

Farewell Irwin.. We'll Miss You...



Irwin Dining Hall's demolition process

AKI LI '25
NEWS ASSOCIATE
CHARLES POTTER '25
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The Tsai Field House was officially opened to the Lawrenceville community on September 22, 2022. Incidentally, the date also marked the final day of operation for the Jane W. Irwin Dining Center, commonly referred to as Irwin, which had been in operation since September 1972. Irwin was Lawrenceville's second centralized dining facility, constructed a decade after the Abbott Dining Room, before which meals were cooked and consumed in individual Houses' dining rooms. In 1972, the inefficiencies of maintaining almost 11 different kitchens convinced the School to create a common dining center for the Lower and Circle Houses. With \$3.5 million (nearly \$25 million in 2022 dollars) gifted by a then-anonymous donor, the Irwin Dining Center—then referred to as the "Dining Center"—was opened, centralizing Lawrenceville's dining services for the first time. The mystery donor, who was later revealed to be Trustee John Irwin '33, rededicated the building in 1987 as the Irwin Dining Center, after his late wife, Jane W. Irwin. The Irwin Dining Center is currently being taken down due to the complete relocation of its dining services to the Tsai Field House, marking

the end of an era in Lawrenceville's history.

Lawrenceville's planner, Frederick Montferrat, shared the stories behind the demolition of Irwin. Montferrat remarked that Irwin has "outlasted its shelf life" after almost 50 years of operation; alongside Joseph Tsai's '82 donation, the School was able to introduce a brand new facility replacing Irwin and other athletic facilities.

Irwin's demolition will be finished by the end of this Winter Term. According to Sasaki, the company that designed the Tsai Field House, the space will be flattened and repurposed as a plain connected to the Tsai entrance, with tentative plans to build a new basketball facility and outdoor "Harkness Courtyard." The hope for the Tsai Field House is to "reposition student life for the school by bringing together recreation, wellness, athletics, and dining into one interconnected environment," as it restores the old Lavino Field House and introduces new facilities such as an ice rink, basketball gym, swimming pool, and fitness center.

Although Tsai Commons provides a more modern feeling for students to enjoy their meals in, many students have strong opinions about Irwin's teardown. Due to the recent construction vehicles on campus, many students have been bothered by the

Tiffany Wen '23/*THE LAWRENCE* loud noises. Maggie Blundin '24, who lives in the Kirby House, has felt targeted by the din of construction, claiming that she "can't sleep in anymore" and can "no longer enjoy [her] free A period." Other students feel nostalgic about the loss of the building. Maddie McIntyre '25 said she will "miss the dining hall because it was a central part of [her II Form] experience."

Audrey-Lillie Bing '23 also reflected upon the importance of the dining hall during the peak of the Covid-19 pandemic; Irwin was her "home during the pandemic," since as a day student, "[she] was not able to visit other Houses." Sam Huh '23 also thought the teardown was "a shame" because its architecture was "prime for its day" and "the unique pod structure is now lost."

Science Teacher Daniel Concepcion '02 also said he is "sad to see the dining hall go" because he "spent a lot of time and made a lot of really great memories with [his friends] there," both as a student and faculty member. On the other hand, Concepcion mentioned he appreciates Tsai Commons' "novelty, spaciousness, and ability to walk around and see [his] previous students from different grades."

Eric LeGrand Speaks at Smeeting

HELENA CHEN '24
NICHOLE JIN '24
NEWS ASSOCIATES

Last Thursday, Lawrenceville hosted former Rutgers football player Eric LeGrand, who is now an author, entrepreneur, and motivational speaker. Having become paralyzed while making a tackle in a 2010 college football game, LeGrand spoke to students and faculty on some of his important takeaways and learning moments from both his football career and his experience with the injury.

LeGrand joined the Rutgers team in 2008, where he began playing primarily on special positions. In 2009, his football coach, Greg Schiano, moved him to a new position as a defensive lineman. During the remainder of his football career, LeGrand played both on special positions and as a defensive lineman, scoring numerous tackles and sacks per game and proving himself to be a crucial aspect of the team.

In a 2010 game against the United States Military Academy, however, LeGrand suffered a severe spinal cord injury after unintentionally driving his head into the shoulder of another player. After he was sent to the hospital, doctors determined that he was paralyzed from the neck down, and he was soon transferred to a rehabilitation institution.

Reflecting on LeGrand's speech, Abigail D'Souza '24 identified one story that stood out about a friend LeGrand made in the rehab center. After his friend passed away, LeGrand realized that said friend had "nobody, no family, no friends that came to visit," which helped him become more appreciative of "how many people he has in his support system." This story,

along with other experiences LeGrand shared from his journey towards recovery, left an impression on D'Souza: "It has inspired me to be more grateful for the things I have and it made me want to make the most of my life," she explained.

Even after suffering his spinal injury, LeGrand continued to virtually attend classes at Rutgers. Skyping into his lectures, LeGrand was determined to finish his education and accumulate the 120 credits he needed to graduate. "The fact that he was still able to graduate even though the cards weren't in his favor shows his resilience," D'Souza said, "that's something I want to have."

Aoife Kilfeather '24 also noted a story LeGrand told about a young girl with cancer who passed away. "She passed even though she would have wanted to live another day," Kilfeather recounted LeGrand saying in his speech. The girl's death reminded him that he had a "privilege that she didn't," the privilege of living to see another day, motivating him to "make the most" of his life despite his paralysis, Kilfeather noted.

Reflecting on her takeaways from the speech, Kilfeather said, "It motivates me to hear that nothing can truly stop you...despite the challenges he has faced, [LeGrand] is very successful and has left a great impact on those around him and more."

In an effort to find new ways to inspire people and create a positive impact, LeGrand opened his own coffee business in 2022 called LeGrand Coffee House. He has been focusing a lot on the business and aims to reach larger and newer audiences with his brand and story.



Speaker Eric LeGrand

Courtesy of Best of NJ

Faculty Profile On Rozek

Sydney Wang '25 profiles Stephen Rozek, new Director of Instrumental Studies, to find out more about his role at Lawrenceville.



How Should We Categorize Dance?

Sonia Ivancic '25 discusses the nuances of dance and how people should consider it, either as an art form, a sport, or even both.



Get Into a Top Notch College: Like It's Hard?

Ever wondered how Lawrenceville students get in to such prestigious institutions? Eric Frankel '23 gives an exclusive step by step guide to success.





THE LAWRENCE

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CORRECTIONS

Readers who notice errors should contact the Managing Editor at kpark23@lawrenceville.org.

Dog of the Week (Margo!) Juliette Vazquez '24



Editorial Who's Really at the Wheel?

A popular existentialist parable describes life as a road trip down a muddy path. As your car traverses down the road, it kicks up mud that flies every which way. You attempt to keep your course steady and hope that you don't hit any obstacles obstructing your path—so your success is based on blind faith and pure luck.

In this metaphor, the road ahead is the future: forever obscured by the mud splattered across your windshield. Your side windows are proxies for the present; while we never gain true understanding of events as they happen, we can observe and perceive them through the gaps in the mud splatter. Finally, our completely clear rear-view window is the past. Hindsight, for the existentialist, is indeed 20/20.

For those in the sphere of public policy, hindsight is also held in the highest regard. When speaking in this field, knowledge and understanding of past events is known as "institutional memory": that is, the collective body of information held within an organization owing to the past. Take Professor Dennis Grube, co-director of the Bennett Institute for Public Policy, for example, who states that institutional memory "act[s] as an information repository which enables the business of government to carry on across succeeding administrations." The significance of organizational hindsight is exemplified in the fact that only 10 percent of staff at the White House is replaced at the beginning of each new presidency. Rising above partisan squabbles, institutional memory has proven an essential aspect of any group's success, even amongst the most charged and divisive issues. In keeping traditions alive and reviving ones lost to time, nothing is more helpful than the insights of

those who have deep-rooted memories of events that transpired in the past.

Thus, of all the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, one might argue that the loss of institutional memory has most deeply crippled the Lawrenceville community. As it stands today, only 140 students—barely over half of the Class of 2023—have any recollection of a Lawrenceville unburdened by the effects of Covid. Amongst ourselves, seniors speak nostalgically of the vibrancy Lawrenceville seemed to possess at that time: the way the sun seemed to shine brighter, the way people seemed to smile wider, and the way the winter cold didn't bite quite so harshly. I don't think it's outlandish to claim that the pandemic had a net-negative effect on our campus. We always speak of returning Lawrenceville to its pre-Covid days and getting back to "normal," yet in truth, our student body quite simply does not know what "normal" even means.

Though the tense atmosphere of last year that climaxed with an unprecedented Town Hall meeting has subsided, I certainly cannot claim that Lawrenceville has completely recovered from its existential angst. As Student Council President, I witness and am conscious every day of the general discontent of our student body. We are past the point of crafting angry letters accusing Lawrenceville of robbing us of a proper high school experience, and I believe we've replaced this anger with an even more dangerous feeling: apathy. Left without the foundation of institutional memories from which to draw inspiration, our community has grown apathetic to lacking a definitive campus culture.

In the absence of the institu-

tional memory that once inspired our efforts, I think it's time that we shed off some of the relics of the past we've been holding on to for the sake of tradition. If weekly School Meeting leaves our community bored and unfulfilled, then perhaps it's time we shift to holding the event biweekly, monthly, or even once a term. If the experiences of students in the Crescent and Circle are so disparate, maybe it's time that Lawrenceville takes the first revolutionary step in creating gender-neutral dorms on campus. If the job of Student Council President is too much for one V Former, it could be prudent to take a page out of Hill's book and split the role between two students. Of course, some of these things are easier said than done, but this moment of uncertainty provides us with the perfect opportunity for trial and error through reinvention.

Today, we members of the Lawrenceville community are passengers in a car traveling down a muddy road. Our rear-view mirror has been obstructed by the pandemic in such a way that we can't begin to fathom the path we've traveled. Through little gaps in the mud on our side windows, we see nothing but grey apathy: yet another boring School Meeting, another monotonous week, or another mass exodus from campus on Saturday night. Neither of these perspectives seems very promising. The only other option, then, is to try to get rid of the mud obscuring the way forward. If we can no longer look into the past, and the present seems rather bleak, we can do little more than work towards crafting a better future.

- APB

Closing the Chapter on Unequal Pay

On Dismantling the Pay Barrier for Latinas

MIRANDA DE OLDEN '26

In 2016, Olympic Soccer Gold Medalist and FIFA Women's World Cup Champion Carli Lloyd said, "When I joined four teammates in filing a wage-discrimination complaint against U.S. Soccer late last month, it had nothing to do with how much I love to play for my country. It had everything to do with what's right and what's fair with upholding a fundamental American concept: Equal pay for equal play."

Indeed, equal pay is central to gender equality. And most Americans agree. A 2020 Pew Research Survey shows that an overwhelming majority of Americans agree that women should have equal rights with men. Almost half of those who said it's important for women to have equal rights with men volunteered equal pay as a specific example of what a society with gender equality would look like.

But current gender pay disparities show that we are very far from being an equitable society: our economy is not working equally for all women. On average, women make only 82 cents for every dollar men make. The wage gap widens even more for working women of color, who are paid systematically less: on average, Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander women make only 80 cents; Black women make only 64 cents; and, at the bottom of the pay scale, Latinas make 54 cents for every dollar that White non-Hispanic men make.

Yet while we were stressing over Turkey

Term coursework, studying for tests, and definitely not getting enough sleep, Latina Equal Pay Day took place on December 8. This day marked how far into the year average Latinas must work to catch up to the pay average that non-Hispanic White men received in 2021.

Even within the American Latina community itself, the wage gap varies widely. According to the National Women's Law Center, Argentinian and Spanish women make 82 cents for every dollar paid to White, non-Hispanic men. In sharp contrast, Salvadoran women make 49 cents, Guatemalan women make 47 cents, and Honduran women make 44 cents.

More concerning, Latinas are disproportionately overrepresented in jobs within the service, care, and domestic work sectors, which, in turn, are historically undervalued and underpaid. Latinas are also underrepresented in corporate leadership roles. According to McKinsey's 2022 Women in the Workplace Report, Latinas only make 2 percent of corporate vice presidents and 4 percent

of managers. To make things worse, the Covid-19 pandemic worsened economic inequality for Latinas. During the pandemic, the unemployment rate for Latinas ages 20 and older reached 20 percent.

Such wage inequities exacerbate sexist and ra-

lated to race, ethnicity, sex, and immigration status, all of which contribute to widening the pay gap. Removing the barriers to the equal participation of Latinas would therefore require longer-term economic, social, and cultural changes as well as immigration reform. In the shorter term, however, because Latinas are significantly overrepresented in low-paying jobs, raising the federal minimum wage would be a first step in providing economic security and narrowing the pay gap for Latinas.

In theory, the Equal Pay Act of 1963 bans pay discrimination based on sex, banning employers from paying women lower wages than men for equal work on jobs requiring the same level of skill and responsibility. Since it was passed, 42 states have added equal pay laws to their own books. Yet over the years, ambiguities in federal law and court rulings have weakened the Equal Pay Act of 1963. The Raise the Wage Act of 2021, introduced both in the House (H.R. 603) and Senate (S.53), would update the Equal Pay Act of 1963.

However, the Raise the Wage Act of 2021 would gradually raise the federal minimum wage to \$15 per hour by 2025. Currently, the federal minimum wage is

\$7.25 per hour and has not changed nationally since 2009; furthermore, the minimum wage varies across states. Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, South Carolina, and Tennessee have not adopted a state minimum wage, while Georgia and Wyoming have a minimum wage below the federal minimum wage.

Raising the federal minimum wage to \$15 per hour would be good public policy because it would help narrow the gender and racial/ethnic pay gaps and reduce the number of people living in poverty. Of the workers who would see a raise, 59 percent are women, 28 percent are women with children, and 23 percent are Black women or Latinas. A higher minimum wage would also boost the income of low-wage workers with jobs, which would lift families' income above the poverty line and reduce the number of people living in poverty.

Because the Raise the Wage Act of 2021 has been introduced in both the House and Senate, it is most important that members of Congress co-sponsor the bill. Letting your local Senators and Representatives know that you support this bill can increase the odds of having it passed.

So, if you get some free time between homework and tests, please voice your opinion in support of women, including Latinas, by writing or calling your member of Congress and urging them to co-sponsor the bill. Encourage those around you to do some research on wage disparities and move into action. You, too, can make a difference!



Sonia Singhal '24/THE LAWRENCE

Policy and Pretense

Party's Over, Folks: McCarthy and the Fragmented GOP

ALINA DIAZ FERREIRA '25

As voting for the new Speaker of the House progressed, House Republicans found themselves in turmoil. Understanding this political chaos requires that we return to November 8, the 2022 midterm election. The past year has been highly politically charged, with major events such as the Russo-Ukrainian War, economic distress, Florida's Parental Rights in Education Bill (dubbed "Don't Say Gay" bill), and the Dobbs Supreme Court case that overturned *Roe v. Wade*. Although these factors played into the Republican Party's hands, eliciting projections of a "red wave" or "tsunami," the midterms showed only a red ripple, with the GOP barely winning a majority in the House of Representatives. Due to the anticlimactic midterm results, Kevin McCarthy's faith in being voted Speaker of the House quickly evaporated, eliciting a struggle for the position as key members of the Freedom Caucus, a group of conservative House Republicans, staunchly refused to cast a ballot in his favor.

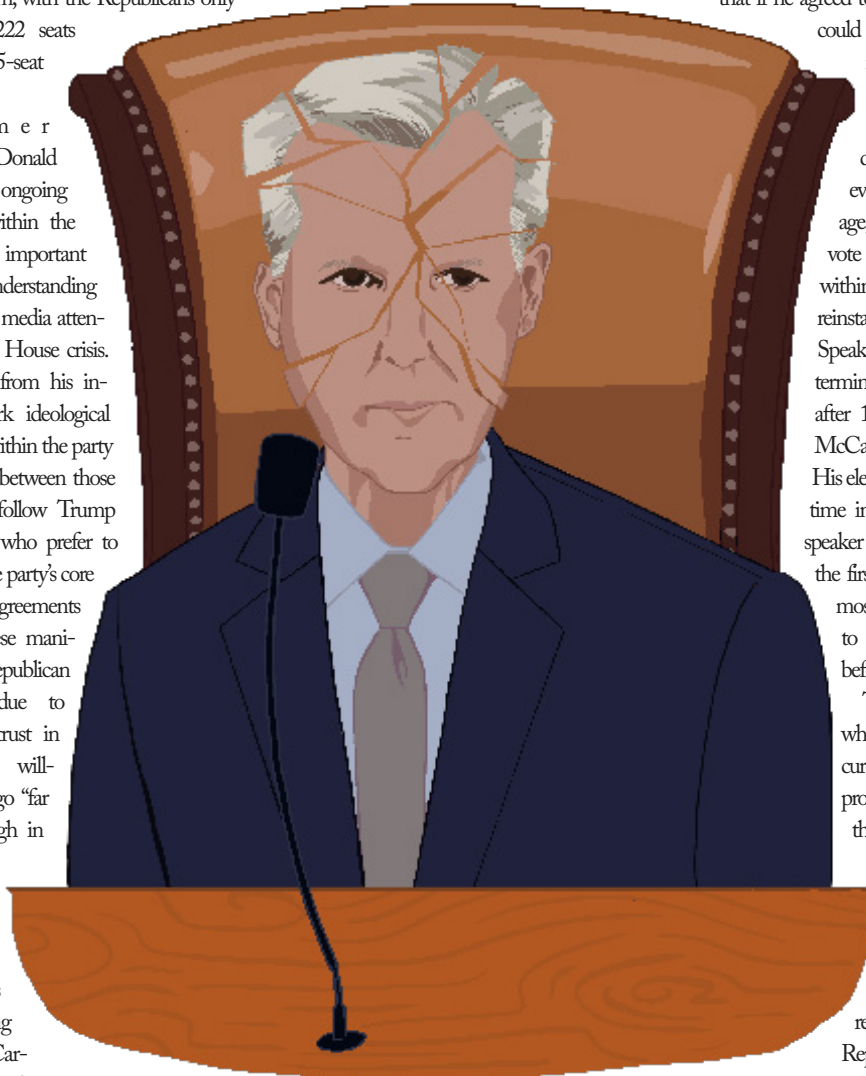
Failing to nominate competent candidates who could appeal to their electorate, the Republicans did not receive the votes they expected. Leading up to the elections, many major pollsters showed that Americans, overall, were more in favor of the Republican Party following dissatisfaction with the Biden administration. Although circumstances were optimal for the Republicans to seize control of Congress, they disappointedly squandered their opportunity to deliver in areas where Democrats have fallen short. As a result, the red wave McCarthy was so desperately relying on to propel him

to Speaker of the House was nothing more than a dream, with the Republicans only procuring 222 seats in the 435-seat House.

Former President Donald Trump's ongoing influence within the GOP is an important piece in understanding the massive media attention on the House crisis. Stemming from his influence, stark ideological disparities within the party have arisen between those who only follow Trump and others who prefer to act upon the party's core values. Disagreements such as these manifested in Republican holdouts, due to a lack of trust in McCarthy's willingness to go "far right" enough in passing and banning legislation.

Following his embarrassing defeat, McCarthy was forced to meet demands from the "Never McCarthy" faction to negotiate his election. From this camp, 20 members from the House Freedom Caucus expressed a desire to maximize

the accountability in House leadership to



Mimie Pinpakornkul '25 / THE LAWRENCE

restore trust in federal establishments. The night before the first speaker vote, far-right Republican representatives presented Mc-

Carthy with a list of requests, promising him that if he agreed to their conditions, he could secure all 218 votes necessary to win the speakership. Although McCarthy did not concede to everything in the package, he agreed to hold a vote to place term limits within Congress and to reinstate a rule that former Speaker Nancy Pelosi had terminated in 2019. Thus, after 15 rounds of voting, McCarthy became speaker. His election marked the first time in 100 years that the speaker was not elected after the first vote, as well as the most ballots it has taken to elect someone since before the Civil War.

The difficulty with which McCarthy secured his speaker seat provides insight into the state of American politics. Whilst the Republicans bickered, House Democrats stayed on the sidelines, reportedly jeering at Republicans during sessions. Had the Democratic Party prioritized the good of the American people, they would have negotiated and compromised, aiding the disordered GOP in governing the country for the next two

years. However, politics have descended into a highly individualized profession in which money and power are primary drivers, and the needs of actual citizens are an afterthought. Politicians' ambitions reflect their party's needs, rather than the needs of the country. Politics is no longer a profession aimed at improving our society—it is a desperate race for power.

Nevertheless, despite this embarrassing display of modern-day US politics on the GOP front, it is essential to recognize that this is not a merely Republican phenomenon—parties rarely present a unified front. Not too long ago, Democratic West Virginia Senator Joe Manchin voted to pass the Inflation Reduction Act, a bill that drew bipartisan opposition. Similarly, particularly progressive Democrats such as Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and Ilhan Omar have consistently pushed controversial proposals opposed by moderate Democrats, such as the total cancellation of student loans.

Our political system is in disarray; the recent House chaos and Republican Party's national display of foolishness revealing a larger problem of inter-party opposition. Selfish motivations and a loss of sincere purpose have caused political parties' and establishments' progressing inability to successfully govern the country and cater to their electorate. Therefore, regardless of party divides, both Republicans and Democrats must regain their poise and present a unified front to work as a functional unit, passing and stopping bills in the interest of the American people, working as a representative democracy does.

George Santos? George Sand Toes? George Scan Prose? Who Knows.

SATHVIK SAMANT '26
OPINIONS ASSOCIATE

If George Santos's congressional story was a comedy show, it would be hilarious. A fraudster felon who embellishes his accolades and fabricates his background to get elected to Congress—it sounds so ridiculous that it simply seems impossible. Yet it's true. Unfortunately, George Santos isn't a comedic bit or a silly character created to poke fun at our political system. He's a fraudster who now holds legitimate power: two things that don't mix well together. His election sets a dangerous precedent for the future of the American government—that liars can also be winners.

His election sets a dangerous precedent for the future of the American government—that liars can also be winners.

Santos, a Republican candidate in a blue stronghold state, narrowly defeated his opponent Robert Zimmerman to win the Third District of New York. His campaign was based on a series of carefully fabricated lies crafted to project him as a successful, educated businessman. He claimed to be a graduate of Baruch College—of which he is not. He claimed to hold positions at Citigroup and Goldman Sachs—he later admitted he hadn't. He claimed to own a port-

folio of thirteen properties—another lie. Not only did Santos lie about his background, but he also lied about his identity. He made misleading statements about his Jewish ancestry, later claiming to have said he was "Jew-ish." Moreover, Brazilian records reveal he has stolen a checkbook, and used it to defraud vendors and make fraudulent purchases. What's worse than a fraudster is a felon in hiding—and Santos carefully fabricated his past in order to win over voters.

In a blue district in a blue state, Santos beat the odds, but he won his seat by de-



Gloria Yu '26 / THE LAWRENCE

ceiving constituents. Although his background was called into question during the race, he still won, deceiving innocent voters. Santos, carefully curating his narrative, fabricated his

past in hopes of becoming a more appealing candidate. His election was based on a false reality—an image he crafted to defraud the public. Now in office, Santos has the power to make real decisions and enact real legislation. If a fraudster and felon can be elected into

office, can't anyone? The essence of our democracy is being corrupted by surface-level ambitions for power. Santos's record is false. His identity: unclear. As a member of Congress, he has the power to do good; instead, he uses his platform to deceive more and more people.

Santos's election reveals the reality of American politics: lies and falsehoods have become commonplace. Politicians are taking desperate measures, lying about their education, background, and platform just to snag a position. Election cycles have become a race to win at all costs, rather than an evaluation of what our country needs and who can deliver it. The decisions that our representatives make affect all of us. Our candidates should be driven by a passion to enact change and carry out a vision for a better America. Our representatives cannot be self-serving. Our system of governance requires capable, passionate Americans who believe in justice and democracy—not felons who believe in self-preservation and lies. Santos's election is a testament to the distortion of American values. What should we look for in a leader? Confidence, yes. Smarts, sure. Yet external appearance can only take us so far; does seeming

leader-like help representatives pass legislature? Does it help them weigh public opinion? No; when we consider candidates, we must look beyond their oratory skills or their stage presence. It is true substance that makes a qualified candidate.

Our system of governance requires capable, passionate Americans who believe in justice and democracy—not felons who believe in self-preservation and lies.

As more George Santos slowly pop up across the country, voters must evaluate what really matters to them: their political ideology or their integrity. Now more than ever, there is a need for voters to come to the ballot box prepared, having done research beforehand. We play a hand in determining the outcome of our country—it's essential that they make the choice that's best for our country. Whether Republican or Democrat, voters have a responsibility to conduct thorough research and make an informed vote. Voting is more than checking off a box, or filling out a form. Every vote plays a part in shaping our nation's future. To avoid another George Santos, voters must assume their civic responsibility and vote their way to a better future.

Faculty Profile: Rozek Takes the Stage

SYDNEY WANG '25

This year, Lawrenceville welcomed Stephen Rozek as its new Director of Instrumental Studies. Along from working in the music department, Rozek has also served on the duty team in the Cleve House and directs the 8 O'Clock Jazz Combo and Jazz Mini Big Band. When he is not teaching in the Clark Music Center or on duty in the Cleve House, Rozek is most likely "spending time with [his] wife and four children, reading, practic-

ing [the] saxophone, and listening to music."

Rozek has had a long history of working with music. When he was 11 years old, he heard a recording of jazz saxophonist Charlie Parker and immediately "fell in love with the sound of the saxophone and what the instrument was capable of doing." He was drawn in and has not quit playing the saxophone since. In fact, growing up, he spent eight years playing in the Heritage of America band, an ensemble in the United States Air Force, as he wanted to serve his coun-

try with his talents and give back to the veterans. "It was all about service," Rozek explained.

Rozek began his teaching career later. He taught at Lawrenceville from 2005 to 2010, then became the Chair of Fine Arts at the Culver Academies in Indiana. Because Rozek truly enjoyed his teaching career at Lawrenceville many years ago, he seized the opportunity to return when he heard there was an open position. He was excited by the opportunity to return to the East Coast, where he attended graduate



Stephen Rozek

Marco Pellegrini '26/THE LAWRENCE



Rozek at the Winter Jazz Concert

Courtesy of The Lawrenceville School

school; more importantly, he was drawn to Lawrenceville's culture. Now, reflecting on his time at Lawrenceville so far, Rozek deems his experience "rewarding." He feels fortunate that he has been able to enjoy encountering and teaching "a great bunch of students" in all of his classes, and that his fellow passionate educators have each been supportive and "inspiring."

Rozek currently teaches Explorations of Music, Foundations of Music, Jazz Improvisation and Honors Music Theory. When asked if he has a favorite course to teach, Rozek stated that as long as all his students are

"engaged and fearless" in his classes, any course he teaches is his favorite.

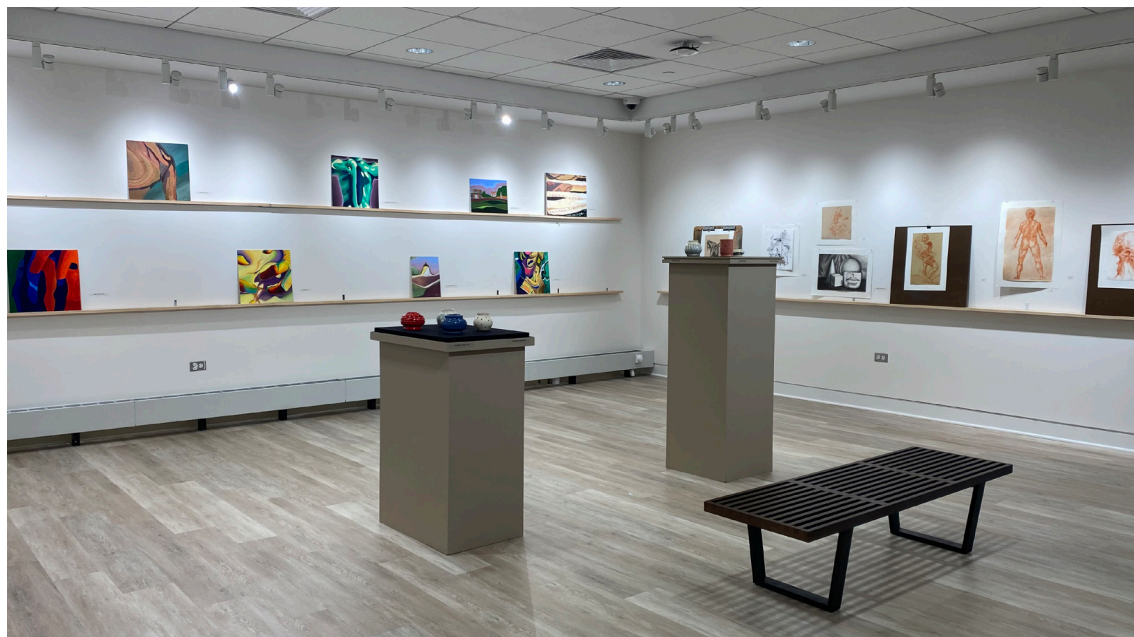
Reflecting on his musical career, Rozek said, "Music has given me so much over the years—I will forever be in debt." He wants to share his passion for music with others and increase his students' "understanding of the art form" in a way similar to how his own mentors have furthered his music career. Rozek firmly believes that through comprehending the different aspects of music, students will learn both to empathize and to appreciate more often the beauty in the world.

Peek into the Big Red Gala: The Hutchins Gallery

HARINI VENKATESH '25
ARTS ASSOCIATE

This Friday, January 15, marks a seminal moment for the visual arts community at Lawrenceville. For the first time since it was closed for reconstruction, the Hutchins Galleries will hold the Student Arts Showcase, featuring an eclectic array of art pieces across classes and Forms.

This showcase provides a great way for the broader Lawrenceville community to appreciate and to engage with student-created artwork, and for student artists, this showcase is a great opportunity to have one's work featured in a larger space. Although the Hutchins Galleries' permanent collection is composed of works by legendary artists like Pablo Picasso and Keith Haring, to see our fellow Lawrentians' art share the stage with them is equally as impressive. In addition, students not cur-



Hutchins Gallery

Susan Lee '23/THE LAWRENCE

rently enrolled in an art class are encouraged to submit work for display.

The gallery will be divided into two floors; the first floor will be dedicated solely to the works of Rania Shah '23 and Stephanie Xu '23, while the second floor will display miscellaneous artwork of various mediums such as painting,

drawing, sketching, and ceramics from other students. In anticipation of the showcase, Xu says she is "excited to witness the talents of [her] peers," especially considering that student artwork is not commonly featured in areas other than classrooms. Her collection in the gallery comes from the Advanced

Studio class she took her IV Form year, and it circles key themes of identity and self. On the second floor, one piece from every Fall Term art class will be featured, alongside some other works created by students independently. The various artwork on the second floor are composed of an assortment of themes, colors, and

tones, presenting a larger statement on the diverse personalities found in the Lawrenceville community.

Although the gallery has been open since last December, this year, for the first time, the Student Showcase will be included as a part of the Big Red Gala, which also involves other arts-centered activities like an auction hosted by Muse, Lawrenceville's visual arts club, and a House fashion show. The Big Red Gala begins in the gallery, then transitions to Muse's silent auction, where student-made auction items will be sold, with all proceeds donated to charity. The night will end with Lawrenceville's annual Fashion Show, which will showcase student-created and designed clothing. All together, the Big Red Gala will be an incredible night to celebrate the visual arts community at Lawrenceville and beyond.

How Should We Categorize Dance?

SONIA IVANCIC '25
ARTS ASSOCIATE

"Is dance really a sport?" is an age-old question that many dancers get asked. Most non-dancers believe dance falls under the category of arts more so than sports. While there are definitely a few reasons why dance leans towards the arts and is therefore excluded from the bracket of sports, I believe dance shares exactly as much in common with other sports as it does with forms of art.

To start, we need to understand what a sport is. The dictionary defines a sport as "an activity involving physical exertion and skill in which an individual or team competes against another or others for entertainment." Breaking down this definition, sports have five major parts. The first is the act of accomplishing a goal, which usually involves winning a competition or game. The second major part of sports is accomplishing these goals through athletes' skills and techniques. Third is collaboration, as most of the time, the athletes accomplish this goal by working collaboratively as a team. Fourth, sports always involve physicality or exercise. Lastly, sports are a form of entertainment for their viewers.

Before comparing dance with these five aspects of sports, we must establish that dance has two different goals: competition and performance. Competitive dance lines up exactly with the five components of sports outlined above. Unlike performative dance, the goal of competitive dance is to win, just like that of any other typical sports match. Although the

existences of both solo sports and dance numbers seem to contradict dances' being a sport, both activities usually focus on the importance of working together. In either case, each group member must put in their best effort, work on the same page as the others, use their skills for the group's advantage, and act with the intent of success for the entire team. Third, dance is extremely physical. Dancers must have precise control over each muscle in their body, from their necks and heads to their toes, as well as muscular strength, especially in the legs, core, and arms. Flexibility is often a large component as well. Serious dancers put in the same amount of commitment and practice as other serious athletes do, from the diligent perfection of their technique to lengthy rehearsals. So, stamina and cardiovascular endurance are key to both dance and all other sports. Entertainment, though more of a focus on performative dances, is still present in competitive dances, because competitive dance must entertain a group of judges responsible for scoring performances. Lastly, the techniques that dancers portray help them accomplish the goal of winning the competition. This is the same in sports, where players with more refined skills are more likely to win a game.

From this analysis, dance aligns with the definition of a sport. In what ways is it then classified as an art form? The answer lies more so in performative dance. Between these two mediums, the goal of the dancer changes. Instead of striving for first place, the aim shifts to shaping the viewing experience of

the audience members. Dance becomes a form of entertainment as the dancers try to express a theme through their movements. This exactly fits the purpose of art: to portray a message creatively.

Looking through this lens, even visual arts, music, and theater share many aspects with sports. Working in a team, using skills and techniques, focusing on entertainment, and winning a competition all match these other art forms. But what they all mostly lack—which dance has—is the element of physical exercise. The physical work needed is what propels dance toward the definition of a sport. However, the creativity and expression of dance also lean dance toward arts. In such a way, dance lands in a gray area, this muddled space between sports and arts. Dance shares all aspects but one with sports (creativity), and all but one with arts (exercise).

The question of whether dance is a sport is still left unanswered because of how it shares just as many commonalities with sports as it does with arts. Therefore, dance must be taken just as seriously as "typical" athletics in the world of sports. I believe the way the media frames dance is what influenced the popular belief that dance is not an actual sport. When we turn on the TV, soccer, football, tennis, and golf are what usually appears on screen. This idea of what sports is, derived since childhood, shapes our concrete, innate understanding of sports as we age. We should consciously change this perception, because, we dancers can



Sonia Ivancic '25 dancing

Courtesy of Sonia Ivancic '25

often feel as though our lifetime's hard work, which matches the commitment of athletes, has less worth than athletics. The low recognition dancers receive unevenly matches the intense

dedication we put into our sport. As a society, we already think of dance as an art. Now, we must begin to think of it as a sport, just as much as it is a form of expression.

"False Confidence": A Reflection of Reality?

ANGEL XIN '26

I discovered the song "False Confidence" by Noah Kahan during Thanksgiving break thanks to Spotify's recommendations. At the very beginning, this song was a part of my workout playlist due to its catchy lyrics and unpredictable procession of rhythm, but as I kept on playing it, I began to see the words form a story. In fact, I felt that the personal battles that Kahan conveyed in his lyrics strongly resonated with those of teenagers today.

Kahan starts off with the line, "Don't take yourself so seriously / Look at you all dressed up for someone you never see," which is continually repeated later in the song. This line rings especially true for us "screenagers," a term used to describe teenagers with intense addictions to their electronic devices. With increased use of technology comes dependence on social media,



"False Confidence" Album Cover

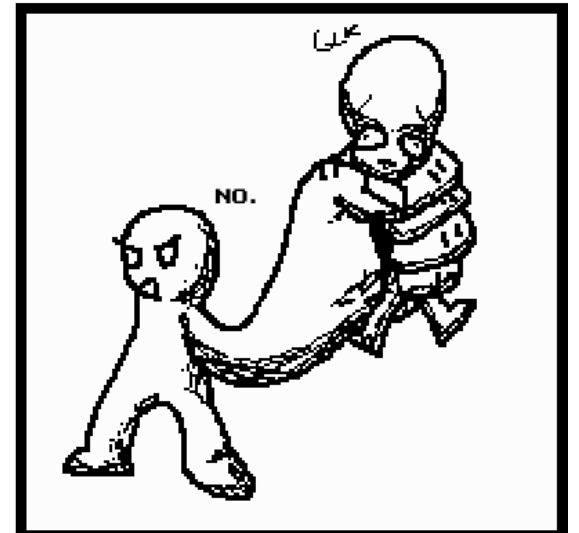
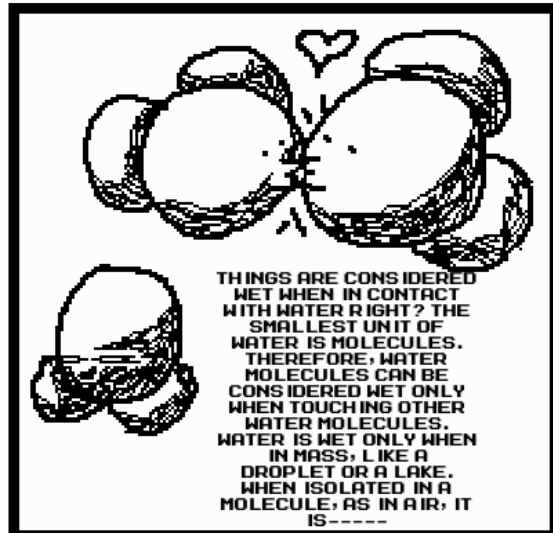
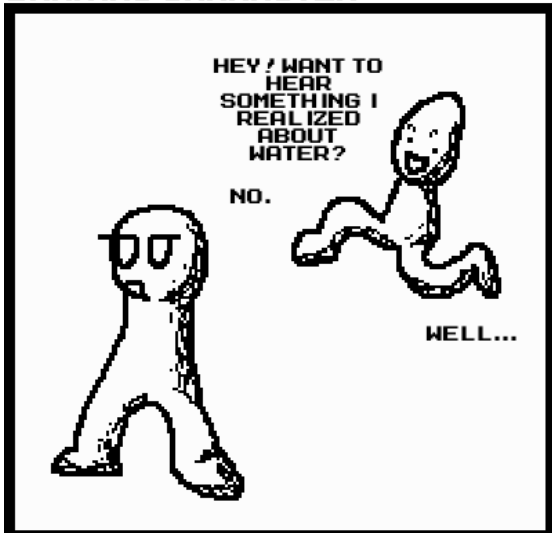
Courtesy of Spotify

which has numerous other side effects: students begin to normalize the highly filtered lives of social media influencers, and by reposting similar aesthetic content, they themselves become the perpetrators of a culture of faking one's life. By dressing up for likes and comments, we lose an essential part of who we are. The singer soon picks up the pace in the second stanza of the song, with "And I wonder why I tear myself down," creating a steep contrast with the following line, "Surrender yourself." I interpret the tearing down of oneself as the surrendering of personal identity, the way we give up who we are to fit in. Hearing this line, I immediately thought of Lawrenceville and the sadness it would bring me if the people around me lost their spark and distinct identity. However, I also have faith in my peers' ability to uphold who they are, given the diversity and strong support systems on campus. The song then returns to a slow rhythm

in the next stanza, but then builds up the tension again after once again repeating the line, "Surrender yourself." I personally interpret the ever-changing pace and unpredictability of the piece as the mood fluctuations and inconsistent identities of teens today. Yet, despite these irregularities, the hope of "[waking] up young again" was constant. This sentiment is especially true for young artists, who have yet to find their unique voice and often rely on attaching their music to popular online trends.

After munching on the lyrics for a while, I felt as if I rediscovered something new. This song has become more than a combination of pitches that forces me to sweat; rather, I see it as an epitome of teenage struggles. In the piece, Kahan recounts the obstacles that he faced as an artist concerning age, self-doubt, and authenticity, while encouraging his audience to stay true to themselves.

BRANIAC CHARACTER



Zachary Kalafer '24 / THE LAWRENCE

Meet Lawrenceville's Most Outdoorsy Guy: A Profile on John Hughes

RILEY MCKIBBEN '25

Do you ever wonder who advises the Ropes Course Instructors, or who manages the Harkness Travel Programs? What about who oversees Lawrenceville's School Camp (or "SCAMP") every summer? One faculty member wears all of these hats...the man, the myth, the legend: John Hughes. As Lawrenceville's Director of Experiential Education Hughes has been able to share his love for "the profound way that people [can] transform and learn in unpredictable ways." In each of his encounters with education outside of our traditional classroom, Hughes has made new and exciting discoveries about himself and others.

Hughes first attended a sleepaway camp when he was eight years old, beginning his relationship with experiential education. When he was 15, he enrolled in a two-week exchange program in France. At 17, he spent the summer in China with no understanding of the language. Thus, after playing football and studying international relations in college, Hughes considered enlisting in the military or the state department. Unfortunately, an injury ended his collegiate athletic career, and he was forced to redirect his compass to focus on different goals. He found himself working as a camp counselor that summer in Poland, Maine on a ropes course. Hughes was immediately captivated by the art of facilitation—gently guiding a group's experiential education—as he recalls his "peak experience, that sweet spot of challenge and skills [that keeps] you in your learning zone the whole time." Since then, Hughes has cultivated a career that focuses on this passion.

As the Director of the Ropes Course, Hughes exercises his experiential education skills through both low ropes activities and the three climbing structures alike. When asked about his favorite activity on "The Josh," as the Joshua L. Mi-

ner Ropes Course is affectionately called, he replied, "I can't pick one answer!" Hughes explained that his first highlight of each year is developing a unique skill set for the Ropes Course Instructors (RCIs) during training week. He described the week as "so intense and exhausting," but added that "seeing the reward in skill development, group dynamics and facilitation makes the process such a joy to be a part of." His second favorite piece of pioneering the Ropes Course Team is watching the RCIs use their facilitation preparation during II Form Orientation and House Sundays. Hughes finds more substance in the personal development and group dynamic work on The Josh than the physical component of climbing because "people are encouraged to push their boundaries, whatever that looks like for them."

Additionally, as a leader of the Harkness Travel program at Lawrenceville, Hughes spends a great amount of time scouting out new trips, as well as leading active ones. His travels include the Grand Canyon, Iceland, Austria, Nepal, Tanzania, Hawaii, and soon, Patagonia. When asked of his favorite experience so far, Hughes answered, "the next one" with a laugh. "My mindset for trips is [that] I've been to places before. I've never been to these places with the groups I'm with...I get to re-experience a place for the first time through my students...it's like asking which one of your children is your favorite." According to Hughes, the standard process to prepare and execute a Harkness Travel trip can take over a year. With 12 or 13 active groups per year, faculty is offered a showcase in March to present their ideas and intentions for a potential trip. From there, trip decisions come down to logistics, safety and health risks and as much global representation as possible. Hughes also mentioned that "some trips are kind of in a rotation." If a student has their heart

set on a hiking trip based in biochemical sciences in a certain place, it's likely that "something equally as exciting would be offered the next year in a different location."

Hughes also shows a great affinity for SCAMP. He was excited upon hearing that running SCAMP was a part of his job at Lawrenceville, as he attended camp when he was younger and truly resonated with the program. A camper's typical day at SCAMP includes a 7:15 AM wake-up time, an 8:00 AM breakfast, and a cabin and camp-wide cleanup before a rotation of activities such as performing arts, nature lessons, swimming practice, or practicing fundamentals of sports like basketball or soccer. After a 12:30 PM lunch, each day has a different pre-planned "fun activity," followed by a free swim and dinner. An all-camp evening activity follows afterward, as does an all-too-soon 8:30 PM bedtime and 9:30 PM lights-out rule. The point of this schedule is to maintain structure and fun, while warding off a camper's inclination to be idle. Hughes's favorite parts about SCAMP are the two bookend campfires, which occur on the first and last nights. He described how on the first night, campers share hope for their summer and add the stick to the fire, but on the last night, they put a stick in the fire and share something that they are thankful for. With a glimmer in his eyes, Hughes mentioned that they "wait for everybody to say something, especially for those little ones who are too shy to speak up. By the last night, you see how transformed the campers are. Lots of tears are shed on the last night, and most of the answers don't have to do with 'I learned how to swim,' but rather, 'I made amazing friends and I am so happy for my experience here.'"

Finally, Hughes shared a story from his two-week trip to Iceland in June of 2017, which he believes perfectly represents the power of experiential education. On the last



John Hughes

Fifi Xu '24/THE LAWRENCE

five days of the trip, the group was set to trek through the Laugavegur hiking path, but upon waking up on the first day, there was a blinding fog with hail, rain, and sleet, making hiking seemingly impossible. Regardless, the group had to reach the next hut by the end of the day to continue the trip as scheduled. With the proper gear and as positive of an attitude as could be mustered, Hughes led his students 20 minutes into the storm. "When I felt my underwear start to get wet," he said with a chuckle, "and the saturation of water through my Gore-Tex Pro-everything on, I told myself I would be soaked to the bone all day. This wasn't going to be comfortable." Soon, he gathered everyone together, looking out at his students' scared eyes, and said, "Get used to being uncomfortable." Hughes was right,

and the entire group was drenched the entire rest of the day, walking straight through rivers, unafraid of adding more water to their weight. Once they arrived at their cabin, they hung up all their clothes and enjoyed a much-deserved and fantastic meal, while acknowledging that if they could get through this, they could get through anything. When the students on the trip returned to school the next year, one girl stood up at school meeting to tell the story. She recalled that she now used the mantra that Hughes used to fuel her internal fire in Iceland to propel her towards her V Form year successes. "To this day," Hughes closed his story, "that was one of the most profound challenges that I led a group through, and certainly the most powerful and moving day for a group."

From Korea to Ohio: Celebrating Family Across the World

SOPHIE BILANIN '26
FEATURES ASSOCIATE

Lawrenceville's diverse student body and individuals' unique perspectives are one of the best aspects of our community; and with this variety of backgrounds comes a variety of unique ways to celebrate the winter holidays. After speaking with an array of students in the Dawes House, it has become apparent that whether it is rooted in culture and religion or a small but meaningful family tradition, every kind of celebration of the winter holidays is important and interesting.

Sofia Montenecourt '26 is a Russian Orthodox student from Moscow, Russia. When discussing how she spends her winter break in Russia, she explained, "It only lasts from December 31 to January 9." During this time, "the temperature can drop as low as -50° Celsius and is often followed by "up to 10 feet of snow." In Russia, Christians celebrate Christmas and the New Year on January 7 instead of

December 25 because the country follows the original dates from the Julian calendar, rather than those of the contemporary Gregorian calendar. At midnight on this day, tradition holds that Father Frost and his helper, the Snow Maiden, put presents for well-mannered children under the New Year's tree. The Snow Maiden is Father Frost's granddaughter, whose origins can be traced back to a Russian fairy tale about a girl made from ice named Snegurochka.

Emily Lee '26, on the other hand, describes how her family, along with many other Korean families, celebrates the holidays through gift-giving and personal customs. Lee explained, "I meet up with some close friends on Christmas Eve to eat dinner at a local restaurant [in Seoul]. Then, we walk down the main city street together and appreciate the holiday atmosphere of all the decorations." Her family, however, has its own annual tradition of traveling to Vivaldi

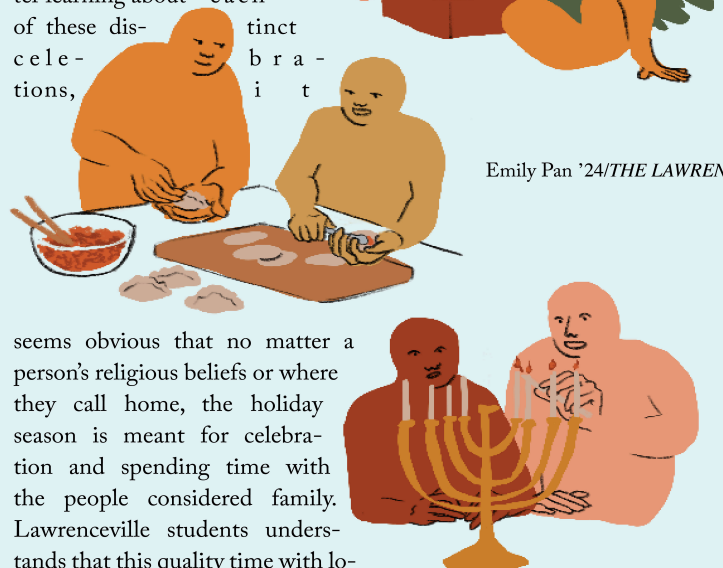
Park, a ski resort around two hours away from Seoul, to spend the first week of winter break skiing.

Simi Rath '26 is a day student from Princeton, New Jersey. Her family is Hindu and celebrates Christmas. They follow the common practices of getting a tree, giving gifts, and putting up decorations, but they don't view the holiday as a religious practice. Instead, they see Christmas as an excuse "to be thankful for friends and family through gift-giving and quality time," according to Rath.

Stephanie Schloss '26, a boarder from Shaker Heights, Ohio, shared her family's custom of celebrating Christmas on both December 25 and 26. She described her "extension of the holiday spirit...now that I'm away at school, going home is extra special. No matter your religion, holidays are a time for families to gather and bond, and we like to have as much of that time as we can." This is notably true for Schloss's family, because while

she is at Lawrenceville, her older brother is in college, so the time they can spend together is especially limited and thus important.

These are just some of the many ways the current residents of the Dawes House spend their holidays. After learning about each of these distinct celebrations,



Emily Pan '24/THE LAWRENCE

seems obvious that no matter a person's religious beliefs or where they call home, the holiday season is meant for celebration and spending time with the people considered family. Lawrenceville students understands that this quality time with loved ones is the best gift of them all.

Get Into a Top Notch College: What, Like It's Hard?

ERIC FRANKEL '23

The key to getting into college is simple: You just have to be the best at everything.

What? You dare scoff at me, child? It's not the easiest task! If you want all of your classmates to enviously seethe at you once your Instagram bio updates to "Lville '23 || Harvard '27," then you must make sacrifices. Follow this 10-step guide to achieving the elitist dreams every one of your classmates is praying for.

Cut off your friends. They're dead weight; you can't solve world hunger when you have friends. Some of the best people alive today don't have friends, and look at how amazing they are: Elon Musk, Mark Zuckerberg, Jeff Bezos. These people are amazing, and they did it because they did it solo.

After you've detached yourself from such aforementioned silly, mortal possessions, the next step is to constantly bring up your superior intellectual and moral standing in everyday conversation. In Harkness conversations, strike to kill. When your opponents (classmates) speak, be ready to spring and interrupt as soon as they have to inhale. How will you know if you're successful if other people can't begrudgingly admit you are? If someone gets accepted into Stanford alone in the woods, did it really happen?

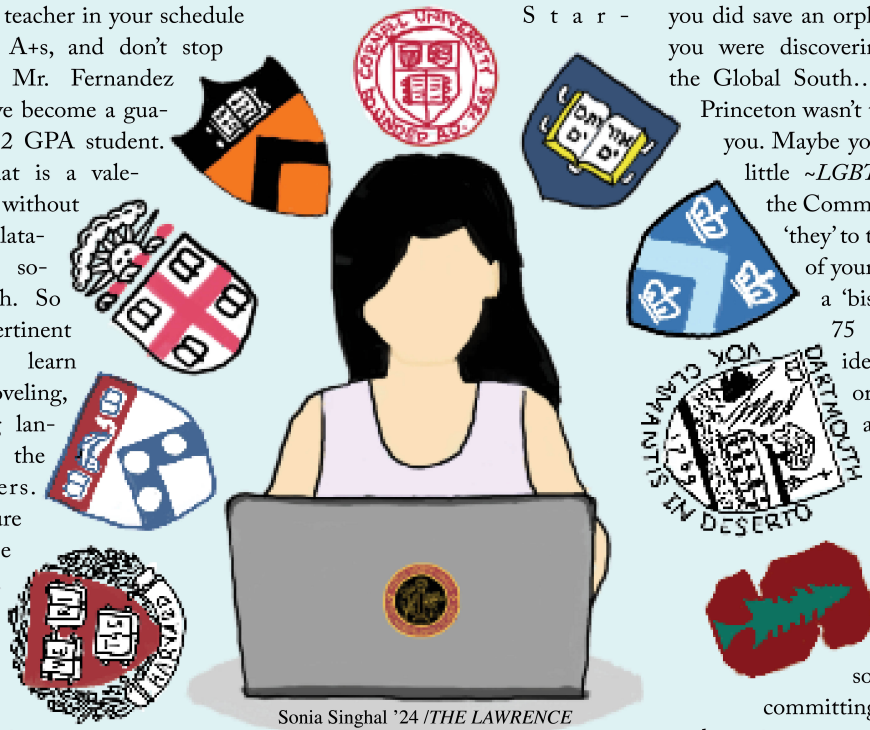
Some soft, idiotic yuppie might tell you that you should work as hard as you can and aim for

your best, not a letter grade. These people are liars attempting to ruin your greatness. True future hedge-bank managers must game the system. Learn your teachers' birthdays, and their dogs' birthdays, and bring them gifts accordingly. Ask anyone and everyone whether a teacher in your schedule gives out A+s, and don't stop harassing Mr. Fernandez until you've become a guaranteed 4.2 GPA student.

But what is a valedictorian without some relatability? A social pariah. So it's pertinent that you learn the groveling, grumbling language of the commoners. Make sure to use common refrains such as "I just did S O O O bad on this test!" No matter whether you received an A+ or an A- (you scum!), you must give off the perception that you have weaknesses, just so that the mob doesn't get to you. Find the cure for cancer. What, like it's hard? Write your personal statement

about the most tragic, sad, terrible, traumatic thing that will bring an underpaid, overworked 20-something year old admissions reader to never-ending tears. I had a kidney stone once, and I wrote my personal statement about it. A pity acceptance is still an acceptance!

S t a r -



Sonia Singhal '24 / THE LAWRENCE

ting when you're in fifth grade, create a fake billing company and begin siphoning money away from your parents' bank account. This will culminate in an eventual donation to the school of your dreams. If you actually wish to get any sort of

preferential treatment, make sure this amount is over \$1,000,000.

On the other hand, you could just come from generational legacy, or have your parents donate a building. These strategies are so passé, though.

Lie. Truth is irrelevant, alternative facts are the way to go. Maybe you did save an orphan's life while you were discovering poverty in the Global South...who's to say?

Princeton wasn't there watching you. Maybe you are feeling a little ~LGBTQ~ today on the Common App. Add a 'they' to the second part of your pronouns and a 'bisexual' to your 75 characters on identity, whether or not you care about queer rights. Think of how Yale will jump at your amazing and vast identity. Kill someone. By committing a felony—and a spicy one at that—you get to check "yes" on another box in the Common App. That's really all college is about: Checking boxes.

I've been a bit dramatic at times, but let me speak truthfully. The college admissions process is a grueling, saddening, and confusing labyrinth; but it's also where you get

to make big decisions about what you want in life, and it is a great opportunity to take stock of where you are. Underformers, you are all prepared for this maze. The one thing you cannot give into, though, are airless ideas of what a 'good school' is, and correlating anyone's intrinsic value to the institution they enroll in, including yourself. No matter how many times you may hear and not believe it, sometimes the best experiences come out of not getting what you originally wanted. I know you might not believe me, and sometimes, I don't either. But hey—there are so many more valuable things in life than what logo will adorn your degree.

Hopefully, you're doing things right now that you care about. That might be getting eight hours of sleep and not procrastinating, hosting club events, or maybe just seeing friends. The arc of your life isn't all leading up to what university you end up paying an insane amount of money to. It's about building good habits, making lifelong connections, and trying your best. As someone in recovery from terribly elitist beliefs about college, I find it easy to think I've squandered Lawrenceville if I don't end up at a certain type of school. But if that's not the truth, then my time here has only left me with a wealth of relationships, wisdom, and community. That means so much more than any acceptance ever could.

Backstage With The Periwig Tech Crew

SONIA LACKEY '25

FEATURES ASSOCIATE

Before every theatrical production, Lawrenceville's tech crew prepares the set, props, lights, sound, and cues for every shift happening behind the scenes weeks before opening night, ensuring that everything runs smoothly. The weight of every Lawrenceville show rests on the back of our Periwig tech crew, from the stage manager to the prop runners. So, how does the crew prepare for and communicate during productions? Here's a brief overview of what really goes on behind the scenes.

Within the complex organization of the Periwig Club, each and every individual has a unique role that serves as a gear in a well-oiled machine. Over the past few months, every member of the crew was thoroughly committed to working on the Fall Musical, *The Drowsy Chaperone*. The crew started production during the first week of school and worked until the show's debut in October so that they could do "the impossible and [present] a believable and convincing stage to the audience," according to Jack Chou '23, this year's Co-Head of Tech and Co-President of the Periwig Council. Chou oversees every technical piece of each Periwig production, from building set pieces to the sound and lighting operations.

Each of these functions is also overseen by specific representatives, such as the Sound Representative, Philip Burgess '24, and Lighting Representative, Luke Park '24. In every one of these roles, the crew members are all "focusing on one

goal," according to Co-Head of Tech Lily Hooge '23. What is this goal? In the words of Chou, the Periwig crew focuses on "bringing [the audience] into another reality."

So, how does the Periwig crew achieve this goal? Before the show, many transitions need practice during run-throughs, and everything needs to be prepared well ahead so the actors can focus on delivering

crew members on task while preventing injury and ensuring that everyone stays safe while working. In addition to building and preparing the sets, Hsu teaches members of the backstage crew how to paint set-pieces that work with the props. Hooge stated that Singhal and Hsu "try really hard to keep everyone and everything safe."

Additionally, during the musi-

messages to complete transitions on time, ranging from moving set pieces on and off stage to altering the lighting. Behind the scenes, commitment and clear communication are necessary so the crew and the actors can put on a production for the audience.

This commitment varies greatly from student to student, ranging from a couple of hours a week to up

The backstage crew often branch out from their individual roles if they have extra time. However, many crew members agree that prioritizing their time and being willing to ask for extensions when needed helps them manage their busy Lawrenceville schedules. Burgess stressed the importance of being willing to reach out to his teachers, because if the students are unable to ask for help, it can become difficult to handle the Lawrenceville workload.

Although Periwig can be a large time commitment, each tech member noted how the community was the most important part. According to Hooge, "There's no other community on campus like Periwig...It's just a group of people who love each other and love what they do."

Burgess emphasized that he "really appreciated the Periwig community that [he] found with [Periwig]." Each member ended by sharing their love for Periwig and the memories gained from shared experiences, such as playing games of Koomcha before every production or laughing over set mishaps. One piece of advice shared across most interviews was that you should not "be afraid to try new things at Lawrenceville, whether it is a new sport or activity," says Chou.

Many of the members of the tech crew found Periwig through friends or because they wanted to just try something new, but in the words of Hooge, "Everyone at Lawrenceville should try Periwig at least once... [even] if you've never been involved; if you want to learn how to use power tools, you should really come to the scene shop!"



Periwig tech crew

Sonia Singhal '24 / THE LAWRENCE

a great performance. Weeks in advance, props are found or built and every movement backstage is choreographed into a dance of lighting cues and set changes that fall into place during the production. For example, Frances Hsu '23 and Sonia Singhal '24 were respectively the Assistant Head of Tech and Assistant Prop Master during the Fall Musical. It was Hsu's job to keep all

cal, it was their job to make "sure all the props were where they needed to be and...[make] sure that all of the characters had their props when they needed them," according to Singhal. Backstage, every member of the crew receives over the headsets from Stephanie Xu '23, the Production Stage Manager, who watched the show to call these cues. All deck crew members need to receive these

to 10 hours a week for those who are extremely involved in Periwig. Many members of the crew help out in general work on set if their specific task cannot be completed at the time. According to Park, "Although I do lights, a lot of my commitment is also...expanded from that." Before large productions, roles can become much more flexible, depending on where the show needs the most help.

The Ronaldo Situation: Analyzing the €200 Million Move

KEVIN CHUNG '25

The Situation

Cristiano Ronaldo has joined the Riyadh-based Al Nassr Football Club, a Saudi Arabian soccer club, in a move to signal a gentle, gradual tempering in his career. The move was catalyzed by his recent clash with Manchester United over his issues with the current Manchester United coach Erik ten Hag. Ronaldo first played for Manchester United from 2003 to 2009, jump-starting his career; he later transferred to Real Madrid. Ronaldo returned to Manchester United in 2021, seeking to play with the team that helped him rise to fame. However, Ronaldo's second—and last—time with Manchester United was characterized by fractious relationships with his teammates and coach.

With the €75 million per season contract with Al Nassr, coupled with on-field bonuses and advertisements, Ronaldo will easily make over €200 million a year. Although this staggering sum of money is indisputably appealing,

fans are questioning if this move was solely for higher pay, or a team he can work with and inspire. Ronaldo's fans initially thought the decision was foolish, with many arguing against him leaving Manchester United. Ronaldo has recently been switching between many different teams, as he was not able to find a team to stick with considering his coming retirement. Moving from Real Madrid to Juventus, and now to Al-Nassr, we can truly never predict where Ronaldo's career will take us.

Opinion

The move to a less competitive league and a bigger paycheck may sound as if Ronaldo is solely profit-driven, but Ronaldo's switch reflects a common practice of older soccer icons who approach the end of their professional soccer careers. Ronaldo is now 37 years old, which means his retirement is inching closer. If he were to stay at Manchester United, Ronaldo would have no chance of having a peaceful retirement, especially with many of his fans urging him to maintain the dominant stance Manchester United has been holding in the

Premier League.

Despite this sudden switch, it is important to understand that many great players in the past made similar decisions, such as Wayne Rooney, an icon on the soccer field, who moved to D.C. United towards



Emily Pan '24/THE LAWRENCE

his retirement. Even though he did not receive a high salary, Rooney was able to cherish his last moments with soccer and retire in 2021. Another example is David Beckham, another British soccer icon, who had played in most of the top leagues in the world. In 2007, he made the move to LA Galaxy to end his career with \$250 million for five years in the club.

Both of these moves barely received any criticism. Rather, they

garnered a positive reception about how these players deserved a break with their career achievements. Therefore, if other "GOATS" of the Premier League historically have had a say in what club they want to join towards the end of their careers, why not Ronaldo? Ronaldo left the scene after playing from 2003 to 2022 in Europe's most competitive leagues while destroying records and having one of the greatest rivalries of all time. We all should understand his situation and support him during his last professional games.

How's It Going So Far?

Well, the superstar has yet to play due to his two-game ban from the FIFA Association. This ban was implemented on the basis of 'improper conduct' after Ronaldo hit a fan's hand in anger after losing to Everton in a close 1-0 altercation when he previously played for Manchester United. The fan allegedly saw a cut on the superstar's leg and moved his camera towards the wound. When he came by the fan, Ronaldo smacked the phone out of the fan's grip, leaving a smashed phone screen and a

bruised hand.

After the incident, the fan's parents took to social media to share their enraging incident with Ronaldo and how he bruised their child's wrist. Replying to their announcement, Ronaldo quickly made an apology and invited the family to another Manchester United game. However, this apology did not suffice, as he was given a two-game suspension regarding his improper behavior.

In spite of his departure from the Premier League, Ronaldo's suspension is still in effect. As a result, fans missed the exciting debut of Ronaldo's Saudi Arabian career in the game against Al-Tai.

The start of Ronaldo's new career may have started in a negative direction; however, the amount of attention he brings to the team is insurmountable: entire stadiums are fully booked whenever Ronaldo is announced to play. Superstars often wind down their careers by signing for less prominent leagues right before their official retirements. Ronaldo is certainly no exception to this crucial tradition.

SIMI RATH '26

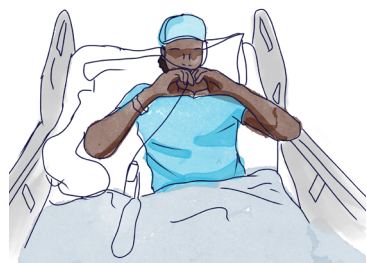
Tennis. Basketball. Football. Swimming. While these sports are quite different in strategy and objective, they all share one common feature: the risk of injury. In the US alone, over three million children and teens are injured in sports-related accidents. Whether the playing field is professional or recreational, sports medicine remains one of the most integral components of all modern athletic endeavors. Sports medicine makes sports possible for everyone, from childhood teammates to famed and celebrated athletes. Recently, the field of sports medicine has stepped into the spotlight in professional athletics, the media, and even our Big Red community.

Just last week, Buffalo Bills safety Damar Hamlin made headlines after his sudden collapse and cardiac arrest in the first quarter of the Bills' game against the Cincinnati Bengals. While commentators were frozen

in shock, the Bills' team of sports medicine specialists immediately crowded the field, ready to assist. This instantaneous response is attributed to Hamlin's promising recovery. The entire medical team was essential when approaching Hamlin's condition, but one specialist in particular impacted Hamlin the most.

The specialist in question? Bills Assistant Athletic Trainer, Danny Kellington, who took the initiative to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) on Hamlin. According to a recent study, 90 percent of those who endure cardiac arrest outside of a hospital or official medical facility do not survive. It was Kellington himself who beat these odds and saved "not just [Hamlin's] life, but his neurological function," according to one of Hamlin's doctors. Cardiac arrest is a condition in which the heart stops beating, and therefore cannot distribute oxygen through the bloodstream to the body's organs. The longer

the heart is stopped, the lower the oxygen levels become. Low oxygen levels in these vital areas increase the probability of organ damage and risks survival. Kellington's swiftness truly saved Hamlin



Michelle Zhang '25/THE LAWRENCE

from tragedy. Many members of the National Football League (NFL) commended Kellington's efforts. During a recent news conference, Bills head coach Sean McDermott described Kellington as "nothing short of amazing" and "a real hero in saving Damar's life." Thousands have been inspired by the actions of these sports medicine professionals,

and Damar's story will serve as a historical remembrance of the value that sports medicine brings to the table.

The Lawrenceville community also had the experience of witnessing the other side of sports medicine from former Rutgers football player Eric Legrand. Legrand shared his story of sustaining a life-changing football injury and provided remarkable insights regarding his perseverance and newfound gratitude. In Legrand's case, his condition is virtually incurable. However, he mentioned his work with athletic trainers and physical therapists in his determined pursuit of regaining his ability to walk. When he is not working with specialists to reach his walking goal, Legrand finds joy in the philanthropic, entrepreneurial, and literary sides of himself. One of his most recent endeavors is establishing a small business, Legrand Coffee Shop in Woodbridge County, New Jersey.

Legrand views his business as "so much more than simply opening a coffee shop," noting that "it is a reminder that we can accomplish anything if we set our heart, mind and focus on that goal." His perseverance to engage in treatment while also finding time to pursue new passions serves as a humbling message to all to practice gratitude, while simultaneously raising awareness of the value of health throughout the school community.

Sports Medicine certainly does not end here. The future of sports medicine promises new and innovative technologies that help keep athletes safe on the field to prevent accidents. As our society raises more awareness for physical and mental wellness, sports medicine is heading towards a powerful future. From taping ankles to physical therapy sessions, athletic trainers are making a difference in the future generations of professional athletes.

Board Picks

	Yewon Chang Co-Opinions Editor	Cindy Shum Photos Editor	Kyle Park Managing Editor	Emma Kim Co-Features Editor	Autri Basu Editor-in-Chief	Sally Lee Co-Web Editor	Noah Trupin Co-Web Editor
Most useless thing in your room	my to-do list	the goddamned AC	The Lawrence issue	a fake oscar	my kennedy hoodie	Kelly Lu <3	guitar
Favorite board quote so far	i am adam levine	kindness is mid	very salient to the modern zeitgeist	we're all asian so we all look the same	...i can't print that	I'd enjoy the office a lot more with a pony	anything I've said
Your New Year's Resolution	be as cool as trupin	solve world hunger, etc.	haven't got to that yet	graduate	meeting yewon's costarican husband	Watching all legendary k-dramas	be as cool as yewon