students [who participated out of] my 165 students."

In order to record safely while following COVID-19 protocols, Mr. Rutkowski had to find a bigger place than the orchestra room. "Room 218 was too small, both gyms were occupied, the auditorium stage was storing tons of desks, chairs and all kinds of furniture that had to be taken out of classrooms to make them safe," he explained.

Each teacher involved has taken a moment to reminisce on past years and share what they'll miss from an in-person Artfest. Ms. Man said, "I will miss seeing the reactions as students see their own work hanging on the walls and the awe and admiration from their friends, parents, and teachers." Similarly reminiscing, Mr. Giacalone said, "I will miss seeing all the work of our students hanging on display in the Little Theater...seeing all the paintings and drawings share space with the sculptures and photographs and digital work, a mosaic of student voices and expressions to weave through, linger before and appreciate." And most of all, he "will miss...the front of the gallery, where seniors in AP Studio Art & Design would take on portions of the walls and present their entire AP Sustained Investigations."

Thinking back on past years, Mr. Rutkowski said, "Besides that there is no live audience or live performance and only one fourth of my students performing, I could not have the seniors stand up and be recognized for putting up with me for four long years." He will also "miss the 45-60 minutes worth of photo-taking that the parents do in the auditorium after the concert when scores of former music students are home from college and come to see the concert."

Despite the tough switch from an in-person to virtual Artfest, teachers from the Fine Arts department are very hopeful that this year's Artfest will still effectively display the talent that North High's students possess, as well as the beauty of their art.



Student musicians pre-recording pieces for the Artfest showcase while still adhering to COVID-19 safety precautions. Photo: Mr. Rutkowski



AP Art student Alice Liu's impressive piece, depicting four people with their faces covered, will be showcased for this year's virtual Artfest. Photo: Alice Liu

# Sakhai's Space: Summer Plans

VICKY SAKHAI '23  
COLUMNIST

Summer is around the corner, and with certain restrictions still existing, many students are still unsure of what to do. Despite this, students are determined to make the most out of their summer experiences and find activities to do that they enjoy, yet are also meaningful.

Although many are still trying their best to figure out plans, it "can still be extremely hindering and discouraging to know the amount of restrictions that are put onto our summer," said sophomore Jessica Nahavandi. "It's also challenging to figure everything out when many

places don't even know what they're doing yet," she added. Nahavandi is not the only one who is frustrated at this situation. While summer is always something many students constantly look forward to, "there is definitely a stress factor added this year," said sophomore Danielle Glucklich, who is uncertain herself of her plans for this summer.

Although some kids may not have it all figured out yet, there are still many

choices on the table. Popular summer sleepaway camps such as Modin, Silverlake, Chipinaw, Timber Lake West, and Cedar Lake are all still open this summer. In addition, although most teen tours are still being hosted, many have switched from international to domestic, commonly along the West Coast. If students were to travel internationally, vaccinations would be required for all. Very well-known (in

Great Neck) teen-tour companies, like BBYO and NCSY, have both made this change.

While many organizations are definitive as to what they're doing, some are still figuring it out as they go. For example, one of the programs that

Summer Discovery (a pre-college summer enrichment program) was offering was planning on hosting a program at the University of California. Yet, even after people signed up, an abrupt shift in the agenda was made, changing the program's location from UCLA to the University of San Diego for COVID-19-related causes.

On the other hand, many volunteer options, such as volunteering at animal

shelters, which interest many students, are no longer open for volunteers. Even though there are Zoom alternatives to many of the no longer in-person volunteering opportunities, many students are strongly opposed to pursuing their interests remotely, especially considering the weather will be nice, and they would rather be outside. Because of the fact that students have been learning

virtually for the past year, "the thought of now doing Zoom in the summer sounds horrific," said sophomore Iyana Kaiman.

Yet, while some students are unsure of their summer plans, most people have at least an idea of what they're doing. Many students here

at North High are becoming lifeguards at camps. Some popular lifeguarding options include Camp Jacobson, Kenilworth, and Parkwood. In fact, Nahavandi and sophomore Kayla Hakimi have both become lifeguard-certified. Many students are also becoming lifeguards with the assistance of Mr. Ro-

driguez, a business teacher here at North High who works as a lifeguard in the summer and often offers opportunities for North High students to work with him. In order to become a lifeguard, students must first complete a Red Cross course, then take the test required by Nassau County. After passing the test, the applicant simply has to look for a lifeguarding job. Another popular summer option here at North High

is becoming a camp counselor. Popular camps include Camp Jacobson, Parkwood, Northshore Day Camp, and MJC. Sophomore Rachel Tavazo has no worries about her summer plans. "I am ecstatic with my job at MJC...I feel like it's going to feel like everything is almost back to normal," she said. Of course,

there are many stress factors with the current circumstances. And although Covid-19 has multiplied anxieties since March of 2020, it has now added a stress factor to summer. Regardless, everyone is looking forward to finding their own respective leisure and work opportunities, no matter how untraditional.



Teens working as counselors at Camp Parkwood during previous years. This summer, students will continue to work as counselors and lifeguards at local camps.

Photo: gnparks.org



After completing a course and passing the Nassau County lifeguarding test, many students have become lifeguard-certified and plan to work as lifeguards over the summer. Photo: gnparks.org

## TikTokers Reach for Real Fame

SHIRIN ZAUBER '24  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

With the rise of TikTok, a social media platform, the rapid popularity of new "celebrity" TikTokers has been extremely prominent. This platform has given people all over the world previously unimaginable opportunities. Well-known TikTok stars such as the D'Amelio sisters and Addison Rae are a few of the many people who have been propelled into fame instantly and are now absorbing the attention and publicity in the press and media. Along with their attention, TikTok stars have received numerous opportunities in the entertainment industry. Being that they are constantly in the eye of the people, controversy has arisen over whether TikTokers deserve the titles they have been given and the opportunities in the entertainment industry they have been granted.

Recently, Hulu announced a new D'Amelio family reality TV show. This led to the input of hundreds of thousands of people, some being fans and others being people who are active on social media. Many argue that the family doesn't deserve this huge opportunity because they lack real talent and are simply lucky. The D'Amelios' fame rose by the power of social media. Charli, the youngest daughter, posted a video on TikTok that gained an incredible amount of attention. Charli received 100 million followers around the world, leading her and her family to now live as ce-

lebrities in Los Angeles. Many people find their rise in this industry to be unfair. They question how young adults, still in high school, can land such incredible opportunities, while people in the real world, who work extremely hard, are struggling to land jobs. The idea that fame is a ticket to quite literally anything is now present in the rise of the D'Amelio family.

On the other hand, the millions of fans that support them feel that the chances they have been given have been well-earned and fair.

Although the D'Amelios' fame might be controversial and some of their opportunities may also be, it is what the family does as new celebrities that makes them deserving or not of these opportunities," said freshman Jolie Ebrahimzadeh. The love for the D'Amelio family has been supported by their fans' infatuation in their family dynamic and the entertainment they provide. "The D'Amelios de-

serve what they have gotten. Their fame has started from the bottom, and they have worked their way up," added freshmen Chloe Hedvat.

The show focuses on the life of two teenage sisters, Charli and Dixie D'Amelio. It provides insight on how Charli juggles her fame, school, and her

life while constantly being in the spotlight. It also offers a look into how Dixie's singing career has flourished through their rise of fame. Ultimately, the show provides fans a look into their lives and their new adjustment to the world of fame. With this huge opportunity comes the backlash of many people that the D'Amelios, being that they have been scrutinized by the public for quite some time, have expected. The sisters have chosen to ignore it and focus on bigger and better things. Addison Rae, another TikTok

star, also gained her fame from posting videos. Within a short period of time and with the help of her large number of supporters, Addison grew to be one of the most popular influencers on the platform. Similar to Charli, Addison now lives in Los Angeles with a celebrity lifestyle. Recently, Addison has been featured in many well-known magazines and TV shows, such as Vogue and "Keeping Up with the Kardashians". Addison's recent debut in "Keeping Up with the Kardashians" has led many to question how she fits in and why she is appearing on this hit reality TV show. Fans claim that it does not make sense, as such a young and new influencer is appearing on an iconic reality TV show. People find the opportunities granted to Addison Rae to be undeserved. Her love amongst the young generation led her to becoming very well-known on not only social media platforms, but also in the entertainment business as a whole. Though some people find Addison's appearance on Vogue and "Keeping Up with the Kardashians" well-deserved, others beg to differ. "Addison doesn't really have any talent, and therefore, she should not be given these incredible opportunities that people with real talent work so hard to earn," said freshman Leah Hagooli. People claim her intentions were not to land jobs in Vogue nor to be featured in TV shows, so she, unlike other people who work extremely hard to reach such amazing opportunities, doesn't deserve it.



The D'Amelio family shooting their new reality TV show with Hulu. It has sparked controversy as to whether TikTokers deserve these major opportunities. Photo: people.com



# Return to Everyday Instruction

**REBECCA BERNSTEIN '23**  
STAFF WRITER

After over a year of hybrid and remote learning, North has recently transitioned to everyday, in-person learning for all students, leaving their excitement at an all-time high. Freshmen and sophomores were able to return full-time starting on May 18, and juniors and seniors returned on May 20. The reunion felt almost like the first day of school, especially as some students entered the building for the first time this year after switching from full-remote learning. With the increased capacity of students in the building, it is now especially important that all students adhere to the COVID-19 guidelines enforced throughout the building.

North High continues to enforce various procedures in order to restrict the spread of COVID-19, including one-way staircases, temperature checks upon entering the building, as well as reducing six-foot social distancing to three feet, as per CDC guidance. Mr. Schad, an English teacher, said, "It is heartwarming to see more students back in the building, learning, laughing, and taking small steps back toward normalcy," and that "It's clear that North High is taking appropriate steps to keep the students, staff, and community as safe as possible."

During the transition to full in-person learning, many previously full-remote students have been able to return to school, either with a hybrid or full-time schedule. Sophomore Anjelica Wu transitioned from full-remote learning to the hybrid model and is now in school every other day. She feels that she gets "the

best of both worlds." When asked which schedule she enjoys more, Wu said, "I enjoy in-person learning more than fully remote learning because I get to interact with my classmates and teachers more than I would in front of a computer screen." Additionally, she pointed out the benefits and struggles of both in-person and remote learning by revealing that "I definitely concentrate much better in class because I'm physically in an environment where everyone around me is learning. Plus, I can actually walk around more and not just be stuck in front of a computer the whole day. For remote learning, I can get a bit more sleep and have a more relaxed schedule throughout the school day." Lastly, Wu thinks that the transition to in-person learning was smooth and that she is happy with her decision to attend in-person classes. It is safe to say that the switch to in-person learning has enabled students to feel more engaged and focused in their classes, and it has allowed them to unite with their peers.

The switch to full in-person learning has also allowed teachers to come together with most of their students again, with some teachers even meeting their students for the first time this year. Mr. Schad said, "All the teachers at North are overjoyed to have our students back in the classroom sharing their thoughts and observations with each other," and that "The teachers here at North are proud of our students for their tenacity during a difficult time, and are excited by the resurgence of energy and productivity we've seen as our students return to the classroom." Many teachers have also seen a surge in students' abilities to focus when in school, compared to attending



*Freshmen Lihie Kalfa and Molly Nasiri together in Science Research class after almost a year of being separated in different cohorts. Photo: Lihie Kalfa*

classes through Zoom. Mr. Yager, a math teacher, said that since the return to full in-person learning, "I think the dynamic is better and more productive." He also shares his opinion that for students, in-person classes are more effective than remote learning and said, "I have had many students say they can't learn on Zoom. I see with my own 15-year-old son how easily distracted he gets when on Zoom."

Overall, the transition to full in-person learning is a very exciting time to be able to reunite with peers. As the school year nears its end, students and staff can safely enjoy the last days of school, finally unified at North High once again.

## YOUR TEACHERS' DREAM VACATIONS

**Ms. AGUADO**  
PRIVATE BEACH  
ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD

**Mr. BARBACH**  
JAPAN

**Mr. BONVOCINO**  
AMALFI COAST

**Mr. CORRAO**  
BORA BORA

**Ms. KACHMAR**  
EUROPEAN EXPLORATION

**Ms. MAKSYM**  
BORA BORA

**Ms. MAN**  
MALDIVES

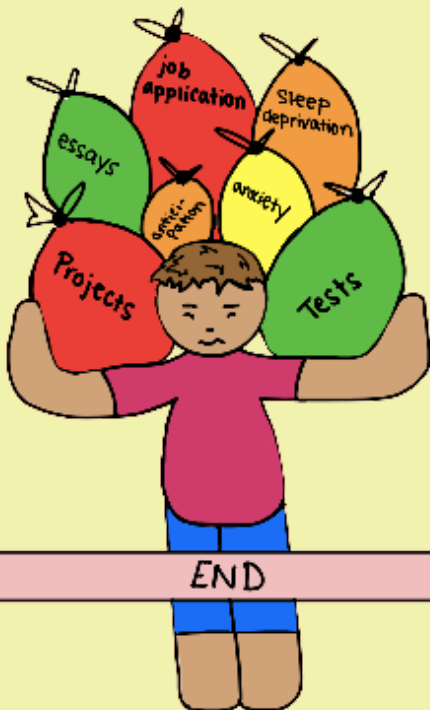
**Mr. MARCHESI**  
HAWAII

**Mr. RUTKOWSKI**  
VIENNA WITH MRS. RUTKOWSKI, HIS SONS, AND HIS STUDENTS TO VISIT HOMES OF COMPOSERS, SEE THE VIENNA PHILHARMONIC, AND PLAY MUSIC

**Mr. SU**  
LOS ANGELOS TO VISIT HIS SISTER

**Mrs. VIRGILIO**  
AMALFI COAST AND POSITANO

## FINAL STRETCH TO SUMMER



*Students endure a lot of tension in the last few weeks of school. Final exams, projects, and the stress of finding job opportunities for the summer become overwhelming and time-consuming. Preparing for these events puts a heavy weight on students' shoulders as they take the last few steps before making it past the "finish line" to reach summer break.*

Paz Wysoki

END



# PAUL VS. MAYWEATHER



**JOSHUA DAVIDSON '24**  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Throughout the United States, anxious fans marked June 6th 2021 as the boxing match of the year. In recent weeks, the boxing match between Logan Paul and Floyd Mayweather has recently gained extreme attention across various social media platforms. Shockingly, in December 2020, Mayweather told his fans that he would be returning to the boxing ring after winning his last match against Tenshin Nasukawa. Fans realized his next match in 2021 was set to be against YouTube star Logan Paul. Surprisingly, Logan Paul, who had lost all of his previous matches, was willing to go against Floyd, who holds about 50 wins. Fans will watch the match on June 6 via live stream. They can purchase PPV (pay per view) by heading to Fanmio Boxing's Website or Showtime PPV. The intriguing match is planned to take place in Hard Rock Stadium in Miami. The PPV broadcasts are said to start at 8 p.m., but fans should expect Mayweather and Paul to make their ring walks—extravagant entries—at around midnight.

The primary debate on the fight was whether it is beneficial to boxing or just a “hyped event.” Many think that the fight is detrimental to the sport of boxing. They question if Paul, someone with a large social media platform but little knowledge of boxing, is worthy of a match against a champion boxer like Mayweather. Previous fights with Jake Paul and Nate Robinson are debated for the same reasons but have more leeway for fans to accept the fight as “respectable.” For years, professional boxers like Manny Pacquiao and Paul Williams have been chasing down Mayweather for a rematch; however, he has managed to dodge them while accepting a fight against celebrity Logan Paul. Many think

Logan Paul is not qualified to fight against boxing star Floyd Mayweather since he has not significantly contributed to the boxing community. Freshman Aaron Nasiri said, “For Logan Paul to truly have any chance at winning, he must settle an agreement with Mayweather to make him look less awful in the ring.” Most fans and people debat-

ing over the match would take Aaron's logical side. Even though Logan Paul may outweigh Mayweather by nearly 50 pounds, he is an amateur when it comes to boxing. Freshman Alec Blumberg, along the same lines as Aaron, said, “It's really just a matter of opinion, whether or not Logan Paul is considered worthy enough of fighting Floyd Mayweather. But in the end, it is still a fact that Logan Paul is less experienced with the sport.”

Disputes started between the Paul family and Mayweather on May 6 at a press conference leading up to the fight. In an attempt to promote his brother's fight, Jake Paul took the spotlight at the event by stealing Mayweather's hat. The altercation started with Jake Paul confronting Mayweather with taunts that he would not beat his brother. Intentionally trying to provoke Mayweather's bodyguards, Jake Paul be-

gan to ask if “they lift.” After Mayweather's interview, Jake Paul went further by remarking, “This guy is supposed to be a billionaire and has dirty air forces on.” The quarrel took off when Mayweather and Jake discussed face to face, arguing about their views about the match coming up. The situation got heated to the point that



Undeclared, boxing superstar Floyd Mayweather at 50-0 will take on social media sensation Logan Paul, with two losses, in a special exhibition boxing match that is expected to make history. Photo: Essentially Sports

Jake Paul took Mayweather's hat off and ran away with it, commenting, “gotcha hat!” The news of the event went viral on social media, turning it into a match promotion. Jake Paul even took the initiative to make hats labeled “gotcha hats” and posted them on his website for sale, attracting publicity for the match. Moreover, during a press conference, Jake Paul pulled a prank by tying Mayweather's shoelaces together. Mayweather, surrounded by his bodyguards, reacted by throwing punches at Jake. As a result, Jake's team of bodyguards tried to protect him by escorting Jake to the nearest bathroom. During the initial press conference, Mayweather told Paul that he would “kill him,” for all the dirty pranks, especially the stealing of his hat, making Paul take initiative to order more security during the match. TMZ Sports agreed to protect him

and his brother with 24/7 surveillance and security. The Paul family does not know whether or not Mayweather was being serious or not. Regardless, they will not take any chances after his dangerous threats.

The drama and tension surrounding the match between Paul and Mayweather escalated when Mayweather filed a lawsuit against PAC Entertainment Worldwide. Mayweather claimed that they had not lived up to their word by not holding the match in Dubai. The organization was said to have many prime relationships with other companies and organizations in Dubai but Mayweather expressed that he was looking forward to the fight there. After Mayweather Promotions signed the deal with the organization in Dubai, guaranteeing them about \$100 million in profit and business promotion, the organization failed to make the first payment of \$30 million to Mayweather Promotions. Consequently, Mayweather moved to have the match held in Hard Rock Stadium, in Miami, Florida. Freshman Ethan Bloom, stated, “I completely understand where Mayweather is coming from and his reason behind filing a lawsuit against the organization in Dubai. Whether the debate is over something such as keeping a promise or not, in this instance, they were still alleging a breach of contract by breaking the promise of holding the match in Dubai with Logan Paul.” The lawsuit does entail that PAC did indeed approach the Mayweather Promotional Company with the agreement to host the event in Dubai, enraging Mayweather further.

As the lawsuit remains pending, fans are on the edge of their seats for the match. Even with conflicting opinions about the bout, people on both sides of the debate will stream the anticipated fight. We have already seen Paul lose both his matches—can he really defeat the undefeated Mayweather?

## Sports Betting Skyrockets

**ADDISON KLEBANOV '23**  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Throughout the pandemic, society has become increasingly dependent on virtual interaction, which has led to a significant increase in sports betting. Sports betting is defined as placing a wager on the outcome of a sporting event.

Alaska, Idaho, Maine, Minnesota, Montana, Nebraska, and Rhode Island have the minimum betting age of 18. Every other state has the legal betting age at 21. A few states, such as California and Oklahoma, have some areas within the state where 21 is the minimum age and other areas within the state where 18 is the minimum sports gambling age. States such as Hawaii, Idaho, Louisiana, Montana, Nevada, Washington, and a few others do not allow sports betting.

Over the past few years, many states have legalized sports gambling. The FanDuel sports betting app allowed users to gamble in New York for the first time in 2019. Maryland, South Dakota, and Louisiana all legalized sports betting in 2020. Connecticut and Florida have legalized online sports betting this year as well. Across the country, states are slowly legalizing online sports betting through various platforms. Sports betting can be done both online and in person. However, due to many casinos being closed during the pandemic, the doors for online betting were opened.

Forbes states, “A record 7.6 million people said they would bet online, up 63% from the previous year. The sports betting market in the U.S. generated \$1 billion in revenue in 2020, and that number is projected to grow sixfold by 2023. If betting becomes legalized in all 50 states, estimated revenues will exceed \$19 billion a year.”

Gambling apps make it way easier for people to gamble. If somebody wanted to gamble 10 years ago, they would have to deposit money and find the nearest casino. Nowadays, a person can log onto DraftKings and gamble with money from PayPal, American Express Cards, Visa Cards, and MasterCard. A huge issue with this is that people can more easily be tempted to bet large amounts of money. Because users aren't dealing with physical money, all they see when they gamble is text representing an amount of money. The easier availability of gambling is what led to such a significant increase in this activity. Online gambling also produces opportunities for illegal gambling for people under the age of 21 or 18. DraftKings requires a driver's license, proof of residence, or a tax form to prove one's age. Nevertheless, a teenager can easily use a form of identity belonging to an older person to gamble illegally, especially because of the idea of “hitting big.”

“Hitting big” in sports gambling is investing little money to win a plentiful amount. Since most people do not have tens of thousands of dollars to gamble,

many will put a low amount of money into low odds expecting a large payout.

Students at North High cannot gamble because the sports gambling age in New York is 21. Yet, some students like to place bets with each other. Sophomore Aiden Weinberger, shares, “I enjoy betting small amounts of money on the outcome of big sports events, like the Superbowl and NBA Finals”. Sophomore Zach Asstrof states, “My older brother and I often gamble some money on big soccer games. Recently, we bet on the Champions League Finals.” These are both forms of friendly wagers which are technically illegal. No one is going to get in trouble for betting \$10 on a Jets game with a friend. That brings up the question: why is online sports gambling illegal (under the age of 18 and in certain states) if people can just do friendly wagers? If you are over 21 and considering engaging in sports gambling, remember the odds are against you. The casino rigs the line to give themselves a slightly higher chance of winning money over you. For example, on an even bet (a bet where a person makes the amount they put in), the casino will payout 1.9 times the original amount. This slight decrease seems very small but, over a long period of time, it is how casinos made \$30 billion in 2020, the lowest amount since 2003 (usnews.com).

Online sports betting websites, specifically the two biggest sports gambling sites DraftKings and FanDuel, were a part

of that 30 billion. DraftKings was founded in 2012 by Jason Robins, Matthew Kalish, and Paul Liberman. The three friends worked out of Liberman's house. DraftKings started at the bottom and had little interest. After a few months, the DraftKings team partnered with the MLB to provide fun contests for people at baseball games. This gave DraftKings much-needed exposure. DraftKings received tons of outside investment, including \$300 million from Robert Kraft, the owner of the Patriots, and another \$250 million in a deal with ESPN. FanDuel was founded a few years before DraftKings in 2009. FanDuel was formed from another sports gambling website, HubDuel. The initial founders of FanDuel bought HubDuel and started with an additional \$1.2 million investment. FanDuel quickly became popular by giving away hundreds of thousands of dollars in free-to-enter tournaments. That was FanDuel's way of advertising. Eventually, FanDuel stopped with the free play, and millions of users were attracted to FanDuel tournaments, and currently, FanDuel is worth \$35 billion and is only growing. As more states legalize gambling, FanDuel will only increase in users and value.

If you ever decide to gamble, knowing that the casino always has a higher chance of making money is important to keep in mind. The next friendly wager you make on a game may be technically legal, but it is not wise in the long haul.



# Summing Up Spring Sports

GISELLE MAKANI '23  
STAFF WRITER

As the spring season of sports and the school year winds down, it is time to recall the most notable events of the season. Undoubtedly, the pandemic posed a threat to sports across the nation, as students could not leave their houses due to the mandated quarantine from the peak of the pandemic. Yet, with the spread of the virus slowing down and more safety precautions being taken, students were finally able to get back out there and start playing the sports that they love. COVID-19 precautions coupled with the students' drives to play sports and collaborate with their friends created an overall terrific season for everyone.

## Girls

varsity softball ended the season with an impressive record of 9-5. Alana Shapiro commented, "Although this season was shorter because of the pandemic, we are all grateful that it even happened and wouldn't have wanted it any other way. In just a short amount of time, we improved so much as a team."

Alana and her teammates are grateful to have the opportunity to play the sport that they love, despite the hardships COVID-19 had brought to the world. She said, "The COVID rules hardly affected us at all. The only difference this season had from others was wearing masks and that there were fewer spectators permitted to watch the games." A lot of students took many optimistic approaches to this season. All student-athletes were glad to get the chance to play with their friends and enjoy what the season has to offer.

Additionally, coaches have seen the effects of the pandemic on the sports and have said that despite the season bring-



Girls varsity softball pitcher, Iyana Kaiman, pitching against the varsity Hempstead team, while sophomore Danit Kashi plays catcher. Photo: Amanda Lavian

ing on many hardships, they were extremely proud of their players. Ms. Nastri, coach of girls varsity softball, concluded, "This season was unlike any I've previously coached. Missing an entire season last spring due to COVID, I was unsure of what this year would bring. I could not have been more excited and happy to be out on the field with this group of hardworking young ladies who were so eager to learn." Ms. Nastri was thankful for the experience she had coaching the varsity softball team. For her, along with other coaches, this season was unlike any other. She continued to say, "While the missed season created challenges for us, it turned into more of a strength than a weakness and drove the girls to cram two

seasons' worth of knowledge and experience into one. I could not be more proud of them and the energy and enthusiasm they brought to the field each day." Coach Nastri along with many other coaches agree that this season had a tough start because of the missed one last year, but with the cooperation and hard work of everyone, the season soon came together and the coaches were proud of their teams for persevering during this unique and challenging time. The morale of the students strengthened because of the missed season, and the students collectively put in great effort to make this one enjoyable despite the vast amount of issues presented.

The girls lacrosse team also enjoyed their season, despite not having the best record. Lacrosse player Sophie Frenkel recalled, "We are required to wear masks as tolerated, so once it becomes too difficult, we are allowed to take them off. When we play games against other schools, we have to start the game with our masks on, but we can take them off if we need to." The lenient restrictions for the athletes allow them to keep playing the sports and can take off their masks when there is proper distance between the athletes or if in rigorous circumstances.

This was the first spring season for both freshmen and sophomores in high school due to the start of the pandemic in mid-March of last year. Freshman badminton player Talia Sarraf said, "The Great Neck North girls badminton team is not known for being so successful. At the beginning of our season, half of our team could barely hit over the net. Coach Zak trained us to overcome and defeat." Talia verbally applauds the outstanding job coach Zak has done this season. Coach Zak has taught a group of inexperienced girls the basic fundamentals and strategies behind playing badminton, and it clearly has paid off. Sarraf continues, "We have redeemed our losses and have now made it into the playoffs. Overall, it was one of my favorite teams to be on." The girls have expressed their satisfaction with the dedication of their coaches and the teamwork ethic that has pushed them to make the playoffs, despite the difficult start to the season with the lost season last year.



Girls' lacrosse freshman, Emily Nogheri, receiving the ball in a game against the Roslyn girls' lacrosse team. Photo: Emily Nogheri

Overall, Great Neck North sports teams had enjoyable seasons and successfully managed the challenges COVID-19 brought forth.

# Reckless Fans in the NBA

NOAH BERKOWITZ '22  
COLUMNIST

"This can't be tolerated." This was Stephen A. Smith's response to the multitude of fan-player controversies that have occurred just two games into the NBA playoffs. The NBA has done a superb job of handling the COVID-19 pandemic by enabling fans to once again enter arenas and spectate games live, giving the sport newfound energy and excitement. However, fans have been abusing this privilege greatly, mocking and taunting opposing teams' players. Fans seem to have forgotten that these hard-working athletes are also human beings, not just sources of entertainment.

During the second game of the Washington Wizards' first-round playoff series against the Philadelphia 76ers, Russell Westbrook suffered an ankle injury. This happened while attempting a spin move around 76ers forward Furkan Korkmaz. As he was being aided off the court and into the locker room, an opposing fan dumped popcorn over the tunnel overpass onto his head. Westbrook, rightfully so, became irate about this action and was forcibly held back by the staff present at the game. Following the game, Westbrook told reporters that "this [was] getting out of hand." Westbrook claimed that he is "all for the fans enjoying the game and having fun... but there are certain things that cross the line."

Another similar incident occurred that same night in New York. In the second game of the Atlanta Hawks' playoff matchup with the New York Knicks at Madison Square Garden, a Knicks fan who was sitting courtside lowered his mask and spit on Hawks star Trae Young. Young was not too bothered about the incident, making jokes on Twitter telling the fan to keep his mask up and asking 50 Cent, who was sitting next to the inconsiderate fan if he was okay. Regardless, this behavior was inappropriate and was not tolerated by stadium officials.

Three Utah Jazz fans initiated a verbal interaction with Tee and Jamie Morant, the parents of Memphis Grizzlies point guard Ja Morant, during game two of the Jazz and Grizzlies playoff series. Reportedly, three fans made racist remarks towards Morant's parents and even made sexual remarks towards his mother. Retired NBA player Kendrick

Perkins brought up his own past experiences when discussing the incident with Ja Morant's parents, claiming that "it's disturbing" and that he "went through it during his career," when his wife would get into verbal altercations with fans due to racist comments. Ja Morant took to Twitter speaking out against the recent uprise in disrespect towards NBA players, posting the hashtag "#protectourplayers."

While each of these athletes in Westbrook, Young, and Morant decided to take the high road and not press charges, they were understandably upset about these situations over the lack of respect players have been receiving recently.

Regarding the actions of the Knicks fan towards Trae Young, the organization released a statement saying, "We investigated the matter and determined that this patron, who is not a season ticket holder, did indeed spit on Trae Young, and for that reason, he is now banned from The Garden indefinitely."

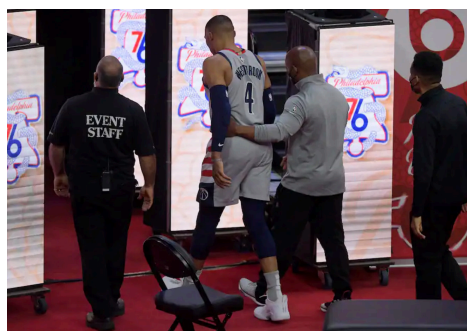
Similar to the Westbrook situation, the organization went on to apologize to Young and the team, stating that the person's behavior "was completely unacceptable and will not be tolerated in [their] venue." Following the remarks said towards Tee and Jamie Morant, the Utah Jazz released this statement: "The Utah Jazz have zero tolerance for offensive or disruptive behavior. An incident occurred last night involving a verbal altercation during Game 2. Arena security staff intervened, and the investigation resulted in the removal and banning of three Jazz fans indefinitely. We apologize to all who were impacted by this unfortunate incident and condemn unacceptable fan behavior."

Although each of these respective organizations has taken proper actions in permanently banning these fans, people have raised the question about the limited severity of the punishment. With today's technology, fans have access to the game from virtually anywhere, so being banned from a stadium for committing chargeable actions is not as severe of a consequence as one might think.

What many fans seem to forget is that basketball is a job for these athletes. They are putting in countless hours of hard work and relentless dedication to perfect their craft.



On May 27, Atlanta Hawks superstar Trae Young was spat on by a Knicks fan before inbounding the ball at Madison Square Garden. Photo: TMZ



After suffering an ankle injury, Washington Wizards superstar Russell Westbrook was walking off the court when a fan dumped popcorn on the point guard's head. Photo: Washington Post

officials. Three Utah Jazz fans initiated a verbal interaction with Tee and Jamie Morant, the parents of Memphis Grizzlies point guard Ja Morant, during game two of the Jazz and Grizzlies playoff series. Reportedly, three fans made racist remarks towards Morant's parents and even made sexual remarks towards his mother. Retired NBA player Kendrick



# HIGHLIGHTING GNN'S FINEST 2021

**LORIA KAYA '23**  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

In March 2020, when COVID-19 began to spread rapidly, most of the world went into lockdown. No one knew if school would start back up, let alone if or when they would play for school sports teams. However, with the 2020-21 school year, things were beginning to look better for student-

athletes. Athletic practices were slowly incorporated into high and district routines. No one believed the world would ever experience a sense of normalcy again; however, these senior student-athletes proved that they could thrive in any environment.

Senior Julia Zalta, who is attending the University of Delaware for volleyball in the fall, was a starter for all four years of high school. She is one of the best right-side hitters that Great Neck North has seen. Moreover, she was a pioneer in our volleyball program. Being one of the first girls who got serious about the sport, Zalta inspired younger generations to participate in club volleyball.

She explained, "In elementary school, I was involved in almost every after-school activity possible. My friend introduced me to volleyball, and I wanted to play more than just one unit in gym class. We joined a CYO team, and I became more interested in the sport and began playing competitively since I was 13." When COVID-19

hit, it was a huge setback for her club teammates and her. Like many other club sports, they began Zoom workouts and "Zoom volleyball." However, not being able to play with her best friends was extremely difficult for her. Though, she said, "Playing outside every day in my backyard and slowly getting back into it taught me so much." The recruiting process posed a challenge for many young athletes as rules and dates were constantly being changed. This past season brought along many disappointments: mask-wearing became mandatory in order to play, the club team went from having six to eight tournaments to only having one, and the season was cut down.

However, she said, "Getting to play at all, even with so much of the unknown, made it worth it." Zalta had a remarkably strong season. She was a top 25 player on Long Island, went all-county, and received a sportsmanship award. Once Zalta was in tenth grade, she began emailing schools to come to watch her play at a tournament and sending out video highlights. One of the schools that reached out to her coach on her behalf was the head coach of the University of Delaware volleyball team. She said, "I immediately became invested, as any athlete would, and researched the school a bit more. After visiting that summer, the gut feeling everyone talks about kicked in. It was the campus, the coaching staff, the scenery, the teammates, and the culture of being at UD that left my eyes set on it for the past few years."

Senior Alex Geula, who is attending Wesleyan in the fall, is part of the Great Neck North track and field team. Geula remarked, "I got into running through the pacer test in elementary school. I always loved competing and it showed me that I was able to last longer than other people when it came to running." He also gives credit to his soccer coach, Coach Berzins, who encouraged him to do winter track in order to stay in shape for

the soccer season. However, COVID-19 shut down Geula's junior year spring track season. He explained, "I still was able to train on my own and hit the times required by the D3 coaches. With the help of Coach Henriquez's workouts and some organized time trials I was able to become a lot faster over the course of COVID." Geula has chosen to go to Wesleyan "because it was the best school he got into." In addition, he was attracted to the school "because he was able to compete in cross country and track and field there."

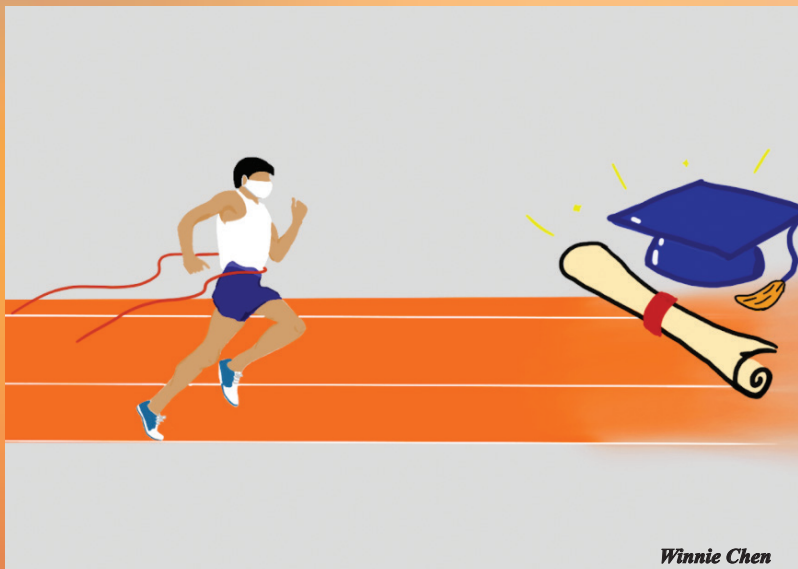
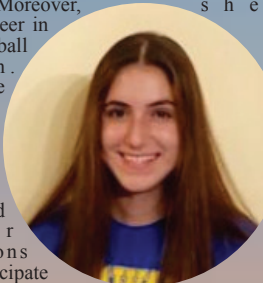
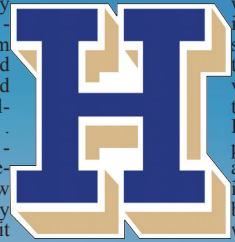
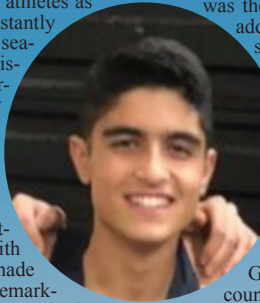
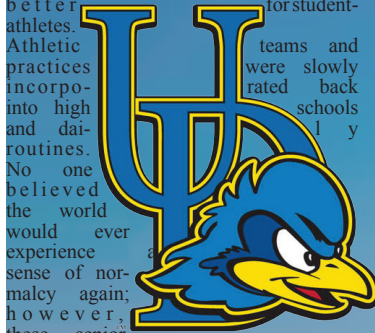
After he emailed many schools, Geula explained, "Wesleyan was the most receptive, and the coaches there were always helpful and looking to see my improvement." He had an exceptionally strong season. Geula was all-county for cross country in the 5k event and indoor track for the 4x800m and he won many races this year. His main event is the 800m.

Senior Scott Levy, who is attending Hamilton College in the fall, is also part of the track and field team. Levy began "playing soccer and always knew that [he] should do track just for the sake of staying in shape." So in his sophomore year, in the spring season, he joined spring track. He said, "When I joined, I absolutely fell in love with the sport. Running is really incredible when you are good at it. And it was a really good thing for me. So I decided to stick with it." Moreover, he credits his parents for his success too. He explained, "My parents are also crazy athletes and have always been on the fringes of exercising anyway." Like for many athletes, the pandemic took a toll on his sports career. He described, "When COVID-19 first came and closed school in March last year, everything kind of halted." Levy explained that, at first, none of his teammates or him were consecutively running. "But then [he] started meeting with [his] two other running friends: Daniel Sedgh and Alex Geula." Levy recalls running together every morning during the summer. He comes to

the conclusion that "losing the track season was kind of bad for the team because a lot of people just were not running at all, but for the individual, for at least us three, it was really, really incredible to have all of the extra time." In terms of committing to Hamilton College, he said, "It was almost kind of an accident." Levy described that he was on a college trip with his mom and they were passing by Hamilton college, on their way to visit Colgate university. While

they were driving, his mom suggested they visit Hamilton College. Levy explained, "I realized it was exactly what I was looking for, which were small, rural, liberal arts schools." He ended up doing some more research and ended up getting in. In the future, Scott is planning to continue pursuing track and cross country through college. He explained that he has been in contact with the track coach of the Hamilton College team. So, he is going to be on the Hamilton track and cross country team and "[he] absolutely wants to be running for the rest of [his] life."

Although this unprecedented year brought along many changes, as well as challenges, athletes continued to thrive. These athletes have shown colleges, as well as the Great Neck North community, that hard work pays off. Zalta, Geula, and Levy will continue to be role models for the younger generations of athletes in Great Neck North High. GNN is grateful for their contributions to the sports program and wishes them success in college!



Winnie Chen