

Learning as a Creative Act

NICHOLE JIN '24 NEWS ASSOCIATE

On February 13, and 20, Executive Director of the Hutchins Institute for Social Justice Zaheer Ali hosted Listening as a Creative Act sessions in honor of Black History Month.

The event aimed to bring together participants to explore identity, share histories, build community, and expand their imaginations through listening to a curated music series. Each playlist was organized around a specific theme, genre, artist, or time period, encouraging participants to "reflect on and discuss the ways they construct meaning about music."

The playlist Ali compiled for the series featured artists such as Bob Marley, the Staple Singers, and Olivia Dean. All

these pieces were selected to encourage participants to listen to music with a more "intentional" attitude to "form an attachment to music."

Ali came up with the idea to host a music listening program after a similar event was organized last spring. After the May 14 Buffalo shooting, the Office of Multicultural Affairs "invited students to gather in the community through a music listening session. The conversation organically evolved into the ways music figures in our sense of self and connectedness to others," Ali said. Due to the success of the Spring Term event, Ali and Dean of Diversity, Inclusion, and Community Engagement Cameron Brickhouse decided to host a similar program for Black History Month.

As an oral historian, Ali's work is built on listening to "create opportunities that invite and affirm people's sto-



Students at a "Listening as a Creative Act" Listening Session

rytelling." One of his goals is for students to understand that the creative process is not always about "what is produced," but also about "taking in the world around us" through listening.

"I want participants to come away from our gatherings with a deeper understanding of how different elements of sound resonate with each of us differently and creatively," Ali said. His program promotes music as a way to build community by

allowing individuals to develop a greater appreciation for how "listening shapes and creates the world we encounter."

Looking to the future, Ali hopes to continue the series in the spring and encourages more students to attend with Explorations credits for similar programs. He acknowledges that the series will "take time to catch on," but encourages more community members to attend.

Congratulations to The Lawrence's 143rd Upper Management!

Congratulations to Claire Jiang '24 and Luke Park '24 on their selection as the Upper Management of the 143rd Lawrence Board.

Jiang, the incoming Editor-in-Chief, looks forward to "being able to produce issues that...make [people] excited to be a part of this campus."

Park, who will fill the newly-renamed Executive Editor position, is excited to "see a new dynamic of Board members who are each committed to their sections...coalesce."

In the coming year, Jiang and Park hope to increase engagement with the paper, whether by adding an Outreach and Media Editor or encouraging the submission of letters to the editor.

Reflecting on her time on The Lawrence, Jiang said, "I've grown a lot as a writer, but also as a thinker and as a friend...[and] gained a lot



143rd Lawrence Board's Upper Management

of valuable experience that would not be possible otherwise."

Applications for the rest of the 143rd Board are due on February 25 at 11:59 PM, with the exception of the Outreach and Media Editor, which is due on February 26 at 11:59 PM. All students are encouraged to apply, and the full Board will be selected in late March.

Happy Trails to the V Formers of The Lawrence CXLII

HELENA CHEN '24 NICHOLE JIN '24 NEWS ASSOCIATES



The 142nd Board of The Lawrence Nishka Malik '24/THE LAWRENCE

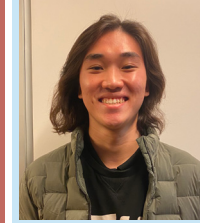
Editor-in-Chief: Autri Basu '23



Our fearless leader

As the Editor-in-Chief of The Lawrence, Basu reflected that seeing people read the papers and getting messages about articles and editorials each week "makes every moment [he] spends worth it." He is grateful for the opportunity to meet "a great group of people" he would have never met outside of The Lawrence. He will always remember the fun times during office hours, whether it was "singing Bohemian Rhapsody or watching Nathan Chen videos at 10:00 PM for a long time." Basu acknowledges that working on The Lawrence can be stressful and time-consuming, so his advice for the 143rd Board is to "trust yourself, and trust those [they] work with—your writers, your associates, your co-editors, your upper management, and believe that the Board is always there to support you."

Managing Editor: Kyle Park '23



This issue's honorary Waldo for journalism and a collective purpose to share our stories with the Lawrenceville community."

Serving on Upper Management, Park took on a major leadership role in ensuring that the publication ran smoothly and maintained good standards. While producing issues on a weekly basis was challenging, Park noted that the Board's "group dynamic greatly contributed to [their] overall success" as everyone played a unique role in the process. Elaborating on this dynamic, he said, "tasks can get stressful, but we are ultimately united by a shared passion for journalism and a collective purpose to share our stories with the Lawrenceville community." Park was appreciative of the balance between "seriousness, camaraderie, and humor" in the office. His advice to the 143rd Board is to take a flexible and open-minded approach to change, as the Board is there to "challenge you, and in doing so...bring the best out of you."

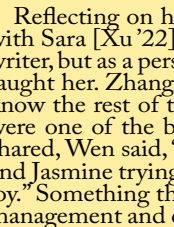
Features Editors: Adi Jung '23 and Emma Kim '23



First issue Board Picks who?

For Kim, the best part of The Lawrence was office hours. Reflecting on the office culture they fostered, she said, "I've laughed, cried, chowed down on delicious feeds, and watched highlights of the Olympics with these people." Working closely with the other members of the Board also helped Kim improve her communication skills and learn to "mitigate [her] own reactions to stress and unplanned circumstances." Jung views her time on The Lawrence as one of "the most rewarding and fun experiences" she had during her four years at Lawrenceville. Something she learned from the experience was "how to balance your work with another person," as section editors each delegated their tasks differently from others. For Kim, a major takeaway was the importance of communication. "We've had our fair share of issues as a board but I think we were able to properly navigate them because of our open communication," she elaborated.

News Editors: Tiffany Wen '23 and Jasmine Zhang '23



Personality pics!

Reflecting on her experience with The Lawrence, Wen said, "from writing my first Features article with Sara [Xu '22] and working on the final 142 issue, I can say that I've grown so much, not just as a writer, but as a person too." She appreciated the lessons of "diligence and empathy" that the publication taught her. Zhang echoed her sentiments, remarking that it was an "incredible experience" getting to know the rest of the Board and the community of writers. Both editors also agreed that the people were one of the best parts of the 142nd Board. Reflecting on the close bond the Board members shared, Wen said, "Whether it's yelling at Autri [Basu '23] for dropping most of our acai bowls or me and Jasmine trying to evade editorial-writing-duty, these moments are always filled with laughter and joy." Something that the News Editors hope to leave with the 143rd Board is the importance of time management and communication. "There are little pockets of time I've learned to take advantage of... communication is also ultra-important since you're constantly talking with others," Wen elaborated.

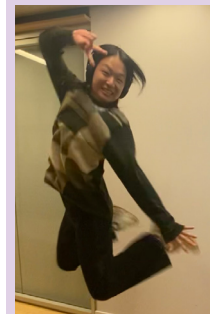
Sports Editor: Andrew Boanoh '23



Two thumbs up!

Having worked with The Lawrence for a long time, Boanoh said, "my legs practically carry me to the office every Wednesday and Thursday night." Boanoh remarked on the pride he felt in his progression from an "eager freshman flipping through The Lawrence" to a part of the publication: "It's been a blast to become one of the cogs in the massive machine that is The Lawrence." Reminiscing on the times he spent with the 142nd Board, Boanoh brought up a fond memory of "Autri's feet." Boanoh's advice to the incoming Board members is for them to work ahead and stay on top of their tasks.

Arts Editor: Kelly Lu '23



Kelly's personality pic

While Lu started off on The Lawrence unfamiliar with many Board members, she felt as if she had "gained a family" after just one tenure together. Her favorite aspect of her experience was the office atmosphere: "A mix of serious academia and adolescent humor, the office might be my favorite place on campus." As a result of this strong rapport the Board members built, Lu felt that she found herself "joking around more often than [she] thought [she] would."

Opinions Editors: Yewon Chang '23 and Iris Wu '23



Wu-Chang Clan.

Chang recalls her experience on the board as spending "the best time with the best people." She believes that there's no good way to describe what it is like being on The Lawrence, as it is "something that becomes a part of you immediately and naturally." Wu also enjoyed her time being an Opinions Editor, and saw The Lawrence as an opportunity to reach a larger audience, where she can "exercise in self-expression." She reflected that her "experience as an Opinions editor has made [her] think more deeply about the purpose of journalism and reconsider what a "good" opinion is—or if such a thing even exists." Wu expressed her excitement of "watching [the writers] grow more confident in their own voices." Both Chang and Wu hope that the 143rd Board would "never lose sight of their initial purpose to be on the Board" and "treasure their time on The Lawrence."

Web Editors: Sally Lee '23 and Noah Trupin '23



Lee and Noah

For Trupin, his time on The Lawrence was "incredible, with both positive and negative denotations." Being on the Board was "most rewarding yet most time-consuming," but in the end, a worthwhile experience that he would "join again in a heartbeat." Lee shared the same view, expressing gratitude for the opportunity to "work with so many wonderful people." Trupin and Lee also both appreciated being able to write code and contribute to the publication through an online medium while "surrounded by friends."

Associate Editor: Grant Shueh '23



Fruit snack muncher gives a thumbs up

Shueh commented that working as the Associate Editor for The Lawrence has been "absolutely splendid, the time of [his] life." He enjoyed the feeds, the entertainment, the people, and most importantly, "the incredibly intense yet rewarding commitment of being the Associate Editor." Shueh explains that "after a long day of making board picks, chiefing the fruit snacks, and distracting fellow board members from their pressing duties, [he] at last rests, worn and weary but content with [his] backbreaking work." His advice for the incoming 143rd Board's Associate Editor is to "carry on the legacy of the esteemed and prestigious work for The Lawrence even when the position ceases to exist!"

Graphics Editor: Stephanie Xu '23



Staying artsy <3

Having worked on graphics since her II Form year and on the Board since her III Form year, Xu has been working closely with The Lawrence for a long time. She noted that, after all these years, her favorite part of The Lawrence was "harassing the Section Editors to put in their graphics requests." Her advice to the 143rd Board and future generations of the publication is for them to "stay artsy!"

Saying Goodbye to the 142nd Board of The Lawrence

After two years of working on The Lawrence, Editor-in-Chief Autri Basu '23 reflects on the 142nd Board's tenure.



The Highlights and Lowlights of 142

Explore some of the Lawrence 142 Board's most memorable moments, including the Section Editors' first Lawrence articles, a which-editor-are-you?, and much more!



The Tempest? No, It's King Lear!

In honor of the Class of 2026's The Tempest performance, the Class of 2023 reflects on their II Form Shakespeare production, King Lear.





# THE LAWRENCE

Class of 1968 Fund in Honor of Edward A. Robbins H'68 '69 '71 - Nicholas G. Ifft '44 Fund  
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Ms. Margaret Ray

Ms. Lisa Gillard

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Readers interested in subscribing to The Lawrence should contact the Editor-in-Chief at abasu23@lawrenceville.org. Letters to the editor should be mailed to the address above with C/O Elizabeth Buckles or emailed to lvillelawrence@gmail.com. The Lawrence may be accessed online at thelawrence.lawrenceville.org.

## CORRECTIONS

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

### Dawg of the Week: Horizontal Autri



It's 9:00 AM on a Thursday, and I'm sending increasingly passive-aggressive messages to the 142 group chat, begging the section editors to finish their pages by 5:00 PM. As I arrive at my meeting seat, I ask Yewon, who sits behind me, how the Ops articles are coming along. She, like always, responds with a kaleidoscope of expletives; the eternally-empty boxes on article tracking corroborate her report.

It's 12:00 PM. At advisory lunch, I sneak up on Mrs. Buckles's table to ask about what we'll be doing for that night's feed. Adi, sitting next to her, begs me to leave them alone for just one day. As I announce that we're getting Domino's again to the group chat, Tiffany texts me separately to ask if we can abolish printing for the sake of bringing Chipotle back.

The clock strikes 3:00 PM. I retreat to my room-away-from-room: Pop 027. The air conditioning blasts so intensely that I bury myself under one of our mysteriously-unwashed blankets, even when it's 65° F outside. As I take my daily nap on the office couch, Jasmine peeks in to ask me why I'm there, grabbing a bag of Popcorners on her way out.

At 5:00 PM, I finally leave the office—at least physically—with just two pages in my hands. I may have a Winterfest... or Stay Safe... or Drowsy Chaperone... rehearsal to attend, but that won't stop me from editing from the depths of the Black Box's seating. As I call the office phone—giving everyone a heart attack in the process—Mr. Cuthrell catches me whisper-shouting about the status of the editorial, but lets my split allegiance off with a laugh.

At 6:00 PM, the feed arrives. I get a glimpse of the office from the "one forty two crew" Snapchat story, where Kelly is gulping down mango habanero wings and Diet Coke faster than I thought was humanly possible. Amid her preparations to leave the office for the night, Sally—our Web-Editor-come-Graphics-Associate—receives yet another last-minute graphic request from the Opinions Section; Cindy, meanwhile, desperately spams her associates for the front page photo.

At 6:30 PM, Grant finally sends in the finalized Board Picks. Boanoh, having already lost half of his page to an extra Features article, begs me to cancel

## Editorial 142 Crew, I'll Miss You.

the column for that week; he is promptly vetoed by the rest of the Board. Meanwhile, Emma, who has finished editing all of her articles for the next six issues, lets Kyle and me know that she'll be hanging out in L10 News's office; I relish in knowing that she'll stay there for longer than the L10 Executive Board itself.

7:00 PM marks the intermission of this dress rehearsal. I go to the KAC lobby to check out the available treats; Iris, who has been watching the show, notices me anxiously sprinting around. She reminds me to calm down, because everything will be alright. But I don't listen.

I don't listen because *The Lawrence* isn't just a newspaper. It's a legacy that I—no, we—must uphold, lest 141 years of tradition come crashing down behind us. So when I first stepped into my position last March, I had high hopes for our Board's tenure: I wanted more special reports, more twelve-page issues, more distribution, more articles, more issues, more writers, more subscriptions, more readers, more everything. To an extent, we succeeded at that goal, peaking with the publication of a twenty-pager at the end of last Spring Term—but only after barely scraping by a week that nearly cost us our sanity.

Yet through all of our struggles—every night crammed into the office until 11:00 PM, every writer who disappears after signing up for an article, every conference spent begging the administration to let us publish a controversial article—our Board has become a family. Amidst the tragedies our school has faced in the past year, we have come together to commemorate our classmates and voice our concerns about Lawrenceville's culture. We've offered critiques of disciplinary announcements and sex bans, and advocated for gender-neutral housing and not hating the Tsai Commons. Above all, we've been able to serve as a forum for Lawrentians' voices—and, in the process, created bonds stronger than any of us could imagine at this time a year ago.

At 9:15 PM, rehearsal ends. I check in with Stephanie, who has accepted that I'll never stay late in the KAC on a Thursday night; she runs back to the office with the Copy Editors and me

to grab a bite of what's remaining of the feed. I rush into the conference room with Mrs. Buckles and Ms. Ray, who inform me that six pages are in; as I catch my breath, they congratulate me on being on track to finish early yet again. I enter the office and spot Trupin, who has been sitting in his corner since 6:25 PM. None of us know what he's doing or why he's here, but he's a perennial presence, an emblem of stability within a Board that is almost never together all at once.

By 9:45 PM, only Kyle, Claire, Luke, Yewon, Iris, Boanoh, Trupin, and I remain. While I'm lying on the couch, Iris uses our in-house digital camera to capture the debut of "horizontal Autri"; Yewon makes sure to photobomb me. As Mrs. Buckles and Ms. Ray finish editing the last two pages, I tell the Copy Editors that they can go home, but they refuse to abandon us this far in.

The final page comes in around 10:00 PM. As Kyle and I sit down to upload the issue, we reminisce about our time together on the Board, as well as how quickly it's gone by. I start drafting a message to the Board announcing another special issue, but he reminds me that extra work during a major assignments week isn't exactly the best idea; after a brief debate, I relent. Kyle has saved 142 from another 1:00 AM office night.

We clean up the feed, fold up the blankets, and turn off the lights. I take in the eerie red glow of the hallway's exit sign; this is my final goodbye, Pop 027.

On my way to class the next morning, I notice that the office lights have mysteriously been turned on.

As I fob in to investigate, I spot Claire and Luke inside, furiously typing away as they discuss their plans for the upcoming year: more feeds, more social media engagement, more school-wide surveys. I can't help but laugh as I think back to my own naive ambition during this same time last year—that is, until tears start streaming down my face.

142, we've spent the past year making *The Lawrence's* legacy our own. Now, 143, it's time to make it yours. I know you'll make us proud.

-ABB

## A House Is Not A Home

### Not Without Ramen, Poker, and Toothpaste Tubes, At Least.

**NICHOLE JIN '24**  
NEWS ASSOCIATE

Lawrenceville: Where III and IV Formers don't just coexist with one another but truly live together. Where students find themselves inextricably linked to their Housemates by a shared sense of pride. Where the color of students' blood runs the same as the color of their weather-beaten flag.

Or, at least, this is the House System that our admissions office so persistently advertises.

In reality, there are a staggering number of individuals on this campus who lack allegiance to their Houses—in other words, the fiery spirit that, upon seeing a rival House, sparks hoards of students to scream senseless chants across the quad.

Oftentimes, such a lack of zeal arises not from meekness or modesty, but from shortcomings within the House community itself. After all, if people feel that they are living in a House of strangers—with their interactions limited to awkwardly borrowing toothpaste or accidentally bumping into each other in the hallway—who can blame them for not wanting to wear their House colors with pride? It is the rapport that students build with their Housemates—upon bonding over a tube of borrowed toothpaste or striking up a conversation after bumping into each other in the hallway—that

enables them to replace uncertainty and discomfort with companionship and House spirit.

These seemingly insignificant moments of camaraderie are what makes a House a home. Each minuscule act of kindness is a step towards creating a House environment in which students feel as if they truly know each other. To live in a House together does not necessarily mean having deep and intimate conversations all the time—it means engaging with one another just for the sake of talking, or sharing a moment from the day regardless of its significance. It means taking comfort in the simple fact that there is someone there who cares about you.

Whether you like it or not, your assigned House is your designated home away from home for at least half of your Lawrenceville career. What you choose to make of your time with your Housemates will have a

significant impact on your experience here. There are those who actively work towards vitalizing their House community, working in the common room during study hall, and waving hello when they see a fellow Housemate. But on the other hand, there are also many who have



accepted their lamentable fate—placed into a House without their friends, they swear off Lawrenceville's culture and instead succumb to two years of solitude and reclusiveness.

*Isn't the whole purpose of the House system, after all, to give students the opportunity to form bonds with people they wouldn't have known otherwise?*

However, the key to having an enjoyable House experience is not to cross your fingers and pray that you will be sorted with your friends—it is to make an effort to nurture collective care regardless of who you are placed in a House with. These strangers have the potential to become your most trusted peers, who you will soon grin and snicker with over tubes of toothpaste and untimely hallway interactions. Isn't the whole purpose of the House system, after all, to give students the opportunity to form bonds with people they wouldn't have known otherwise? If Form Housing is where you first

meet your grade, and V Form Housing is where you then reconnect with them—but the Circle and the Crescent are where you familiarize yourself with the Lawrenceville that exists beyond your closest circle of friends.

A morning spent knocking on doors to go to breakfast, an afternoon passed by microwaving instant ramen in the kitchen after sports, a night remembered by playing poker in the common room—these shared and unique experiences cultivate a loving House environment. Yet such experiences don't happen unprompted. They can only be created when there are individuals brave enough to initiate them, courageous enough to knock first, offer the first cup of ramen, or bring out the poker set. Many individuals like to blame the House itself when finding themselves stuck with a group dynamic they don't enjoy; when in reality, they themselves are just as responsible as the people at whom they wag their fingers.

Where do those gutsy individuals come from, you may ask? They come from the group of people who want to make the most of their time in their House. They come from people who remember their time as a prospective student and just how badly they wanted to be part of a spirited House culture. They come from people who understand that growth doesn't come from isolation and close-mindedness. And they can come from you, too.

# 5 Ways Social Media is Deceptive (#4 Will Shock You)

## Breaking News: Fake News is Out, Says New Jersey

MIRANDA DE OLDEN '26

Do Covid-19 vaccines contain injectable traceable microchips? Is Elvis still alive? Was Planet Nibiru headed straight for Earth? Social media has allowed questions like these to circulate unchecked, deceiving uninformed users and manipulating their behavior.

Thankfully, New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy is willing to fight the good fight. On January 4, New Jersey became the first state to require K-12 public schools to teach media literacy in order to combat misinformation, disinformation, and fake news. First introduced in 2016—and reintroduced every year since then—the law finally received bipartisan approval last fall. In a time of political divisions and polarization, this new media literacy law is more important than ever.

But what are misinformation, disinformation, and fake news, and how do they impact our democracy? People often confuse these terms or use them interchangeably, but understanding the distinction is an important tool in fighting false information. According to the American Psychological Association (APA), misinformation is false or inaccurate information, a good faith attempt to tell the truth. Misinformation becomes disinformation when it deliberately intends to mislead. Disinformation under the guise of news reporting is often called fake news.

In a healthy democracy, citizens rely on the free flow of reliable information to make decisions about social and political issues. Having access to a diverse range of verified information sources is key to being civically engaged, as citizens use this information to form judgments on the social and economic issues that inform their political preferences—and their votes.

Due to their lack of strong verification systems, however, social media platforms al-

low anybody to pose as an expert, including those without complete understanding of an issue or those who aim to mislead others. These so-called experts can reach millions of people. In fact, they already have: claims that Barack Obama was born outside of the U.S. to hurt his presidential candidacy; conspiracy theories that Covid-19 vaccines contain injectable traceable microchips aimed to foster distrust in government; and viral videos containing disinformation about monkeypox in order to spread homophobic sentiments have all gained traction as a result of social media. The list is disturbingly long.

Social media posts, with their thousands of comments and reactions, can become echo chambers in which a user's informational intake becomes overwhelmed by a singular perspective. Without recognizing that they aren't getting the full picture, ordinary citizens can easily fall victim to disinformation and fake news.

The rapid increase of online disinformation and fake news is dangerous to our democracy for three reasons. First, people rely on social media to get their news. The PEW Research Center finds that young Americans under 30 trust information from social media almost as much as they trust information from national news outlets. Second, once

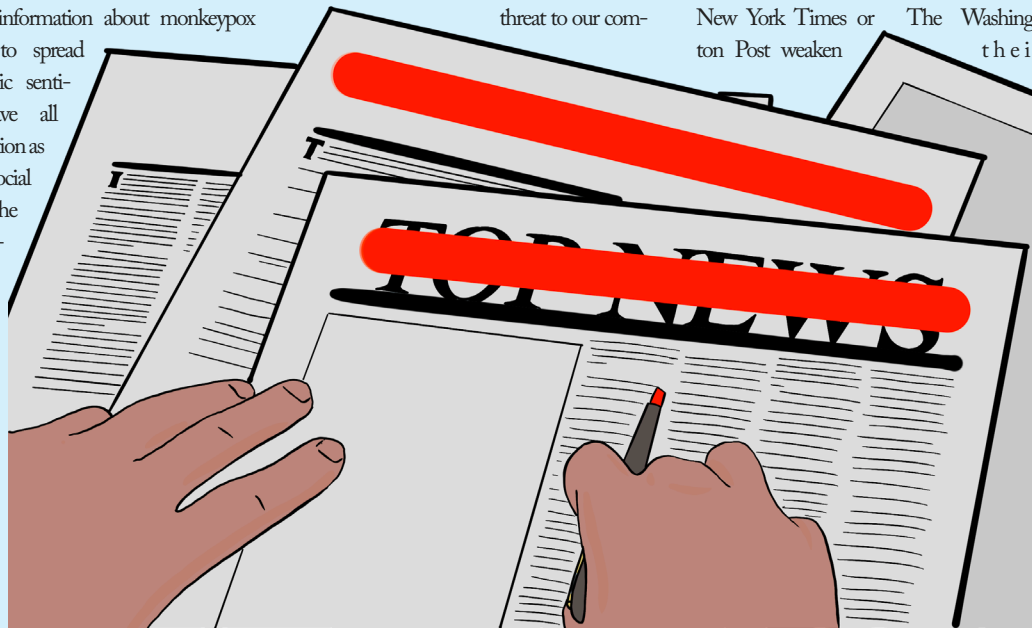
accepted, false information is very difficult to correct. For example, despite authorized investigations confirming that allegations of electoral fraud during the 2020 election were false, 36 percent of Americans still do not believe that President Joe Biden legitimately won the election. Among Republicans, that number increases to 78 percent. Third, people who believe in disinformation can take action and pose a tangible threat to our com-

seriously, making them even more difficult to counter. Fact checkers at The Washington Post reported that Trump, an avid Twitter user, made 30,573 false or misleading claims over the course of his four years as president. Research shows that citizens take cues from high-profile members of society, including elected officials, to form their policy views and preferences. To make things worse, attacks on reputable media sources like The New York Times or The Washington Post weaken their

man by 54 percent to 46 percent. Santos' lies bring into question the true representation of the 54 percent of the constituents who voted for him in Long Island and Queens. How can our democracy stay intact if we do not know what we are voting for?

The new New Jersey law on information literacy will help students recognize which sources and news outlets are credible. It aims to set learning standards that improve research methods and literacy skills by helping students differentiate between news and opinion, primary and secondary sources, as well as learning how to access peer-reviewed print and digital library resources. The NJ Department of Education will implement an information literacy curriculum, compiled by librarians and teachers that includes lessons on digital, visual, media and textual and technological literacy. In addition, the law requires that public hearings must take place before the State Board of Education adopts the new media literacy learning standards.

The new law adds to New Jersey's efforts to fight disinformation and fake news. During the early stages of the Covid-19 pandemic, New Jersey launched a disinformation portal run by the state's Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness. Other states, including California, Idaho, Colorado, New Mexico, and Connecticut, have also launched state-run websites intended to fight disinformation on issues like Covid-19, elections, monkeypox, deepfake technology, and the war in Ukraine, among others. These state-run sites are reactive and top-down initiatives—which, while effective, are only for the short-term. In sharp contrast, teaching information literacy is a sustainable, bottom-up effort that will empower students to identify disinformation and resist fake news. Equipped with media literacy skills, New Jersey citizens will be poised to think for themselves and cast an educated vote.



Aileen Ryu '25/THE LAWRENCE

munities. For example, during his re-election campaign in 2020, former President Donald Trump disseminated false claims among his supporters that the election was hijacked. His supporters, under the impression that said election had been rigged, decided to attack the United States Capitol Building in Washington, D.C. on January 6, 2021.

This issue becomes more pervasive when not just random users but elected officials deliberately manipulate the public. Government officials' accounts are not only verified, but are also guaranteed to reach large audiences, so citizens take these claims even more

abilities to act as fact checkers and watchdogs of politicians and elected officials. These sentiments leave citizens vulnerable to believing disinformation regarding policy issues, such as healthcare or foreign policy, that affect our daily lives. Unaware of the true implications of our vote, we unknowingly enable incompetent people to take office. Take as an example George Santos, the representative for New York's third congressional district. Using Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, Santos lied about a multitude of his qualifications, such as his college degree, his occupation, and even his religion—and, with his false persona, beat opponent Robert Zimmer-

## Mirror Mirror on the Screen, Not All Is As It Seems

SATHVIK SAMANT '26  
OPINIONS ASSOCIATE

For many of us, "the scroll" is a part of our daily routine. We scroll when we wake up, while we walk from Mem to Pop, and as we lie in our beds before falling asleep. Day in and day out, our thumbs dance across the screens of our phones, swiping and tapping, as our minds absorb heaps of information from our glowing and all-knowing screens. Before we fall captive to social media's never-ending stream of information, however, we must keep in mind the dangers it poses, including its ability to distort the very fabric of reality.

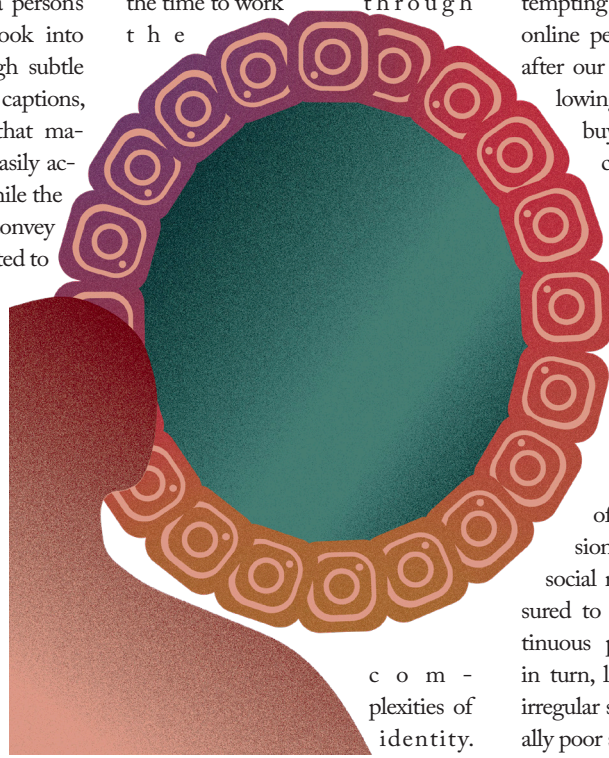
The structure of social media—its accessibility, diversity, and almost-constant availability—lends itself well to connecting communities. Open 24/7 (besides the occasional server crash), social media sites at just the tap of a thumb provide users with constant access to the lives of others.

Yet such access to others' lives often presents information that is fabricated to create a false notion of perfection. These carefully curated posts can seem intimate, but they are shared under the guise of being sincere and personal and are often superficial and inaccurate. Such deception isn't

necessarily purposeful; after all, a photo, a short video, or a 280-character Tweet can only communicate so much. Quite rarely do a person's posts provide an honest look into their lives. Whether through subtle filters, deceptively-worded captions, or selective editing, tools that manipulate reality are all too easily accessible on social media. While the images that users post may convey one reality, thoughtfully crafted to project their most likable selves, behind the lens may exist an entirely different truth. Before blindly falling for the attractive "reality" that these posts may lead us to believe, we must begin to ask ourselves: Who's really behind the camera? While users may pledge to "BeReal," the reality is often quite the contrary.

Social media is one-dimensional—it dilutes peoples' identities to nothing more than what they wear, how they look, and how many followers they have. As reductive as this system is, it's also convenient. Social media is an avenue by which we can easily understand ourselves and the world around us.

It's tempting to flatten the nuances of real-life relationships into mere numbers and statistics, instead of spending the time to work through the



Emily Pan '24/THE LAWRENCE

complexities of identity. Therefore we are unsurprisingly susceptible to forming our perceptions of ourselves based on our social media presences. As we become more wrapped up in the world of social media, our reality begins to

merge with that of how people present themselves online.

Eventually, we find ourselves attempting to transform ourselves into online personas, modeling ourselves after our favorite influencers by following the same food habits, buying the same clothing, and changing the way we interact with others. We tell ourselves that if we can copy these social media personas that we so admire, we can also gain recognition in the eyes of our peers. Yet such a yearning for approval is simply another byproduct of social media's distortion of reality. Under the impression that everything we see on social media is true, we feel pressured to buy into the idea of continuous perfection. This aspiration, in turn, leads to body image issues, irregular spending habits, and generally poor self-perception.

The seemingly harmless "scroll" can throw us into a deep spiral of self-doubt and hatred. This isn't to say that social media can't be used for positive purposes—it can foster a sense of community, act as a source of inspiration, and can be an important outlet

for information. However, we often rely too heavily on this "fake reality" to shape our outlook of the world.

Especially at Lawrenceville, we must constantly remind ourselves that social media only paints one side of the picture: the side that others want you to see. These false representations of the world distort our reality, changing our habits, our behaviors, and the way we live our lives. We must think critically about the information that appears on our social media feeds, and recognize that social media is not real life, but rather a distortion through which the truth is often changed, broken, and, often, entirely lost.

We must not let our perceptions and our relationships be dictated by what people online present to us. Lean into the discomfort of getting to know somebody beyond your surface-level interactions. Connect with your community by signing up for more Explorations, or by dropping into a teacher's classroom just to chat. Dedicate some time in your day to self-exploration by engaging in activities that excite you. Building relationships, especially the relationship with ourselves, is difficult, yes—but nothing worthwhile is ever easy.

# Now, From Your New Upper Management...

## Dear Rabbit—Stop and Smell the Roses.

CLAIRE JIANG '24  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF OF  
THE 143RD BOARD

From athletes to artists, school socialites to campus hermits, there is a commonality that all Lawrentians possess. It lurks under the Harkness table, with its claws creeping up and tearing students down as we are flooded with another wave of assignments. It hides behind the corner of the Bunn Library as we, having returned from an intense day of sports, consign our weary minds to another long night of work. If you look closely enough, it permeates every space we occupy, every breath of air we inhale, and every one of our intrusive thoughts. And so we introduce you, friends, to the dreaded 'it': procrastination. It is the bane of our high school existence, the one trait we all possess, and the one fear we all share.

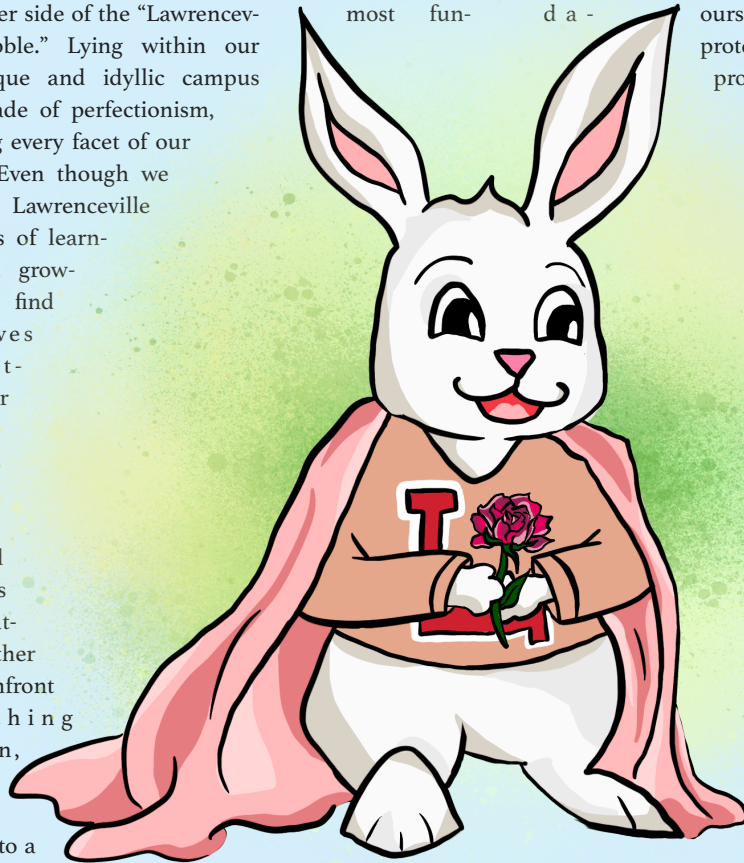
Gloria Yu '26/THE LAWRENCE

*Rather than confront something head-on, we bury ourselves into a small-turtle shell, curling up for a brief but sweet hibernation, before forcing ourselves to sprint to the finish line once again.*

When we procrastinate, most of us assign our inability to complete a task to an innate quality of laziness. However, the true reason why many students confront this grotesque quality often stems from the darker side of the "Lawrenceville Bubble." Lying within our picturesque and idyllic campus is a facade of perfectionism, prickling every facet of our beings. Even though we come to Lawrenceville in hopes of learning and growing, we find ourselves evaluating our performances through exams and grades incessantly. Rather than confront something head-on, we bury ourselves into a small-turtle shell, curling up for a brief but sweet hibernation, before forcing ourselves to sprint to the finish line once again. Or, in less metaphorical terms: It is much easier to ignore a task than face the fact that we can never do something perfectly.

Don't worry. In fact, take some

time to celebrate this habit. Yes, procrastination is self-defense and a form of risk-averse behavior. But coming from a long line of ancestors who have always been driven by the goal of survival at the



most fun- d a - mental level, it is only natural that we fortify our mental inhibitions with something that makes us feel safer—at least in the short term. We are driven to protect ourselves from not only the fear of failure but also the fear of success. We are terrified by the prospect of creating an unreach-

able future benchmark and selling out; we are paralyzed by the possibility of handing over our sense of autonomy to be assessed by others' standards.

Of course, while we can all laud ourselves for this fierce instinct to protect our capacities, the best approach is to take a step back and re-evaluate the true hazard of the daily scenarios students face. Our futures do not entirely hinge on a paper or a math test—they do not even rest on the letter of the alphabet that we receive at the end of the term. Perhaps the Lawrenceville "bubble" is not as suitable a term as the Lawrenceville "droplet." In our liquid prison, we cower from our narrow views and fears at the tapered top; we struggle to keep our heads above the whirlpool of our dread and self-immobilization.

But take the classic lesson in Aesop's fable, "The Tortoise and the Hare": slow and steady wins the race. While this moral can certainly ring true, and the tortoise is an admirable symbol to identify with,

the hare's—or more colloquially, the rabbit's—mindset is also worth learning from. After all, aren't we all like the rabbit in our procrastination? Don't we all deserve to be the rabbit, taking peaceful naps here and there? Don't we all deserve to rest, at least once in a while?

*Our futures do not entirely hinge on a paper or a math test—they do not even rest on the letter of the alphabet that we receive at the end of the term.*

So take my fable. Instead of portraying the rabbit and our own lack of constant productivity in a negative limelight, let us embrace this shared quality—for only when we accept our shortcomings can we really start to make sizable changes to our perfectionist mindsets. Like the rabbit, rest after your brief sprints of inhuman productivity to smell the roses. Slumber for a while. Ponder philosophy a little. Learn to slow it down and take your time. Remember: the finish line we all rush towards does not really exist.

Or, at the very least, the finish line does not lie at the end of your four years of high school.

## "The Reports of My Death Are Greatly Exaggerated!"

LUKE PARK '24  
EXECUTIVE EDITOR OF  
THE 143RD BOARD

It's a warm Friday afternoon, and I'm delivering copies of the latest *Lawrence* issue to the Circle. I'm used to this routine, and I like it—spreading the paper to the School and seeing what my peers have to say about the 142nd Board's work is a fantastic feeling. But there's also a running gag I'm on high alert for. It's a classic: "Who reads *The Lawrence*?"

Everybody knows that nobody reads *The Lawrence*, and nobody knows that fact better than the Board *The Lawrence* themselves. Though we toil week after week in our cramped basement office to bring students interesting opinions, entertaining Features articles, and unique on-campus happenings to discuss, the idea that nobody reads the publication is as prevalent as it is comedic.

Yet there is nuance to the status of *The Lawrence* as a publication and its current readership. As one of the oldest high school newspapers in the U.S., *The Lawrence*'s very existence on campus has entrenched itself into the collective history

of journalism itself. After all, there used to be a time when the internet did not exist, and information was propagated by physical paper instead. Given *The Lawrence*'s founding in 1881, *The Lawrence* was once one of the most accessible sources of information across Lawrenceville. In the 19th and 20th centuries, News articles consistently brought fresh news for the School to see; Opinions articles held far more weight as one of the sole means to uphold student voices; and the publication of *The Lawrence* each week was a far greater occasion. Back then, even if *The Lawrence* wasn't prestigious, it was vital. I wouldn't be surprised if such importance is what has sustained the paper's legacy and its prestige to this very day.

Yet today, every tid-bit of information *The Lawrence* delivers has likely been presented by social media a week before. Information has changed, and emphasis on the paper publication no longer exists. Gone are

the days of the paperboy biking across town, tossing the news from door to door. Gone are the days of students crowding around a freshly printed *Law-*



Emily Pan '24/THE LAWRENCE

*Lawrence*, poring through every line of the newest editorial. Here are the days in which opin-

ions disseminate across our phones faster than Section Editors could ever send out topic emails—where we spend mere seconds checking our Instagram feeds, Snapchat stories, recommended videos, and online news pages to get the scoop of the day.

In fact, if you type in "newspapers" in the Google search bar, one of the first results you might get is "Do newspapers still exist?" Though the question sounds ludicrous, paper publications across America are slowly declining; most concerningly, a study published by Northwestern University estimates that a third of all newspapers in America will cease publishing by 2025. Given that Lawrenceville is a microcosm of American society, the loss of newspapers in the country to other forms of media might spell out the very end of *The Lawrence* itself. This potential horror raises an existential question: What should we, the Board of *The Lawrence*, do to prevent the decline of the publication? But the answer is simple. *The*

*Lawrence* won't decline.

Newspapers adapt, and by transitioning online, countless newspapers have gained the advantages of social media, like the live coverage of events. *The Lawrence* has established an online presence, but even without a webpage, I believe it will still survive; I have faith in it. As written in its Charter, *The Lawrence* aims to mirror and represent the student voice—an intangible, but sacred component of campus life that cannot be lost to the growth of technology and the passage of time. Our discussions on mental health on campus, the importance of civic education, and even the history of lawns or why the squirrels on campus are black all hold a unique and irreplaceable perspective that people will always have to pick up the paper to get.

And so, people do pick up *The Lawrence*. Whether it's the parents and faculty, students casually reading the press in their Houses on a Friday afternoon, or the collective anticipation over a pressing Editorial, *The Lawrence* is something invaluable to Lawrenceville, whether people realize it or not.

After all, nobody reads *The Lawrence*—it is not merely read, but needed and beloved.

## The Best Fales of the 142nd Board

ADI JUNG '23  
FEATURES EDITOR (DUH)

Stephanie Xu '23/THE LAW-



### THE LAWRENCE

Class of 1968 Fund in Honor of Edward A. Robbins H'68 '69 '71 - Nicholas G. Ifft '44 Fund  
- The Princeton Packet Fund (Denise L. and James B. Kilgore '66) - Michael S. Chae '86

This poor guy's name being spelled wrong in literally every issue since 1990 (his name is G. Nicholas Ifft)

## Features by the numbers

0

The number of mistakes, typos, or errors this section has published (jk it's like 40).

273

The number of times we have beefed with News when they stole our profiles. It's like the only thing we can write about.

100

The percentage of 143 EIC applicants who insulted the Features section.

0

The number of pages Emma In-Designed or topics I came up with.

7,543

The number of copy edits made when we submitted articles after second edits.

14

The number of times Emma and I tried to publish something out of pocket.

## A First Look at The Frosh: Get to Know the Class of '26

Emma's and my trying to publish this wonderful article about our lovely II Formers under the title "A First Taste of Fresh Meat"

Also, if any of you are interested in taking over "Dear Pearl" next year, please send an email expressing your interest to [ajung23@lawrenceville.org](mailto:ajung23@lawrenceville.org) and [ekim23@lawrenceville.org](mailto:ekim23@lawrenceville.org). Okay, that's all—take care, my dears! I love you, Lawrenceville. Pearl

I ruined the big reveal that Pearl was Quinn Thierfelder '22 by messing up the InDesign



When Kelly had to take over a last minute graphic....

Kelly Lu '23/THE LAWRENCE

## Dogs of the Week: Part Two (Fake Twins)

Luna  
Jasmine Zhang '23

Happy  
Tiffany Wen '23

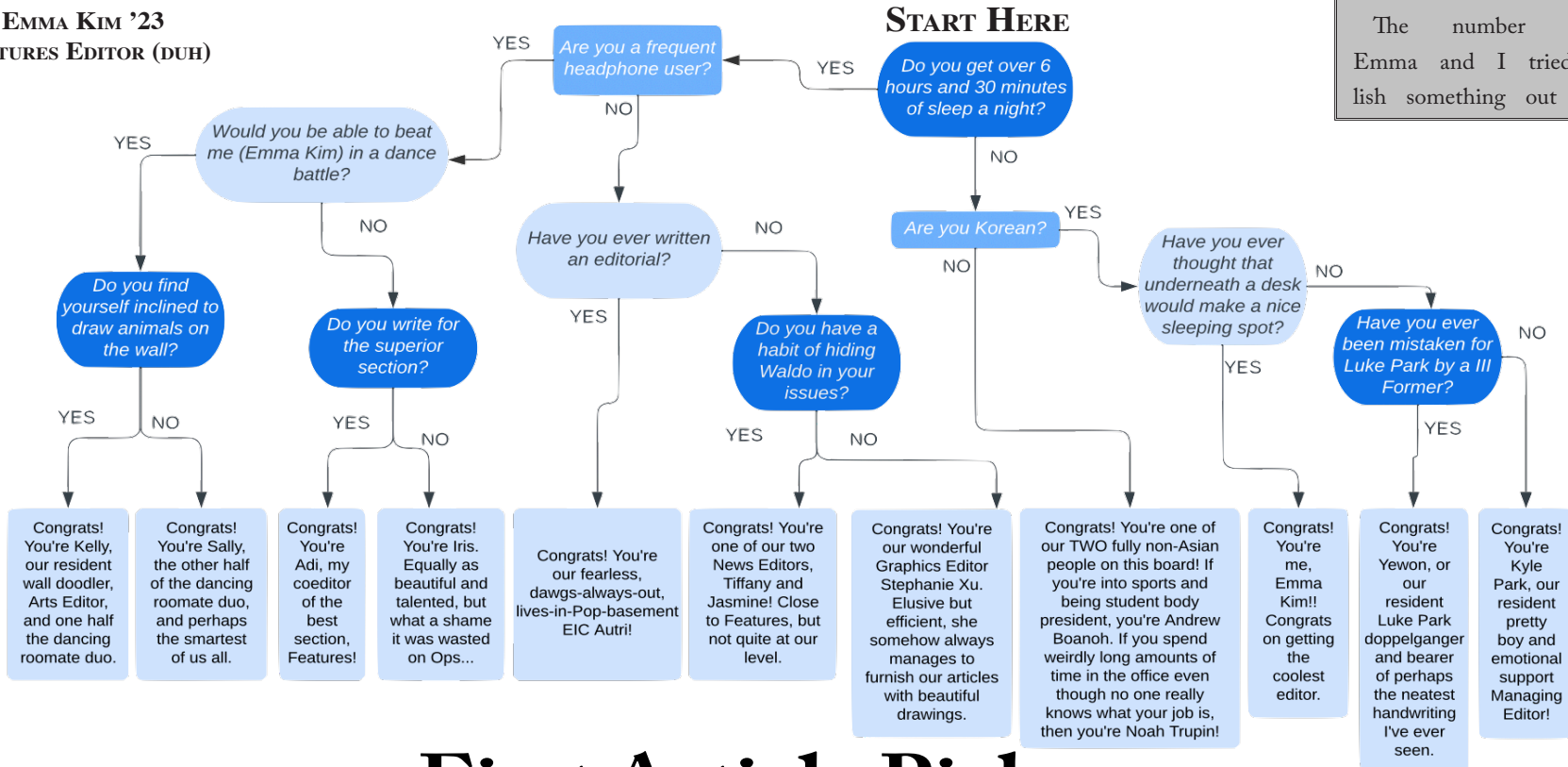
Publishing two sections of 'dogs of the week' because we tried to publish an article about the II Formers getting lice but our faculty advisors nixed it.

When I made a typo in the very first issue.

## Performnig Arts Teacher Matthew Campbell


# Which Editor Are You?: Choose Your Own Path

EMMA KIM '23  
FEATURES EDITOR (DUH)



## First Article Picks

	Emma Kim Co-Features Editor	Andrew Boanoh Sports Editor	Kelly Lu Arts Editor	Tiffany Wen Co-News Editor	Autri Basu Editor-in-Chief	Yewon Chang Co-Opinions Editor	Luke Park Co-Copy Editor	Claire Jiang Co-Copy Editor	Kyle Park Managing Editor
What was the title of your first article?	Tour Guide Council and Virtual Big Red Admissions, co-written with Jasmine Zhang!	The GOAT of GOATS: Who is the greatest athlete of all time?	Previewing the Fall Play: Clue: On Stage	Freshman opinionates on seniors' college application component: standardized testing	Capstone: Andersen Predicts 2020 Democratic Primary	European Migrant Crisis: Unceasing and Unresolved	"Games are Art"	it was a news article co-written with our very own emma kim and tiff yeung	2019 Choate Day Recap
Summarize in 15 words or less.	Two overreaching third formers think they are writing for the New York Times	Third Former on three hours of sleep does scant research on sporting legends he's never heard of.	completely rewritten by Isabelle Lee and Angel Zhang	unpublished melting pot of foolishness, bad writing skills, and a patronizing freshman. aka my bffs!	Freshman attempts to summarize lecture, somehow makes it even more boring	delusional new sophomore is bamboozled by 187 suggestions and comments	local freshman watches a video essay and goes nuts	ruth bader ginsburg vigil on zoom ft. the candle app	2019 Choate Day Recap
Choose the funniest/most-poorly worded line.	"...for those who are already a part of the Big Red Community, nothing seems insurmountable when working together."	n/a	i just compiled quotes together without writing anything myself	"one problem is that these tests underestimate the success of almost all groups except one: white males."	"secret political gatherings called 'smoke-filled rooms'"	i can't fit 966 words in this box.	"Undertale, a critically acclaimed indie role-playing game (RPG)"	half of the article was basically other people's quotes...	article was pretty much game results and a few interviews
As an editor, would you have published this?	"Two overachieving third formers think they are writing for the New York Times" need I say more...?	Yes. I was elite.	NAHHHHHHH	most certainly. do it to terrorize freshman me, yk?	With that many vague pronouns, Mrs. Buckles would never clear it	i lack the work ethic of lucia wetherill. so no.	Yes. As a joke	yes! (it was a team effort though) I also LOVE christine cheng	Of course. Grayson Miller '21 co-wrote with me.



## THE LAWRENCE

Class of 1968 Fund in Honor of Edward A. Robbins H'68 '69 '71 - Nicholas G. Ifft '44 Fund - The Princeton Packet Fund (Denise L. and James B. Kilgore '66) - Michael S. Chae '86

**"DO YOUR DISTRIBUTION"**  
Horizontal Autri  
"Alright, do you guys have any questions?"  
Autri's lover

Where's Waldo?  
More like where's your editorial...  
Brought to you by Lawrenceville sweatshirts

**WE NEED TO FINISH OUR PAGE**  
~ we need to finish our pageeeee ~  
"One of our writers wrote something controversial again..."

**\*kendrick lamar noises from the corner\***  
"As an asian woman this resonates with me deeply"

**Dream couple: never done indesign x never written a topic email**  
"Can we leave we're five weeks ahead"

**Most likely to be a cosplayer**  
Habanero wing champion

**Sugar, spice and everything nice**  
"Guys, guys, let's be nice"

**"JDF is my father"**  
\*dance battles\*  
Office loiterers #1 and #2

**\*jpeg attached\***  
Still loading

**GET YOUR GRAPHICS IN**  
"I know I've probably been in the office the least but..."

**\*crickets\***  
404 Error

**Faculty Advisors**  
Like Cinderella, but instead of losing her magic at midnight she just gets grumpy  
Our resident office Mom

**Best style in the office**  
Double agent

Redacted for PR reasons

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### CORRECTIONS

Readers who notice errors should just move on. It's fine. Whatever.

## Soundtrack of My Lawrenceville Career

MIRA PONNAMBALAM '26

**"Talk Too Much" by COIN**  
Every Saturday night, Lawrenceville hosts a range of activities for students to participate in instead of study hall, providing a great time to hang out and have fun with friends. Lawrentians can choose to participate in structured activities or simply relax without having to consider what is due the next day. "On Saturday nights, my friends and I used to go on walks and listen to music on my speaker. This is a song that we played a lot, and [it] brings up a lot of good memories," said Anushka Chintamaneni '23.

**"You Belong With Me" by Taylor Swift**  
This year Taylor Swift released her new album, *Midnights*, and began her Eras tour. Her songs have become a familiar presence on campus, melding in with the busy sounds of the House. Mila Cooper '26 mentioned that "it reminds me of choreographing to Taylor Swift in dance class and singing in the common room."

**"Supercut" by Lorde**  
For students at Lawrenceville, cherished memories comprise every moment of their lives. The Lawrenceville experience involves classes and work, but also includes time with friends, House spirit, and new experiences. "To me, this song feels like laying in front of Carter with my friends on a warm spring day... Whenever I listen to it now, I picture a literal supercut of my time here at Lawrenceville," said Stephanie Xu '23.

**"I" by Kendrick Lamar**  
Sometimes, Lawrenceville can feel like a constant grind with little respite. The fast paced environment can be a lot to handle, so Head of School Steve Murray H'54 '55 '65 '16 P'16 '21 emphasized the importance of taking a break to relax and slow down. Kendrick Lamar's "I" reminds listeners to love themselves. "His upbeat optimism gets me every time: 'Lift up your head and keep moving,'" said Murray.

**"Come Together" by The Beatles**  
The faculty singing group, Treble Threat, performs song parodies. One year, in a show hosted for the former Head of School, the group performed a comedic rendition of "Come Together" by the Beatles. "[It] was hilarious. I never hear that song without thinking of the performance," stated English teacher Miranda Christoffersen P'14'18.

**"Levitating" by Dua Lipa**  
Lawrenceville is full of talented people, and Lawrentians are frequently given the chance to showcase this talent through special events and performances. During Sofia Carlisi's '24 II Form year, the Disciples, a student-led pop and rock band, showed off their skills by performing this song. "JalenTheRapper did a cover of it at All Arts Night," added Carlisi.

## The Terrific Mr. Terrile

ARYA VISHWAKARMA '25

Paul Terrile, a recent addition to Lawrenceville's Math Department, teaches Precalculus BC, Honors Statistics, and Honors Calculus BC, in addition to coaching cross country and track. His personable teaching style and calm demeanor (combined with his Boston accent) make him a source of sage advice for students. Ava Martoma '25 recalls that "[his] passions really shone through during our class discussions in the Fall Term." Where did Terrile first find this passion, and how does he feel about further exploring it at Lawrenceville?

After teaching in Massachusetts for six years, Terrile and his wife moved to Singapore on a two-year leave of absence: they "never planned on staying as long as [they] did." Soon, however, they fell in love with the lifestyle, food, culture, and travel opportunities there. What started as a brief but exciting interlude stretched into staying for their two children's births, childhoods, and high school careers. Now that the Terriles are back in the States, he recounted some cultural and environmental shocks provoked by the transition: "I [used to hear] other languages constantly throughout every day...I haven't experienced seasons in 25 years [because] it was hot and humid...it took me a while to get used to seeing animals like deer, groundhogs, and foxes."

For over two decades, Terrile worked at the Singapore American School (SAS). Some of the most exciting offerings he led were international summer interim courses held in various locations, including Tasmania and Switzerland. His favorite of these excursions took place in Japan, in a remote area where "you pretty much had to be fluent in Japanese to get around." Terrile spoke no Japanese and experienced an informative learning curve. He and his students tried many local foods and skied throughout the archipelago. Terrile's experience traveling around the world has given him an appreciation for other cultures and an appetite to expand his own horizons.

Teaching AP Calculus and AP Sta-

tistics in Singapore exposed Terrile to a diverse group of students eager to learn, something he continues to appreciate at Lawrenceville. "I enjoy getting to watch students progress throughout the year, and seeing how far they've come," he commented. Watching shy students open up over the year and grow more comfortable with contributing is especially rewarding to Terrile. A meticulous planner, he spends time making sure each section he teaches has the best experience they can, through interactive discussions and time on the whiteboard. However, he is still adapting to the Lawrenceville class schedule and its demands—he's "excited to get more comfortable with the system."

In addition to his work as a teacher, every May, Terrile assumes the mantle of an AP Calculus exam reader and scorer, paging through dozens of free-response questions and deciding whether or not students have met expectations set by the tests. This experience makes him an invaluable resource for students anxious to know if their logical reasoning is airtight, or if their notation follows convention. During a free period, you can often see him in other calculus classes to check in on other sections. Terrile is always ready to provide support, from holding open office hours during Finals

Week to having a conversation in the KMSC hallway.

While on duty in Woodhull, Terrile was surprised by both extremes of the student body—Lawrenceville's day students and international boarders. Terrile says he likes to see the multicultural aspect of the community and what it does to enhance the student experience, drawing parallels to his experiences at SAS. In addition, he appreciates that "everyone, even day students, seems very involved with the House." A common trait Terrile noticed among Lawrentians is their smorgasbord of ambitions: "I've noticed that kids who are hard workers [in the classroom] are hard workers on the court, too," said Terrile. An ambition of his is to become a mentor for new faculty in addition to his teaching and coaching positions, because of the support he received from faculty while transitioning to his new environment.

A final piece of advice Terrile would like to share is a philosophy cast aside far too often by Lawrentians—living in the moment. "I always hear kids exclaim, 'I can't wait to graduate!' when they're overworked or stressed. Please take the time to enjoy high school—you'll look back on it and recall some of the best years of your life." Thank you, Mr. Terrile, for helping make them that way!



Paul Terrile

Tarak Jayachandran '24 / THE LAWRENCE



Mimie Pinpakornkul '25 / THE LAWRENCE

**"City Ruins (Shade)" by Keiici Okube**

The ruins of Irwin and the construction surrounding it have become a constant over the course of this year. Whenever you walk out of Tsai, it's right there; the construction site starkly contrasts the surrounding area. For Sophie Yang '26, this song reminds her of just that. "[Both the site and the song] sound like nature with the slight hint of a giant bulldozer in the background," she described.

**"The Spins" by Mac Miller**

A good hype song can help you get through a run, workout, or even a big test. "The Spins" has consistently come up during Ashley Wang's '23 time at Lawrenceville, during both House runs and cross-country. Wang says, "it's super upbeat and gives me a lot of nostalgia."

## Why *The Lawrence*?

**JACKIE WILLIAMS '24**  
FEATURES ASSOCIATE

When it comes to the best campus publications, there is no doubt that *The Lawrence* is the first one that comes to mind, especially considering its hard-working members and large presence on campus. Even if you only see the weekly paper sitting on the statue in Pop Hall or quickly check the publication's Wikipedia page, after 142 years of production, *The Lawrence* has made itself known. Everyone has heard of the publication, but has anyone ever thought of why it holds the respectable name it currently does? In an attempt to answer this somewhat extensive question, Board members—both old and new—reflect on their experience with the paper.

Why do people write for *The Lawrence*? Lawrenceville clubs tend to have difficulty receiving continued participation from large portions of the student body due to the business of student life. *The Lawrence*, however, never seems to have complications in attracting and retaining writers. "People choose to sit down and write these articles because they

really care," said Andrew Boanoh '23 of the abundance of students involved in the publication. Similarly, Board members were drawn to *The Lawrence* for different reasons and at different times during their Lawrenceville career reinforcing the idea that there is no singular reason why people join. Grant Shueh '23 aimed to share meaningful takes on topics that are not talked about enough on campus; for example, the raccoon that was found in the Bowl. On the other hand, Boanoh hated writing and joined as a way to "force [himself] to like writing," and in turn, he developed a "slight increase in liking writing," as he currently serves as the 142 Board's Sports Editor. Members like Iris Wu '23 took their time before getting involved with the paper. Wu went through nine rounds of edits of one article in the span of three weeks before being a published writer at the end of her sophomore year. For Claire Jiang '24, however, her magnetic attraction to the publication began immediately after a quick glance at the paper during her campus tour. All in all, people find their way to the paper and make time

to contribute, whether it be by claiming an article or spending a late night in the office.

The success of the publication reflects the hours of work Board members devote to the paper, but alongside their hard work also comes with many special memories. Boanoh emphasized the Board's core rule: "What is said behind the closed office door stays in the office," so while students will never know just quite what goes on, some members have helped us to get a hunch. Different aspects of late Thursday nights are enjoyed by all members, but one commonly shared appreciation is for the 142 Board's Editor-in-Chief, Autri Basu '23. Wu described him as a "fascinating person who is funny to talk to," while Shueh highlighted his toes as his "most important asset as his role as Editor-in-Chief." Jiang elaborated on this inside joke by describing the common occurrence of Basu "resting his bare feet on the office couch." Wu realized that she has seen 50 percent of the board cry, and that they experience every emotion on the spectrum together, making the Board a tight group. After a rewarding session of

working on the paper, no matter how late it may be, Boanoh said that there is always time for a late night conversation interesting enough, that the night may only end when they are kicked out by Public Safety.

*The Lawrence*, as Jiang put it, is the "embodiment of the Lawrenceville community in an eight page issue," making it a publication which "remains consistent in an inconsistent place." Even though much of the student body may not actually read the paper, it is always a good source for referencing current happenings on campus and can have very important messages which elaborate on pressing topics. The paper gives students the ability to write with their own voice and stay true to their own ideas even after rounds of editing. *The Lawrence* has helped Wu in this exact way, as she has an outlet to write in ways she feels she cannot normally speak at Lawrenceville. Another powerful aspect of the paper is its student involvement—many people read the paper just to see their name or read a friend's article. Boanoh's answer to the question "Why *The Lawrence*?" describes it best: "It's just so cool."



The 142 Board in the Winter of 2022

Courtesy of *The Lawrenceville School*



The 142 Board two days before their final publication

Nishka Malik '24 / *THE LAWRENCE*

## A Look at the History of Winterfest

**SONIA LACKEY '25**

Winterfest, Lawrenceville's student-produced and student directed set of shows, ran nine plays in one night as the festival celebrated its 21st year since the program's debut. Winterfest occurs late in the Winter Term and is set in the Black Box Theater. The organization and material choice has varied greatly from year to year, but each Winterfest performance fills its audience with a new sense of appreciation for theatre. This year, there were three longer performances, as opposed to last year where there were two shorter programs that each performed twice on different weekends. According to Performing Arts Department Chair and Director of Theater Matthew Campbell, Winterfest has had as many as four different nights worth of plays in one event in its long history.

But where does Winterfest come from? Few teachers from the debut performances of Winterfest still work at Lawrenceville, but Technical Director of the Kirby Arts Center James Cuthrell has worked on Winterfest for 15 years and has produced the show for the past three years. Since its inception, "the goal of Winterfest has always been as an opportunity for students interested in directing and playwriting to have a venue to explore their artistry," said Cuthrell. According to Cuthrell, this artistry in the theater can present itself in a variety of forms, including dance and song. According to Campbell, Winterfest, aptly named as a festival that takes place during the Winter Term, "models itself around the short theater festivals that happen in many cities that happen across the world" and was always meant to be "for the students by the students,

as much as [is] possible." Winterfest began as a production meant to steer students toward an exploration into directing and producing plays.

Winterfest was introduced because "there was a need to provide students with an opportunity to engage with theater," said Campbell. While faculty members have occasionally directed plays in the past, teachers tend to act as consultants rather than authority figures within Winterfest productions. For instance, in his time as the producer of Winterfest, Cuthrell "[has served] as a mentor and production resource to help the Head of Winterfest and each company bring their work to life," but he also trusts the students to manage the program so he has instead "been able to observe from a distance while all the students involved have been busy at work developing their performances."

Students' production of Winterfest varies greatly depending on the year and the students. For instance, Cuthrell's favorite Winterfest, Winterfest 2021, was "produced over Zoom, from around the country and across the globe...[and] was a feat of sheer magic!" In 2021, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, Periwig completely changed to fit the needs of a Winterfest bound by health requirements. Meanwhile, in recent years, Winterfest has seen the introduction of student-written plays. The audiences see shows for the "first time, being heard in the format that it is supposed to be presented in," according to Campbell. Winterfest, though always based on the idea of student production, changes to fit the needs and ideas of the students as well.

Of the main Lawrenceville art productions, Winterfest has always been the most varied.

The Fall Musical and Spring Play are always productions of their namesake, but Winterfest is a collection of performing arts. The only consistent factor is the presence of student authority; everything else changes depending on the director, producers, tech, and other factors. According to Campbell, fac-

ulty members have "a close hand at the ready, but...they are not making the decisions... All the artistic...choices [are left] to the students." Winterfest is a great example of student independence at Lawrenceville, because it represents the students' freedom to produce their own ideas and take creative liberties.



Actors from the Winterfest play "Candy Heart"

Cindy Shum '24 / *THE LAWRENCE*

# Wondrous Winterfest Reflection

**SOFIA CARLISI '24**  
ARTS ASSOCIATE

With the Winter Term coming to an end, it is the perfect time to reflect on one of Lawrenceville's most cherished traditions: Winterfest. Each winter, students direct, act, and sometimes write short one-act plays that are performed in the Black Box theater. Last year I had the opportunity to act in a play, but this past year, I wrote and directed the show *Love is Knocking on Your Door* along with my brother, Adrian Carlisi '24.

Directing is so different from acting because even though your heart is in the show, you watch the performance with the audience instead of being inside it. Because I, along with my brother, wrote the play we directed, we had thought of every line together. The play had us written all over it, without our actually being in it at all. *Love is Knocking On Your Door* has so much history that no one but us knows about. The audience sees the final product, but not us sitting at the kitchen table brainstorming the ending, or Adrian writing parts of it on the plane ride to Montana. No one



saw Reed Cloninger '25 and my brother during a dress rehearsal fixing his opening monologue. So much of this show is only for the directors and actors to experience, and I never really thought about that until now. I love theatre because I love performing, but it is all those moments between the start and finish that make theater truly something special.

As an actor, one of my favorite

things about Winterfest was the collaborative aspect of it. I truly felt like the character I acted was my own, and that I had shaped her along with my director. Before I ever directed anything myself, Winterfest was my first chance to create a character. Last year, when I reflected on the most recent Winterfest production, I wrote: "Every time I walked into rehearsal, I knew I would come out with a different take on my character and a new perspective through which to see the play as a whole." This sentiment hasn't changed! I knew that my actors would whip up something entirely new and creative after each rehearsal, oftentimes all by themselves. Watching my actors go through the same experiences I did last year was so fulfilling.

My actors were people whom I knew from my House, classes, or past performances. Getting to be a part of a show with them was so special! I loved that for some of the actors, Winterfest was one of their first times acting at Lawrenceville, and it was super cool to experience the novelties of theatre right along with them. I watched my actors shape and rework their characters throughout each rehearsal, and they brought something fresh to every

performance. They took notes and ran with them, and I know that their characters became truly their own, too.

On opening night, Claire Robbins '24 came up to me and said, "Can I bring this fruit roll-up on stage and eat it?" Her character would, for sure, have had a fruit roll-up in his backpack. She had a brilliant idea—I would never have thought of that! Someone

approached me after the show, telling me Claire's fruit roll-up was genius, and I remember saying, "It was all her."

Although I loved directing, my heart belongs to the stage. I am still trying to convince my brother to write a one-character play where I play every role next year. Could I be Adrian's muse? Who knows. After all, with Winterfest, anything's possible!



Winterfest Directors

Courtesy of The Lawrenceville School

# New Hutchins Galleries Exhibition

**LOUIS PARK '26**

From February 10 to April 8, the Hutchins Galleries will display new artwork featuring the works of Vincent "VCAB" Bush and Alia Bensliman. The Hutchins Gallery will present approximately 40 pieces from both artists in two exhibitions: Bush's *Hope from Within* and Bensliman's *From North Africa to North America: Journey of a Story Teller*. The Hutchins Galleries' curator, Melina Guarino, organized these exhibitions, as both artists' artwork would "really speak to the Lawrenceville community; Bush's inspirational paintings and heart-themed work seemed appropriate for this close-knit campus; Bensliman's spiritual mixed media work shows how life can inform art," said Guarino.

Bush, or "VCAB," creates art that's all about love, saying that "the heart is the universal sign for love" because "no matter what culture, religion, color, or walk of life one belongs to, one can recognize that symbol and what it stands for." The heart motifs are his "key ingredient in life" and can be spotted easily in his work. No matter what genre: public art, digital art, paintings, mixed media, the theme of love is always melted inside throughout his art. In this *Hope from Within* exhibition, most of Bush's pieces are paintings, but he also incorporates digital art, mixed media, and photos of his street art. Bush's biggest goal is to remind himself and others about the importance of love, ranging from self-care to loving others. He also shared his feeling about the exhibition at Lawrenceville: "I am extremely thankful that Guarino reached out and thought my art and its message were important to share with the students at Lawrenceville. I



Hutchins Galleries

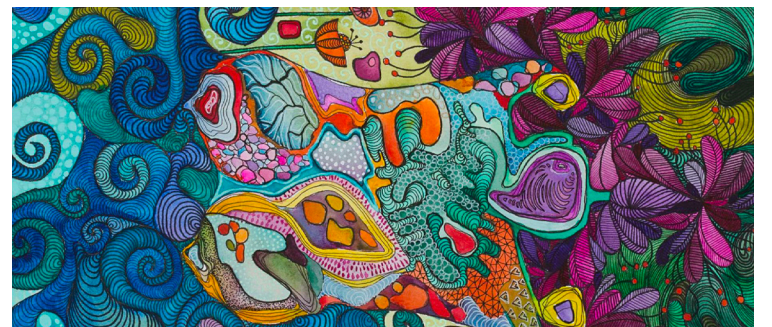
Nicole Halucka '26//THE LAWRENCE

am also thankful to have my second solo exhibit, which is also my biggest!"

The Hutchins Galleries' other artist, Bensliman, introduced her work as contemporary art drawings that reflect her view of life and her sentiments about the current state of society, including topics about socio-political issues, taboos, religion, relationships, health, and human rights. As a result, her artwork is "sort of a diary of [her] everyday life," she said. Bensliman uses a combination of intricate lines, shapes, and repetitive patterns with colors like gold and silver (which she sometimes makes herself) to create the desired textures and intensity of work. When asked about her artistic background, she said, "Since childhood, I struggled with learning disabilities like dyslexia, so school was very challenging, and I felt misunderstood until I went to fine arts school. I was able to find myself in a comfortable environment

where I can thrive. My art was and still is an amazing tool for me to feel comfortable emotionally, physically, and spiritually."

Bensliman grew up in Tunisia, and her art reflects a "fusion of East and West with a penchant for North African and Berber art." As the name *From North Africa to North America: Journey of a Storyteller* suggests, Bensliman explained the theme of this show features her journey as an artist from her home country, Tunisia in North Africa, to the United States. Bensliman wished "to show how [she] felt impressed by the beauty and diversity [she] felt" in the US while sharing her own culture and origins with the viewers. Her show splits into two levels: the first floor presents pieces related to her North African heritage, whereas the second floor is more inspired by a contemporary Western style. Bensliman also remarked that she



Bensliman's Art

Courtesy of CanvasRebel Magazine

"couldn't refuse an amazing invite" from Lawrenceville and how the Hutchins Galleries' Rotunda "fit [her vision] perfectly." To all Lawrentians, she advised, "Never give up and never look back. Don't let anyone minimize you or your work!" Moreover, Bensliman will host an artist talk open to the Lawrenceville

community on March 31, where she will discuss being an artist in Tunisia and her transition to becoming an artist in America.

If any Lawrentian loves to explore art, why not stop by the Hutchins Galleries and immerse yourself into the artistic world of Bensliman and Bush?



Emily Pan '24//THE LAWRENCE



# Freshman Shakespeare '20 Throwback

In honor of the II Form Shakespeare Performance of *The Tempest* on February 25, here are some reflections and nostalgia from performers and tech crew workers from the II Form Shakespeare performance of *King Lear* by the graduating class of 2023.

**STEPHANIE XU '23**  
**GRAPHICS EDITOR**  
**PRODUCTION STAGE MANAGER**

Freshman Shakespeare is still, to this day, one of my favorite memories at Lawrenceville. I can still recall those olive green *King Lear* shirts, peeling grapes backstage before a show, and frantically yelling into my headset about Roan. The show was silly, fun, and full of mistakes, but I am so grateful to Freshman Shakespeare for introducing and welcoming me into Periwig. I couldn't have asked for a better cast and crew to have done it with.

**ANDREW BOANOH '23**  
**SPORTS EDITOR**  
**EARL OF GLOUCESTER**

To enter into the hallowed space that is the Lawrenceville School's Black Box theater, surrounded by actors of the highest caliber, and sets that seem to have been constructed by the great smith Hephaestus himself is to be temporarily possessed by the Muses. For that short Winter Term, we engaged in a performance of Shakespeare's *King Lear* that was nothing short of Oscar-worthy. Our numerous mistakes, including Roan slipping after the rain scene, JTR improvising all of his lines, and wardrobe transformations taking just a tad longer than they should have—were only included such that the audience might truly believe that we were mere freshman actors: those of us in the know understood that we were gods on that holy stage.

**ADELINE ZHOU '23**  
**EARL OF KENT**

If 30 people like and share this article, I will bring back the goatee.



**JACK CHOU '23**  
**TECHNICAL DIRECTOR**

Roan slipping on stage during *King Lear* was perhaps one of the most memorable moments during Freshman Shakespeare. Although I did forget to mop up the stage during transitions, it was great to hear the audience burst out into laughter. Thankfully, he didn't suffer any major injuries and till this day Roan and I still bring it up once in a while.

**ROAN McDONALD '23**  
**EDGAR**

The end product is never going to be perfect; it's a jumping off point for theatre at the school. I got to know people I'd see in productions for the next four years who joined Freshman Shakespeare just for a quick laugh. Just remember not to fall on stage, or it will haunt you forever.



2020 *King Lear* Performance

Courtesy of The Lawrenceville School

**ANDREW PARK '23**  
**KING OF FRANCE/EDMUND**

While I didn't expect to touch performing arts at Lawrenceville, acting in *King Lear* turned out to be one of the most rewarding experiences during my time here, even as a minor character watching from backstage for most of the play. Subbing in to play Edmund on the second night was not necessarily what I expected, but it was an absolute blast to just be in the moment and figure out a major role on the spot.



**EMILY HAMMOND '23**  
**REGAN**

Freshman Shakespeare is like a milkshake. Everyone gets taken out of the freezer, put into a blender, and blended until the original shapes are no longer recognizable. The people who drink the milkshake will never know how much taking apart and putting back together is needed to put on a show like that. However, without the blender, the process is much more time-consuming and less fun.



**ANOUSHKA SHARMA '23**  
**PROP RUNNER**

I joined the deck crew for *King Lear* after I (along with Kwama Ankrah '23) did not get cast in the show. I like to think having to get on our hands and knees to wipe water off the stage with towels between every scene (because the rain rig was leaky) is the price we had to pay for lead roles our senior year (god's plan never fails!)

**LILY HOOGE '23**  
**RUTLAND/FRENCH SPY**

Acting for *King Lear* was what made me fall in love with theater. The community, the passion, the positivity—there is no other opportunity like it exists on campus. Acting for *King Lear* was also what made me realize I have social anxiety, and I have stayed backstage since.

**AUTRI BASU '23**  
**EDITOR-IN-CHIEF**  
**STAGE SUPERVISOR**

My time working on *King Lear* marked the beginning of my long history of making mistakes backstage. I'd like to thank the rain rig for its service, and Roan for his forgiveness.

## From Comedy to Vocals: Impulse x Allegro Show

**HARINI VENKATESH '25**  
**ARTS ASSOCIATE**

On Saturday, Impulse and the Allegro Council teamed up to create a captivating performance that blended the artistry of music and comedy. The show was an immersive and entertaining experience that brought student artists' passions and talents to life.

The Allegro Council is Lawrenceville's music service and advocacy club, dedicated to celebrating music and the talented musicians on campus. In their segment of the performance, they featured various instrumentalists and vocalists. Meanwhile, Impulse, Lawrenceville's stand-up comedy troupe, added a touch of humor to the show through their unique brand of wit and humor. They produced hilarious skits, stand-up comedy, and improvisational performances that brought an effervescent spirit to the event.

Although music and comedy may seem different, they both serve as



The Allegro Council and Impulse Show

Cindy Shum '24//THE LAWRENCE

modes of self-expression, allowing the artist to connect with the audience in profound ways. Both music and comedy possess the ability to unite communities and create a shared experience that transcends individual

differences. Whether through a concert or a comedy show, these art forms can inspire collective joy and foster deeper connections among individuals.

To Allegro vocalist Sameer Menghani '24, this show was part

of "our community's constant effort to celebrate art in unique ways." For instance, live performances are an excellent platform for musicians and comedians to refine their craft and improve their stage presence.

Performing in front of a live audience provides immediate feedback, allowing performers to adjust and ultimately improve their works. Moreover, Menghani's quick switch between being an Allegro vocalist to an Impulse comedian demonstrates the flexibility and variety of art and expression.

To Maggie Hammond '25, performing in Impulse "helps [her] build confidence and showcase [her] creativity." In addition, giving student artists a platform to showcase their talent allows them to represent the wide range of performing arts at Lawrenceville. The Allegro Council and Impulse's joint performance showcased the power of music and comedy to unite communities and create shared experiences. Both art forms serve as modes of self-expression, allowing artists to refine their craft and improve their stage presence while inspiring collective joy and fostering deeper connections among individuals.

## Public Speaking Competition

SOPHIE CHENG '25  
NEWS ASSOCIATE  
SIENNA MORA '25

Every year, all Lawrentians are required to present an argumentative speech to their individual English class during the Fall Term. Students might receive a guideline on what to speak about, but otherwise can argue anything they would like. For example, the semi-final prompt was “the difference between...” providing students with a wide range of responses.

There are different stages to the competition. Each English teacher chooses one student from their English class, leading them to the quarter final round that is judged by a committee of faculty, staff, and administration members. Afterward, the remaining students compete in the semi-finals. This year, Language Department Chair Brian Jacobs H'14 and Math Fellow Sakthi Ponnuswamy evaluated the semi-finalists, with the addition of Miranda Christoffersen P'14 '18 to break ties and facilitate judgment in the Ambrecht room in the Noyes History Center. Five finalists are then chosen to compete in the final round at school meeting.

This year's finalists are Cassandra Dillard '24, Kyle Park '23, Sophia Kohmann '24, Sofia Carlisi '24 and Eric Frankel '23. These students gave their initial speeches sometime during this past fall, then on January 11, had their semifinals on February 8, and will prepare for the final upcoming presentation on March 30. As far as rules and guidelines go, the speech, delivered to the whole school,

must be three to five minutes long. Notecards are forbidden, demonstrating the finalists' advanced ability to give a well-thought-out speech.

Frankel performed his first speech in his class “Radical Love in African American Literature,” this past fall. He spoke about “RuPaul's Drag Race” and the need for all of us to internalize the lessons that Drag Queens embody” in his first and semi-final round. He additionally “spoke about the differences between [him] and [his] sadness and touched upon positive psychology research and the importance of understanding [one's] emotions.” He commented on how he was given a list of guidelines that explicitly declared suggestions on “speaking posture/presentation and voice,” and the ways in which his argument should be constructed. Dillard will speak about “why you should buy yourself flowers.” Park will speak on the difference between participating as a speaker and participating as a listener in his speech “A Principle of Listening Worth Defending.”

Congratulations to all of the remaining finalists this year! This competition represents a key value of Lawrenceville, where students are able to voice an argument that they deem important to themselves and find wise to share with their peers. These students will present their speeches with excellent preparation and catch the attention of the entire school with their arguments. Good luck to Cassie, Sophia, Kyle, Eric, and Sofia!

## Reach Out to the Arts Hosts Trip to Martha Graham Performance Company

DOROTHY LEE '26

On Saturday, February 11, the Reach Out to the Arts (ROTTA) program arranged a trip to see the Martha Graham Performance Company at the Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts, located on the campus of the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. According to Performing Arts Department Chair and Director of Theatre Matthew Campbell, Reach Out to the Arts is a decades-old program, whose “mission is to provide opportunities for Lawrentians to engage with all types of arts, most of the time off campus.”

“The Reach Out to the Arts program is one of the best things on campus,” Rehanna Yakubu '25 declared upon her return from the trip. Mila Cooper '26 corroborated Yakubu's statement, highlighting the ROTTA trip as “really an exceptional opportunity.”

Yakubu and Cooper's past experiences in dance affected their experiences during the performance. Before that Saturday, Yakubu had never attended a performance held by a professional dance company. On the other hand, Cooper enjoys seeing dance pieces and has been a ballet dancer herself for 10 years.

“I'm not a person who is particularly into dance,” Yakubu admitted. “I didn't know if I would like [the performance] that much.” She explained that she registered merely as a frequent attendee of ROTTA events. During the concert, however, she realized, “Oh, so this is what dance is,” and was then filled with “amazement.”

“One thing that was a highlight to [us] was the costumes,” Yakubu elaborated. She also noted “how the dancers [interacted] with each other” impacted the “feeling” of the performance. “I could see the sweat dripping off of [the dancers],” she



Students at the ROTTA trip

Courtesy of Colette Burns

recounted. “The determination to completely do [each] piece was very impressive.”

Cooper watched the dancers with “a lot of appreciation and understanding.” She spoke about “all the work that it [must have taken] to learn the choreography and execute it at [an] incredibly high level of demand.” She associated her wonder with the “intricate” way choreography appeared, referring to “the different hand placements and the movement of the arms or how everything fits together.” According to Cooper, through “all those little intricacies...the dance tried to send [the] message of joy, of movement, sometimes curiosity.”

Attending the performance prompted Cooper to value the “opportunities that [Lawrentians] get being so close to all these really coveted performance venues,” namely Philadelphia and New York. Yakubu agreed, saying, “I never really had opportunities in my hometown to go to those dance companies.” She described how she gained a deeper

“insight” into the arts through the ROTTA trips.

Cooper and Yakubu's experiences align with Campbell's hopes for the ROTTA program—to help students “take up opportunities” and “broaden [their] artistic lens.” He noted that often, “students forget to stop and smell the roses.” He mentioned this trip to the dance performance as an example, mentioning how they had several tickets left over.

“I really believe that part of a well-rounded high school education,” Campbell explained, is “studying and working towards academic goals, as well as the artistic side you have to develop.” He described ROTTA as a “hidden gem” that allows “young minds and hearts grow as citizens who see art as a major factor in their lives or at least have an enjoyable day.”

Campbell additionally named trips to a Broadway musical production and a jazz concert as possible ROTTA events this Spring Term, remarking, “We want to provide students with the unexpected.”

## Closed on Broadway? Don't Worry! Hear it at Broadway Cabaret 2023!

MIRA PONNAMBALAM '26

On Friday, February 17, Lawrenceville's Broadway Cabaret returned to Dresdner Hall in the Clark Music Center. For the first time since 2020, this series of Broadway musical songs sung by Lawrenceville students was presented in person.

Lawrenceville's Broadway Cabaret includes 10 solo musical numbers sung by Naa Kwama Ankrah '23, Louise Carrol '26, Mila Cooper '26, Claire Jiang '24, Alistair Lam '23, Roan McDonald '23, Sameer Menghani '24, Chiedza Mupita '24, Arya Sreedhar '24, and Sydney Wang '25. Lawrenceville vocal instructor Laura Heimes produced the show, and Craig Renoe, a piano instructor, accompanied the students.

As the emcee, Emily Hammond '23 introduced each song and performer. “I write the script myself, so it's fun to interject interesting facts about my colleagues along with telling the story of their pieces and characters,” she said.

This year's Cabaret selection



Performers at the Broadway Cabaret

Courtesy of The Lawrenceville School

spanned the decades from the 1950s to today. From *Wicked* to *Chaplin*, this year's songs cover numerous genres as well. “My favorite part of this year's Cabaret is the wide variety of musical styles and pieces. I think it is a really interesting program,” Hammond said.

Back in January, the singers had to audition for a panel made of the Chair of the Performing Arts Department Matthew Campbell, Director of Music Robert Palmer, Director of Instrumental Studies Steve Rozek, and Renoe.

“I thought this would be a

good chance to improve my vocal skills and give myself an opportunity to try new things,” Wang stated. Cooper, meanwhile, was encouraged by her music teacher to audition. Cabarets are among the less common performance structures

for singing, and many students have not gotten to participate in one before coming to Lawrenceville. “I've never done this before, where it's just you on stage and it's just one song,” Cooper said.

On February 14th and 15th, students conducted full run-throughs of the show, followed by an invited dress rehearsal the night before. “Everyone, including me, has been preparing for one to two months, and we're all really excited,” said Wang. Students worked diligently to perfect their songs. The singers had to select their piece, work through specific techniques and word pronunciations, and incorporate intentional movements into their performances. Along with music lessons and individual practices, the singers each get two coaching sessions with Heimes and Renoe.

After all the preparation, the singers finally presented their songs, giving the Lawrenceville community a taste of Broadway!

## The WNBA's Great Debate

STANLEY DUFOUR '25

Since its founding in 1996, the Women's National Basketball Association (WNBA) has served as a beacon of hope to young women hoping to pursue their dreams of playing basketball just as their male counterparts do in the NBA without facing prejudice and negativity. In a historically male-dominated sport, a major women's league sends a powerful message to girls who love basketball—that they can strive for greatness too without being constrained by their gender. Although the WNBA as a concept is great, the league unfortunately faces underwhelming media and TV attention, and is \$22 million in debt. It is clear that for the league to fulfill its promise as a stage where female basketball players can shine, change desperately needs to come, whether many like it or not.

A proposition commonly tossed around regarding the WNBA is whether or not their basketball hoop rims should be lowered from the standard height of 10 ft. to 9 ft. This idea is quick to anger many who find the proposition demeaning and promoting overt sexism in sports, but considering the major problems facing the WNBA, this proposal isn't so easy to shut down. Evidently, the biggest problem facing the WNBA is in its finances. The league generated \$60 million in revenue during the 2021-22

season. For reference, the NBA generated \$10 billion that season and turned a profit, something the WNBA failed to do. The only reason the WNBA remains afloat is due to funding from the NBA. The harsh reality of this situation is that the WNBA simply does not have the popularity to fund its many expenses, evidently leading to lower salaries for players, coaches, and staff, as well as the impression that the basketball played by WNBA players is an inferior brand of basketball. Without a higher number of fans, the WNBA is unable to secure financial benefits such as sponsorships and media coverage, and gaining fans is much easier said than done. Professional basketball leagues aim to entertain, but without a brand of basketball fans enjoy, there is no reason for many to watch. Multiple surveys show that fans find the dunk, in all its forms, the most popular, enjoyable, and generally spectacular type of shot to watch. Yet a total of seven players have ever dunked in the 25-year history of the WNBA. Sure, dunks aren't necessary for a good and fun basketball game, but they provide many of

the best highlight plays that get fans excited. With the average height of WNBA players around seven inches shorter than that of NBA players, it just isn't physically likely for dunking to ever become a major part of women's basketball if rim heights are left as they are, to no fault of



Nico Garza '26 / THE LAWRENCE

the players themselves.

At the end of the day, men are, on average, genetically stronger and taller than women. In a sport where height and athleticism are so important, it is significantly more difficult for WNBA games to be played in a way that excites fans in the same way that an

NBA game does. Take tennis, for example, a sport that requires far fewer physical attributes than basketball, but demands the same amount of skill and precision. In this sport, the skill difference between male and female players is nowhere near that of basketball. The most famous female tennis player, Serena Williams, is a household name around the world and is just as famous as the most famous male tennis players; most probably couldn't name a professional female basketball player off the top of their heads. In a sport so dominated by physical attributes, an increase in accessibility, such as lower rims for female basketball players, will only do good for the league. Take volleyball, for example, where men and women's net heights are different to make it easier for female volleyball players to spike. Ever since its drop in net height, women's volleyball has been far more enjoyable, thus increasing its viewership and popularity. This change should set an example to the WNBA, and besides, it isn't as if the WNBA doesn't already use tactics such as making the balls smaller to help

out the players. If the basketballs can be made smaller to help the women gain more of a physical advantage, why shouldn't lowered rims be used to do the same?

The WNBA faces unfair prejudice from fans unwilling to give women's basketball a chance, and it certainly doesn't help that the league is always compared to its parent association, the NBA. This problem, however, doesn't mean the league has to allow these limitations to define it and put a ceiling to the heights that female basketball players can rise to. The WNBA just doesn't have the money or popularity to continue on its current trajectory without drastic change, and lowered rims could be just the change they need. The WNBA is a business, and this amendment would not only increase dunks and related highlight plays, but also result in a higher percentage of shots made from all around the court leading to increased viewership, popularity, and sponsorships. The fact is that basketball is a physical sport, and due to hormonal differences, the average woman isn't gifted with the same physical attributes as the average man. There is certainly no shame in making amendments to the rims in order not only to increase league revenue, but also give current players and young aspiring female basketball players a sense of meaning in playing this beautiful sport, and preventing stigma around professional play.

## He's Baaaaackkkk: The Return of Jon Jones

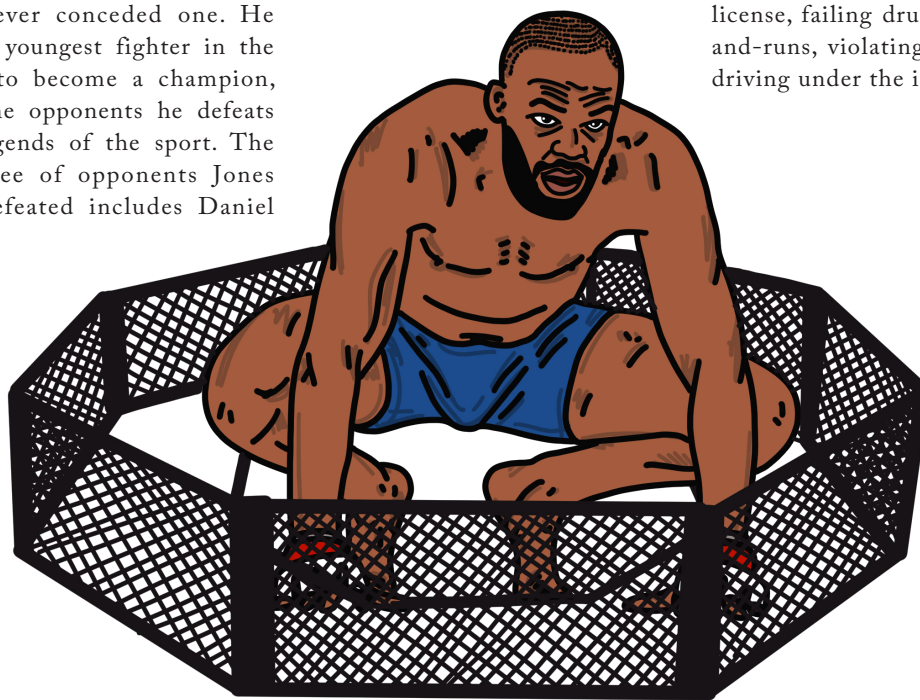
ELI LACEY '25

On March 4, one of the biggest Mixed Martial Arts (MMA) events will be hosted in Las Vegas's T-Mobile Arena. This event has been long-awaited by every MMA fan on the planet, because arguably the greatest—and most controversial—MMA fighter this world has ever seen is making his long-anticipated return to the Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC). That man is Jon "Bones" Jones, a light heavyweight who has been the center of nearly all of the UFC's biggest controversies. From hiding under an octagon for eight hours to avoid a drug test to doing a hit-and-run on a pregnant woman while under the influence of prohibited substances, Jones is undoubtedly a highly talented man bogged down by poor decisions. Here is a brief history of his career, as well as my predictions for what will be the biggest UFC event of this year.

Jones is no doubt an impeccably talented MMA fighter, from his long limbs to his sharp elbows; if a team of scientists came together to formulate the perfect body build for MMA, it wouldn't fall short of Jones. Emerging from Albuquerque, New Mexico,

Jones had a quick rise to fame. His dominance is shown in his UFC accolades: His record is 26-1, with the one loss being a disqualification for an illegal elbow. Additionally, Jones has had thirteen title defenses and has never conceded one. He is the youngest fighter in the UFC to become a champion, and the opponents he defeats are legends of the sport. The pedigree of opponents Jones has defeated includes Daniel

him great, however; what is far more impressive is the way he beats them. Jones is known for his striking, and even when challenged by top-tier wrestlers like Cormier and high-level jiu-



Sara Chiang '23 / THE LAWRENCE

Cormier, Alexander Gustaffson, Shogun Hua, Stephan Bonnar, Andre Gusmao, Vitor Belfort, Chael Sonnen, and Glover Teixeira.

It isn't just the opponents Jones has beaten that make

jiu guys like Teixeira, he still manages to beat them at their own game. Because words can't do justice to the skill of this man, I encourage you to watch one of the thousands of highlight videos made featuring Jones—then

you'll see what I mean.

If I were to talk about Jon Jones, however, I must talk about the many, many personal issues that have heavily plagued his legacy. Jones's list of offenses includes driving on a suspended license, failing drug tests, hits-and-runs, violating parole, and driving under the influence. He

What brings me the most excitement for UFC 285 is Jones's move to heavyweight. This change creates many questions about how he will perform in the division. The heavyweight class in the UFC has greater emphasis on power rather than technique. The majority of heavyweight bouts I have seen end up in slugfests, and submissions are a rarity, so it will be very interesting to see how a man who is so high level at Jiu Jitsu and wrestling will perform. With that said, Jones's opponent is very unique among heavyweight fighters. Cyril Gane is the most technical heavyweight I have seen, and his grappling is very impressive. These factors will make up for a very interesting fight on March 4.

Although I believe that Jones is incredibly talented, his time away from the sport and his move-up in weight are interesting topics to consider. Despite these limitations, I think Jones will come out on top; I can't tell you in what round, but I do believe that Jones will take it to the ground and submit Cyril. With that being said, all I can do is watch. I have given my opinion and strongly believe that Jones has still got it, but only time will tell.

is a once-in-a-generation talent who has severely limited his career by his decisions. It has been two years since Jones made an appearance in the Octagon, and since then, he has also moved up a weight class.

## Another Failed Chelsea FC Transfer Window

BRIAN YUN '25

As the winter window for football club transfers in 2023 came to an end, several high-profile exchanges took place across Europe to reinforce the depth of football clubs for the remainder of the season. While January is usually reserved for quiet transfers, the recent 2022 FIFA World Cup caused a variety of new stars to explode into the popular consciousness of top clubs around Europe. The Premier League was especially unlike any other, spending a total of £922 million, with Chelsea leading the way, spending a record-breaking £311 million on the deadline day.

The transfer of Enzo Fernandez took the headline of Chelsea's winter transfer market. A young Argentinian star proving his talent on the biggest international stage, he is headed to London with a

whopping £121 million paid to his former team, S.L. Benfica. S.L. Benfica thus walked away with an immense profit, having signed Fernandes for around £14 million, releasing the midfielder and accepting the release clause of £120 million. While it was certain that Fernandes's World Cup performance proved his talent as a polished young player, the transfer was a big gamble for the club; Chelsea may have signed the greatest talent of this generation or received another young talent whose price tag cannot justify his talent.

Another young talent, Mykhailo Mudryk, signed to the club with a transfer fee of £100 million (comprising an initial fee of £70 million and a £30 million add-on) from a Ukrainian club, F.C. Shakhtar Donetsk. Though the Ukrainian talent has shown his potential in a handful of games,

his price tag cannot justify his experience at the highest level. A questionable eight-and-a-half-year contract for this twenty-two-year-old talent is another gamble Chelsea took as a club.

Lacking a clear traditional No. 9 striker for the club, Chelsea fans also criticized the £11 million loan deal of Joao Felix, another center-forward who failed to present any special features for the football squad. Aware of the fact that the club recently released a No. 9 striker, Romelo Lukaku, with a market value of £100 million from a £6.7 million loan deal, fans were furious towards the investment management team of Chelsea during the winter transfer window. Despite the talent he has shown at the highest level, Felix is no Eden Hazard and cannot flip the game upside down with his performances.

While other signings such as

Benoit Badiashile (Monaco, £35 million), Malo Gusto (Lyon, £26.3 million), Noni Madueke (Philips Sport Vereniging, £29 million), Andrey Santos (Vasco da Gama, £12.5 million) and David Datro Fofana (Molde, £12 million) joining the team, Chelsea has tied both of their recent games against West Ham United F.C and Fulham F.C, which both have a lower squad market value than one third of Chelsea. Having spent more than £600 million on transfer fees in the 2022-23 season, Head Coach Graham Potter's Chelsea has disappointed fans, currently sitting in 10th place. Surprisingly, total expenditure from Chelsea exceeds the total fees spent in LaLiga and Bundesliga. Therefore, the blame clearly falls on owner Todd Boehly's authority. The total net expenditure of Chelsea since the replacement of former owner Roman Abramovich

has resulted in a net loss of £749 million, the highest deficit of any other club in Europe. Arguably, the departure of former director Marina Granovskaia was the most damaging mistake in terms of Chelsea's legacy and their transfer history. Discovering great talents such as Kevin De Bruyne and Mohamed Salah, and earning a net profit of £100 million from transferring starman Hazard to Real Madrid, Granovskaia was praised by faithful fans of Stamford Bridge.

Compared to Granovskaia's accomplishments, the legacy of Todd Boehly has failed to fulfill the desires of the fans despite the club's multimillion-pound investments into diverse talents across Europe. Todd Boehly's winter transfer window has resulted in another failure, leading to anxiety for both players and fans.

## The Final Board Picks!

	<i>Autri Basu</i> Editor-in-Chief	<i>Kyle Park</i> Managing Editor	<i>Tiffany Wen</i> Co-News Editor	<i>Jasmine Zhang</i> Co-News Editor	<i>Yewon Chang</i> Co-Opinions Editor	<i>Iris Wu</i> Co-Opinions Editor	<i>Andrew Boanoh</i> Sports Editor	<i>Grant Shueh</i> Associate Editor	<i>Luke Park</i> Copy Editor
									
<i>What will you miss the most about 142?</i>	<i>taking over L10's office</i>	<i>juicy toes</i>	<i>autri's spam calls about distributing (but like, not really)</i>	<i>pressuring SEs to write blurbs</i>	<i>noah trupin my lord and savior</i>	<i>new autri form every week</i>	<i>"close the door"</i>	<i>fruit snacks</i>	<i>Every Wednesday night with the seniors :) Y'all rock</i>
<i>Biggest surprise of 142</i>	<i>not getting impeached for that 20-pager</i>	<i>we're actually not in debt (autri is just brainwashing you all)</i>	<i>The Lawrence, in fact, does not have a limitless budget</i>	<i>not getting kicked off for not writing editorials</i>	<i>ditzy autri to horizontal Autri pipeline</i>	<i>i actually enjoyed it</i>	<i>what iris said</i>	<i>going broke</i>	<i>staying for round 2</i>
<i>Biggest regret of 142</i>	<i>waiting until February to introduce horizontal autri</i>	<i>not making associates do mailing labels</i>	<i>not changing the greek motto on the front page more often</i>	<i>kelly</i>	<i>not getting to 40k in debt</i>	<i>only making emma cry once</i>	<i>not hoarding snacks</i>	<i>being too present in the office</i>	<i>staying for round 2</i>
<i>Hopes and dreams for 143?</i>	<i>finally going to Hooters</i>	<i>bring back twice-a-week feeds</i>	<i>the no-editorial-writing-news legacy continues</i>	<i>sort out the raging debt</i>	<i>clothe the toes</i>	<i>a less stereotypical board maybe</i>	<i>get sleep</i>	<i>inviting us to hooters</i>	<i>budget management (YAY!!!)</i>
<i>How will 142 be remembered?</i>	<i>for bankrupting The Lawrence</i>	<i>maintaining a healthy financial balance</i>	<i>where's waldo?</i>	<i>autri's dawgs pasted on the ceiling</i>	<i>pan-asian alliance</i>	<i>coolest and most epic board of all time</i>	<i>the evil men do lives after them</i>	<i>the last Associate Editor</i>	<i>The Splash editorial. Nothing tops that</i>
	<i>Kelly Lu</i> Arts Editor	<i>Adi Jung</i> Co-Features Editor	<i>Emma Kim</i> Co-Features Editor	<i>Sally Lee</i> Co-Web Editor	<i>Noah Trupin</i> Co-Web Editor	<i>Stephanie Xu</i> Graphics Editor	<i>Cindy Shum</i> Photos Editor	<i>Claire Jiang</i> Copy Editor	
									
<i>What will you miss the most about 142?</i>	<i>dance battles</i>	<i>office hours, listening to music, and talking about random stuff</i>	<i>crying in the office</i>	<i>Our cute, small office</i>	<i>yewon chang my lord and savior</i>	<i>weekly "graphics?" texts to ops</i>	<i>our adorable little seniors</i>	<i>yewon + nathan chen, tiff's waldo, kelly's dances, trupin's allergies</i>	
<i>Biggest surprise of 142</i>	<i>being exploited to make merch</i>	<i>when autri called me to tell me I was editor</i>	<i>realizing we were \$20k in debt...</i>	<i>We r actually making a merch!!!</i>	<i>no scandals!</i>	<i>we're still here?</i>	<i>the two feeds per week, then the zero, then the weird in between</i>	<i>fergie</i>	
<i>Biggest regret of 142</i>	<i>not getting jazz and tiff kicked off for not writing editorials</i>	<i>not making more typos! It's my best skilll.</i>	<i>not assassinating autri and becoming EIC</i>	<i>Not being listed on the quote board</i>	<i>not writing more editorials</i>	<i>never writing an editorial...not</i>	<i>not just showing up at OH to watch the chaos ensue</i>	<i>not spending enough time with y'all</i>	
<i>Hopes and dreams for 143</i>	<i>BE FREE!</i>	<i>maybe write about something serious in features...jk</i>	<i>get a bigger mf office</i>	<i>Move online, save trees</i>	<i>print more copies, cut more trees</i>	<i>No more graphics. Art sucks</i>	<i>claire.</i>	<i>becoming the next autri basu</i>	
<i>How will 142 be remembered?</i>	<i>the 20k debt</i>	<i>we won't be</i>	<i>as the board that plummeted us into debt</i>	<i>Popcorners</i>	<i>the quote board</i>	<i>autri fan club</i>	<i>budget cuts.</i>	<i>the lit and lawrence merge (never gonna happen!!)</i>	