

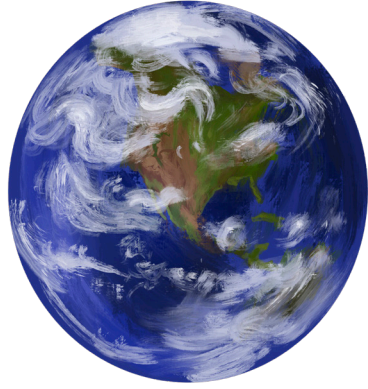
Earth Month: April Showers and Earth Day Flowers!

SYDNEY WANG '25

April marks the beginning of Earth Month, a Sustainability Council initiative focused on encouraging students and faculty to lead more sustainable lifestyles. The program kicked off with the 2023 National High School Climate Forum Youth Summit hosted by the Sustainability Council's Events Subcommittee Alex Noviello '23 and Andrew Noviello '23. This event marked the start of Lawrenceville's annual Earth Month programming.

The Sustainability Council aspires to raise more awareness for environmental issues through these Earth Month events. "If we can take a few minutes of someone's time to get them focused on the topic...then that's a victory from our perspective," Alex Noviello said. He views Earth Month as an opportunity to expand ongoing initiatives on campus such as recycling and zero-waste.

Student Council Sustainability Representative Alistair Lam '23 is "optimistic" about the campus eventually reaching carbon neutrality. The School can become an "increasingly greener campus—not just through discussion and classes but also through action in



Emily Pan '24 / The Lawrence

everyday life," he said.

To reach this goal, the Sustainability Council has implemented a series of initiatives during April for Lawrentians to engage in "academic, intellectual, and fun" opportunities, according to Lam. On April 22, the annual Earth Day Fair will be hosted in the Crescent. Similar to last year's fair, different booths will be set up educating community members on environmental topics such as sustainable agriculture, plantation methods, and plastic pollution. The aim is to "introduce more sustainability topics

to students who [were] not previously interested," explained Lam. The Sustainability Council also hopes to host a film event that integrates environmental elements with sports-related topics, whereby students can learn the importance of political discourse and climate change.

The Sustainability Council also plans to collaborate with other clubs to potentially host sustainability-themed visual arts workshops and community service events. Aside from these activities, students should be more "mindful" in their day-to-day lives and "put what they learn into action," Lam added. "April shouldn't be Earth Month. Every month should be Earth Month, [and] every day should be Earth Day," commented Lam, "That's the ultimate goal."

Director of Sustainability Stephen Laubach "look[s] forward" to Earth Month becoming a longstanding tradition at Lawrenceville. After the pandemic, planning sustainability events has been "difficult" according to Laubach, but expanding Earth Day to include more programs for Earth Month and organizing more events throughout the year will help raise more awareness.

V Form Pinning Ceremony



Pinning Ceremony

STAFF REPORT

As part of a new tradition, the Office of Alumni and Development is combining the Pinning Ceremony this year with the V Form dinner. The event will take place on May 14, where Kyle Park '23 will address the Class of 2023 in the Abbott Dining Room—this will be the first time a student is selected to speak at the event. Director of Alumni Engagement Maria Bolis, Alumni Engagement Coordinator Nick Carnesale, and V Form Level Director Etienne Bilodeau will be overseeing the new program.

The V Form Pinning Ceremony has been a long tradition sponsored by the alumni association, in which V Formers are pinned with a Rosetta by a faculty member or alum. "The Rosetta symbolizes prosperity and good fortune, so it is the alumni association to wish the graduating class the strength to succeed in their respective paths," Bolis explained. While students traditionally had an alum pin them, in recent years, many students have been pinned by teachers and other faculty members.

This year, the alumni office and Bilodeau hoped to "really make an event for the [V Form] instead of something mostly for the alumni" according to Bolis by combining the pinning ceremony

and the V Form dinner, which adds "formality to the [V Form] dinner [and] really lend itself to a nice accumulating event," Bilodeau added.

The Open Door Society, a group of IV and V Formers who help the alumni office with planning events, wanted to develop a pinning ceremony that would be "more meaningful to the graduating class," Bolis said. "We want them to figure out what they want the ceremony to be while still keeping the long tradition alive," Carnesale elaborated, which is how the Open Door Society and alumni office came to the idea of having a student speaker at the event.

Bolis, Carnesale, and the Open Door Society decided that Park, a close runner-up for Aurelian Speaker, should be given the opportunity to address the Class of 2023. By having a student speak at the ceremony, their hope is that there is more of a "shift from the focus being on alumni to the focus being on the students." Though the speaker at this ceremony will not be entirely different from the Vaedictorian or Aurelian Speaker, Bilodeau was excited at the prospect of "a student being able to stand up at this important event and convey a message to their class."

Park was "very excited" when he received the news from Bi-

lodeau. "The transition from student to alum is a big one, so I'm grateful for this opportunity to address the class and reflect on some of the things we've accomplished here," he elaborated. While Park is still unsure of what his finalized speech might look like, he wants his message to be centered around "embracing uncertainty" and the "change in expectations when one goes from being a student to being an alum."

By featuring a student speaker in this year's pinning ceremony, Bolis and Carnesale are redefining the tradition to be more student-centered. Additionally, V Formers Alexandra Schmidt, Lilly Gessner, Grant Shueh, and Ashley Wang will be presenting a check to Head of School Stephen Murray H'54 '55 '65 '16 P'16 '21 at the dinner. The check will reflect the amount of money the Class of 2023 has accumulated with their 72 percent participation donation towards their Class Gift. "The event really helps students embrace the connections with alumni, because you never know what doors you could open or what you might learn from even the oldest alums," Carnesale said. Their goal for the ceremony is to give graduating students the opportunity to connect with alumni while celebrating their accomplishments and their time at Lawrenceville.

Outside the Bubble President Biden Extends Health Care to "Dreamers"



President Biden giving a speech ROSHAN HOBAN '26

Courtesy of Getty Images

On April 13, President Joe Biden announced plans to extend healthcare coverage to over 600,000 undocumented students and youth, otherwise known as "Dreamers." The policy would allow Dreamers to receive Medicaid coverage, helping more Americans gain access to health insurance.

The Biden Administration is aiming to implement this policy by the end of the month. This initiative is part of a larger movement to pave the pathway to citizenship for Dreamers. The New York Times reports that, while 80 percent of Americans support this movement, it is unlikely for more legislation to be enacted by Congress in the near future.

Florida Anti-Abortion Law



Protestors against the new law

Courtesy of NBC News

LUKE PURICELLI '25 ANGEL XIN '26

On April 14, 2023, Florida governor Ron DeSantis signed an abortion ban prohibiting all abortion cases after six weeks of pregnancy, except in cases involving health risks and sexual assault. "I applaud the Legislature for passing the Heartbeat Protection Act that expands pro-life protections and provides additional resources for young mothers and families," DeSantis said regarding the new law.

According to ABC News, those who "actively participate in abortion procedures" are committing a third degree felony, and it would be considered a second degree felony if the abortion results in maternal death. The implementation of this law means women in Florida will have to seek abortion in nearby states; opposition soon followed. According to the New York Times, protests were taking place even before the ban was finalized, with demonstrators gathering outside the Florida House chamber and chanting, "Hands off our bodies!"

Bye Bye ByteDance



TikTok potentially being banned

Courtesy of Protocol

MICHAEL MENG '26

On March 23, a Congressional hearing took place regarding a potential TikTok ban in the U.S., with some members arguing that the app poses a major threat to national security, censorship, and safety. Specifically, representatives were concerned about how ByteDance—the company that owns TikTok—

could be taking data from American users, censoring criticisms of China and the Ughyer genocide, and intentionally promoting trends that endanger children. As of now, over 32 states in the U.S. have banned members of the House of Representatives from having TikTok on their devices, and more is yet to come if Congress decides to take further action on the widely popular app.

Editorial

The Straight and Narrow: Broadening Horizons

Lawrenceville's first batch of female students was admitted in 1987, bringing an end to the 177-year-old all-male legacy and transitioning the School into the co-ed environment it is today. Hooray! Lawrenceville has finally overcome the gender divide and has achieved celestial gender equality: girls and boys collaborate academically around the Harkness table together, eat at the same dining halls, and participate in the same clubs.

Any student from Lawrenceville, however, can testify that this idea of cohesiveness is not the case. In fact, the inherent nature of the Circle and Crescent system enforces the idea that students can only identify as two genders. Despite the addition of the Crescent over 30 years ago, a distinct divide persists between the two majority genders, facilitated by institutional structures that force students into one of the two binary gender constructs, translating into gendered Houses, sports, and advisory groups. While those from the Crescent and the Circle interact and mingle, they always seem to return to distinct single-gender groups like oil and water.

To see how this systematic gender separation

seeps into our social tendencies, take a look around the Tsai Dining Hall: Even when presented with the opportunity to socialize with the opposite sex, we spontaneously revert back to our single-gender "bubbles", and a group of "one gender" primarily populates each table. The same is true around the Harkness table; our tendency to divide the Harkness table by gender is so glaring that it is frequently the butt of a teacher's joke—though we usually respond with blank expressions and silently wait for the topic to change. Any attempt to connect with a friend of the opposite gender and approach their lunch table, or sit on the "wrong" side of the table carries with it a feeling of transgressing some boundary. That's because the line between Circle and Crescent isn't contained within the stretch of road that divides them—it exists as an invisible barrier between all of us, everywhere.

This stringent gender divide, partly of which our unconscious habits feed into, contributes to a heteronormative and cis-sexual student culture. When a Housemate brings a member of the opposite sex into the House, we commonly throw around sly jokes that insinuates a romantic relationship.

Our tendency to view opposite-sex "pairs" through a heteronormative lens reflects the inevitable result of Lawrenceville's gendered culture, which has also erased any other type of relationship between members of opposite sexes/genders. The binary between the Circle and the Crescent not only leaves no room for non-binary or gender-non-conforming people, but also incentivizes them to conform to the gender stereotypes the Crescent-Circle binary reinforces in order to attain any sense of true "belonging" within Lawrenceville's culture.

One reason might be that the systemic separation between members of the Circle and Crescent leads many to form friendships and bond primarily with members of the same sex. Thus, our natural tendency for gender-division is just a result of students wanting to stick to those whom we already know and can befriend easily. However, we must acknowledge how this pervasive separation fosters a student culture that erases any gender identity, sexuality, or relationship that fails to conform to the heteronormative and culturally-conservative norms.

Perhaps the current single gender-housing system in some ways provides a strong

foundation for a community that drives the maturation and development of its inhabitants. A suffocating student culture that marginalizes LGBTQ+ identities and expressions conflicts with Lawrenceville's closely-held virtue of valuing its students' diverse experiences and viewpoints as a way to present opportunities to learn from one another.

"The stringent gender divide... contributes to a heteronormative and cis-sexual student culture"

It is important to acknowledge that the problems described in this editorial are not exclusive to Lawrenceville. The Crescent-Circle binary is a mere vessel for a heteronormative and cis-normative culture that

pervades our general society. Furthermore, it is also important to acknowledge the potential pitfalls of effective measures we can take. Gender-neutral housing and facilities could better reflect the diversity of the student body and eliminate the distinction between "girls and boys" that alienates those who don't fit into the binary. Gender-neutral Houses could only further alienate LGBTQ+ people from the rest of campus without first remedying the campus' heteronormativity. We need to recognize this harmful culture and reimagine the house system in a way that strikes a balance between the benefits and detriments of single-gender housing. Our community must discuss and reexamine the binary system, acknowledging the limitations it places on all students. Only this way can we truly create the community Lawrenceville desires.

This editorial represents the majority view of The Lawrence, Vol. CXLIII

Why "Raising Awareness" Isn't Enough

Lessons on Advocacy

ALISTAIR LAM '23

It's Earth Month once again, so I thought I would share the two most common mindsets at Lawrenceville (and beyond) whenever people discuss climate change:

1. Oh no, there's no way we're stopping it. It's over. We're done for.
2. So what? There's nothing new. We heard these a million times. What a joke.

So there you go—one perspective is the pessimist who believes we're already doomed and any action is futile, and the other simply doesn't care. At all.

Clearly, it's not the case that we are not aware of environmental issues. We walk by trash-filled recycling bins every day on our way to class or through our Houses. Lawrenceville hosts plenty of speakers who come specifically to tell us why we should take care of our planet. Our science curriculum is now filled with classes that offer relevant information regarding climate change. Ironically, "climate change" was the number-one topic of concern among students according to a survey by *The Lawrence* in the fall of 2019.

Despite this, we continue with our lives as if we have infinite resources and

garbage bins at our disposal (no pun intended). What is causing this disconnect between knowing about the problem and acting on it?

"We continue with our lives as if we have infinite resources and garbage bins at our disposal."

Introducing...the awareness-attitude-behavior gap:

No time. Too hard. How much will I save anyways? How much harm am I causing anyways? I'm just one person, it won't make a difference...Environmentally-conscious actions take effort (or excuses when avoiding them). But when that extra or alternative step does not yield immediate effects and their consequences appear to us in the long run—

when the certainty of costs and benefits are unclear—cognitive barriers emerge that stand in the way between our good intentions and (not so good) actions.

Counterintuitively, it's the overabundance of repetitive information that creates the inimical evils—anxiety and apathy. We're trying too hard to scare ourselves with how



Michelle Zhang '25 / *THE LAWRENCE* bad everything is. Understandably, our fanning the flames of fear becomes over-

whelming, so we give up in one of two ways: we lose hope, or we say "screw it."

What we need is a campaign against such surrender. The response to negativity is positivity. The response to I don't

care is here's why you should care. Over time, I realized that storytelling is the secret sauce to motivating action. We might not find the consequences of a two-degree temperature rise interesting. But when we hear stories from the Big Red Farm—how adorable baby lambs are born, how to get honey out of hives and maple sap out of trees to make syrup—we better register the gravity and the extent of the impacts of climate change. We might laugh at the picture of the "sad" polar bear standing alone on the tiny piece of ice, but we become concerned when we learn just

"The response to 'I don't care' is here's why you should care"

a few miles outside of our community, people are breathing toxic fumes and drinking water filled with heavy metals and chemicals. The key is not to encourage us to cower in fear; it's making us realize that yes, environmental crises affect

you no matter who you are. It's a human issue, not just some ice melting on the poles or plants dying worlds away.

More importantly, you're making a difference. Just look at the solar field at our school. Look at how much water you're saving by blasting fewer songs on your speakers in the shower. Look at how much emissions are reduced when the lettuce from the farm goes straight into your salad at Tsai Commons. It's not just talk; we are creating tangible change at Lawrenceville. Reward, incentivization, and the monitoring of our progress are vital to bridging that gap between thoughts and action.

What I've taken away from the past four years working to promote sustainability at Lawrenceville extends beyond environmentalism to all other critical issues we're facing, from destigmatizing mental health to promoting genuine diversity, equity, and inclusion. I've come to realize that the most effective means of tackling larger-than-life problems is never the presentation of the hard, scary facts, but fun and uplifting stories that engage the community to relate—then act.



THE LAWRENCE

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Sustaining Our Social Life

Managing Social Events Without Saturday Classes

ELIJAH MILLER '25

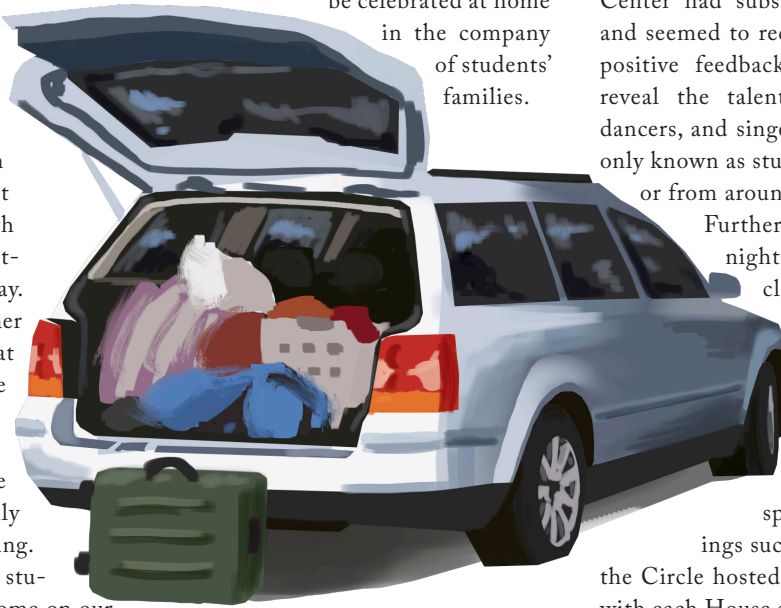
Last August, Lawrenceville announced there would only be three Saturday classes during the Spring Term. Group chats buzzed with excitement and disbelief as arguably the most dreaded aspect of Lawrenceville life was removed. Everyone around me looked forward to the normalcy of a two-day weekend, eager to have both Friday afternoons and Saturday mornings to rest and recuperate. However, this change only inflates the void that is our social life on campus. On each of the past two day weekends, boarding students have driven home in droves, and day students have not come to campus on commitment-free days. On Saturdays, the one day of the week students have the opportunity to take a break from studying, campus became dormant and organized social events seemed to draw even less of a crowd than they usually do.

Theoretically, Saturdays without class should reinvigorate social life on campus. Two day weekends help break-up our endless cycle of work—the feeling that one week leads right into the next—and give students more time to prepare for their new week, preventing the peaks and depressions of the Lawrenceville weekend that

come with working Friday night, attending Saturday morning classes, crashing Saturday evening, and studying again on Sunday morning. Indeed, I have only heard positive feedback about no-Saturday class weekends. My History class really enjoyed the longer break and felt better prepared for the 8:00 AM start time on Monday. Many said that having their sports practice in the morning on Saturdays was helpful in managing the rest of their day, with their only commitment out of the way.

However, rather than relaxing at school on the weekends, many students find relaxing at home with their family more rejuvenating. I was among the students who went home on our first Saturday off. What was there to do on campus that Saturday night? There was an all school “Club One” dance in Clark Music Center. While a dance seems like an ideal way to kick off the Spring Term, there was a disproportionate turnout between forms, and the event didn't seem to leave an impression on students. When I

came back to campus, many of my housemates were not even aware of the dance. Here lies the core problem with our social life: We repeat similar events every Saturday, drawing smaller crowds and depressing student life on campus. Besides dances, most Saturday night activities—movie viewings, trivia, or game nights—can be celebrated at home in the company of students' families.



Emily Pan '24 / THE LAWRENCE

For students seeking a fulfilling weekend, it's in their interest to go home (if they can) and enjoy reuniting with their family rather than attend small-scale activities that seem so similar to ones before. So what activities can convince students to remain on campus, contribute their presence

to Saturday events, and revitalize student life at Lawrenceville?

Events that showcase students' talents and skills seem to attract the most attention and praise among the student body. Events like Impulse Comedy Improvisation shows, The Disciples' performances at school meeting, and “All Arts Night” at Clark Music Center had substantial turnouts and seemed to receive universally positive feedback. These events reveal the talent of musicians, dancers, and singers that we have only known as students from class or from around campus.

Further, the Tuesday night before the no-class Wellness Day saw vibrant activity across campus. Crescent Houses had house specific gatherings such as Stan Swim, the Circle hosted a “Block Party” with each House serving different food items, and the Circle became absolutely packed with students playing frisbee, soccer, spikeball, and football. The Circle experienced an explosion of activity and upbeat moods that I haven't for the past seven months—all because of the no class schedule the next day. Unlike on Saturdays, students on Tuesday were not

fatigued from an entire week of classes and became more eager to socialize. Student performances and light student schedules are integral to a social event's popularity.

However, performers need practice and our schedules are rarely open. Organizing a successful social event requires the intersection of hundreds of student schedules. Organizing student performances takes weeks of forethought. When students don't feel the motivation to attend a social event or even stay on campus, just think of how much dedication it takes to plan, organize, and produce a successful event. Jump-starting social life on weekends is no simple feat. However, the lack of Saturday classes gives us the opportunity to experiment with different events and schedules until we find the combinations acclaimed by our student body. To test these experiments, though, students must stay on campus. Running away from a boring campus will keep campus boring. Staying on campus, actively seeking to have fun, and creating your own social life will increase the collective Lawrenceville's social life. The first step to reinvigorating our social life on campus is choosing to stay at your Lawrenceville home on the weekends.

Beyond Wellness Day: Continuing the Mental Health Discussion

IMANI GASKIN '25

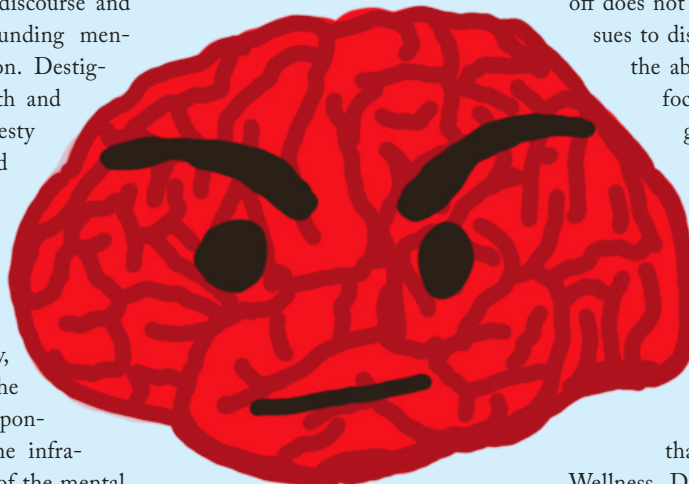
At Lawrenceville, not only do students deal with the universal difficulties of teenhood such as stress, insecurities, and relationships, for many Lawrencians, the School's demanding nature can introduce additional, unique struggles which contribute to more pervasive mental health problems. Over the past year, the discussion of the mental wellbeing of Lawrentians has become an unavoidable topic as the community suffered multiple losses. The administration's most recent method of addressing mental health was last Wednesday's Mental Health and Wellness Day. Although this effort to directly acknowledge mental health was commendable and appreciated by some, others found its execution to be in some ways lacking. There are several ways the school can improve mental wellness on campus, but the first step to doing so is by implementing open communication between students and the administration.

While many students found Wellness Day to be a welcome break, there was significant criticism geared towards the day's programming. The general consensus was that the mental health needs of Lawrenceville greatly misaligned with what occurred on Wellness Day. The majority of student backlash was aimed at the keynote speeches. If student feedback could have been established prior to Wellness Day, there would

have been a better understanding of the nature of speakers people want to see. Instead, the speakers' lengthy and repetitive speeches sent students to the bathrooms in droves in attempts to find respite from the out of touch memes and prolonged personal anecdotes. This is not to say, however, that the speakers did not raise good points. Their main ethos of encouraging open discourse and communication surrounding mental health was spot-on. Destigmatizing mental health and fostering more honesty and discourse around mental wellbeing on campus is something the Lawrenceville community would benefit from greatly. At the end of the day, Lawrenceville, not the guest speakers, is responsible for providing the infrastructure to take care of the mental health of students in the long term. Though the conversation started by the speakers held poignant and true points, more must be done by the school. It is not enough to stimulate discussion; change must be enacted.

Communication between students and administration is integral in beginning to improve the manner in which mental health is addressed on campus, as the keynote speakers acknowledged. If the administration was upfront about its potential shortcomings and inquired into what we students believed was best for us,

they would make crucial strides towards improving mental health on campus. However, it is not just the administration's job to inquire about our needs, it is also on us as students to speak up for ourselves and open discourse with the administration. Whether this communication occurs through increased numbers of town halls, polls or established meetings



Sonia Singhal '24 / THE LAWRENCE

with House Presidents, the School needs to use these systems that it has put in place more frequently to create an honest channel of communication between students and faculty, to provide the best possible insight on what students truly want. It would allow student voices to explain what we as a student body need for our improved mental wellbeing rather than having the administration implement what they think is best. The School must prepare for the

fact that its students' desires may sometimes conflict with theirs. In this situation, it is necessary that the administration is ready to make difficult decisions in order to prioritize the wellness of students. More frequent breaks from Lawrenceville's busy schedule would allow students to take a minute to breathe, connect and recharge. Although a few days off does not magically cause our issues to disappear, giving students

the ability to slow down and focus inwards for a while goes a long way in improving general wellness. The abandonment of Saturday classes is a prime example of how slightly fewer class periods significantly help to ease the overwhelming feelings that many face. Moreover, Wellness Days should be implemented at least once a term to keep the conversation surrounding mental health going. Though this would mean lost class time, it is a sacrifice the administration can make that would communicate to the students that the school values our wellbeing.

Wellness Day is a great concept; by expanding this program, the school could create a permanent, recurring way to address mental health. To properly broach the topic of mental health at Lawrenceville, one must be ready and willing to address specifics of the Lawrenceville

experience. We have experienced tragedies which require more nuanced attention than what was offered on Wellness Day. The student body needs increased support from professionals and unfortunately, the implementation of key-note speakers and workshops, though both led by counseling professionals, were unable to accomplish this due to their impersonal nature. The implementation of group sessions, workshops geared towards coping with, and combating mental health struggles and the positioning of the relevant personnel in panels where students can discuss mental health at Lawrenceville could all help Wellness Day evolve into a more active way of dealing with mental health.

Though not entirely successful in the eyes of students, Wellness Day was a valiant effort from the School and should be acknowledged as such. It is now a necessity that we use the momentum and discourse prompted by Wellness Day to continue to finetune and rectify our general culture of mental health of Lawrenceville. Wellness Day truly has the potential to positively change the way we view and handle mental health at Lawrenceville. Through hard work, open communication and sacrifices from both parties, Lawrenceville will be able to create a culture where all students can function at their highest capacities without sacrificing their mental well-being.

Spring Orchestra Concert

EMILY LEE '26
CHARLES POTTER '25

This past Friday, the Lawrenceville Philharmonic and Collegium Orchestra performed the Spring Orchestra Concert in the Kirby Arts Center. The orchestra performed pieces from a variety of composers, including a medley of music from the James Bond movies, a string quartet composed by Russian composer Dmitri Shostakovich and the international premier of "She Dances Toward the Light," a piece composed by local teenager Adah Kaplan.

Preparing for the performance, violinist Arisa Okamura '25 said that the orchestra worked "at a fast pace." She noted that many of the pieces were challenging, particularly "String Quartet No. 8" and "She Dances Toward the Light," but she enjoyed the process of learning and practicing them. Additionally, the cover conductor of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra directed the rehearsal, with Okamura noting that her advice was "insightful and helpful for us all."

Ellie Turchetta '25, another violinist, said that "the [concert] was a very rewarding experience" since it was a "culmination of all the work [everyone] had done the whole year." "Especially for the Collegium, it felt really great to have all our work pay off

when we played the Shostakovich and the Smetana," she continued. Finally, she mentioned that she enjoyed being able to play pieces ranging from "pop medleys" to "classical masterpieces" with the other performers.

Violinist Juliette Vazquez '24 felt "proud" as the performance "encompassed all of [the orchestra's] hard work in rehearsals." Vazquez was especially excited about their performance of the "Live and Let Die" theme from the orchestra's James Bond piece. She thought "the audience really loved [the piece]" and hoped they were able to truly "immerse themselves" in the music. Vazquez also highlighted the camaraderie of the orchestra, noting that she enjoys being able to "collaborate with [her] peers." Amelie Deng '24, another violinist, was grateful to be surrounded by students who were "willing to help everyone out," which made them more confident in their performance.

Similarly, Helen Chang '26 emphasized the dedication of all the players: "Everyone put in effort, each playing their part to bring together the piece," she said. Chang also had a "great experience" working with students from different grade levels.

Overall, the concert was successful in both showcasing the hard work of the orchestra and helping the players form deeper relationships with their peers.



Spring Orchestra Concert

Courtesy of The Lawrenceville School

Capstone Speaker: Elizabeth Bagley

SIENNA MORA '25

This past Monday, Capstone speaker Dr. Elizabeth Bagley of Project Drawdown hosted a virtual webinar for Lawrenceville students and faculty. Project Drawdown is a global organization that aims to take action on the climate crisis through reducing carbon emissions and carbon sinks. The company emphasizes taking effective action rather than mulling over statistics, focusing on where money and funds would be most effectively spent.

"The name 'Drawdown' comes from the idea of reaching an inflection point where atmospheric carbon dioxide levels start to go back down following the implementation of solutions as quickly and equitably as possible," said Director of Sustainability Stephen Laubach.

Dr. Bagley's talk focused on Drawdown's approach to addressing sustainability through implementable solutions rather than focusing on the negative aspects of the crisis, such as pollution and various climate crises.

Her goal was to provide students with a "sense of hope that we have the capacity, curiosity, and perseverance to solve this problem," according to Laubach. These solutions include "shifting to renewables, improving battery technology for use with renewables and



Elizabeth Bagley

Courtesy of Rotary Madison

vehicles, reducing food waste, [and] finding new ways to make concrete."

The first three Capstone speakers focused on the challenges global leaders and different organizations face in battling global warming because of ineffective communication. Similarly, Dr. Bagley introduced a more hopeful approach in strengthening the sustainability movement. Reflecting on the Capstone seminar, Sophia Kohmann '23 said, "I liked the emphasis she placed on solutions, rather than the data and the gloomy statistics of how the world is coming to an end."

"The capstone speakers are instrumental in helping us better understand the issues on our hands, which is the first step to actually addressing them," Kohmann continued. These talks have "changed [her] perspective" and uncovered certain aspects of the climate crisis that she "has never thought about."

All in all, the Lawrenceville community aims to continue making strides in bettering sustainability on campus. Dr. Bagley's realistic solutions and optimistic approach to addressing global warming introduced students to a unique perspective on sustainability.

Stuart Robertson: The Man, The Myth, and The Artist

LOUIS PARK '26
NICHOLE JIN '24
NEWS EDITOR

Artist-in-Residence Stuart Robertson '11 H '18 graduated from Lawrenceville in 2011 and recently returned to the School as a visual arts teacher. Robertson had collaborated with the NBA G League Ignite basketball team to create art for the 2022 NBA Draft.

Robertson first came to Lawrenceville as a III Former. His art teacher at the time, Jaime Greenfield, "encouraged [him] to push his limits." "If I had a good drawing, she told me to try painting, and if I drew a good face, she asked me to draw a hand...She was the good mentor that I needed," Robertson said. Greenfield inspired Robertson to try using different materials in his art, including graphite and colored pencils. During his time at Lawrenceville, Robertson was also a Varsity athlete, House President, and prefect, helping him "improve his

self-management and prioritization skills."

Returning to Lawrenceville as a teacher, Robertson noted that many aspects of campus life were different from when he was a student. "There has been a change in student interests and priorities...I knew I had to let go of my past picture of the school," he said. Though it was an adjustment, Robertson feels that he has "learned a lot" from young artists at Lawrenceville.

Robertson received the opportunity to work with NBA G League Ignite on their art through one of his wife's connections. Specifically, they hired him to create a unique basketball with artistic flair that the team could use in their photos for the 2022 NBA Draft. Robertson aimed to vary the textures he used in his art by "attaching snake skins, cutting the ball, and using unique objects together." At the draft event, Robertson noted that it was "fascinating to watch people interact with the ball [he] made." "The players were ex-

cited to have something tangible rather than something like a video to make their experience unique," he added. Overall, Robertson was "very excited" to have been a part of the event.

Robertson hopes to become a more "influential artist" through these outside opportunities. "I want to be able to have an impact on both students and other people who identify with me, to show them that they can overcome the obstacles in their way and come back stronger," he said. Next year, Robertson will present his art at an upcoming exhibition at the Heines Gallery in San Francisco.

A piece of advice Robertson wants to leave for Lawrentians is to "do what they genuinely enjoy." Reflecting on his experience as a teacher and an artist, he said, "There's no rush to try and be the best...in the end, it is always worth it to invest in people and experiences because there's always something to learn and appreciate."



Stuart Robertson

Courtesy of Stuart Robertson

Not Even Lightning Can Stop All Arts Night!

HARINI VENKATESH '25

The Clark Music Center was alive with energy this past Saturday as Lawrenceville's annual All Arts Night took center stage. Bringing together members of the Lawrenceville community for a night of awe-inspiring performances, this event showcased the incredible talent and passion of the School's artistic community. The electrifying dance performances of Tour de Force, Suave, and Nachale were a highlight of the evening, showcasing the dancers' incredible skill and precision. The soulful harmonies of the vocal groups, Voicemale, Rouge, and the Larries were equally impressive. The improv comedy group Impulse added a touch of levity to the program with their clever and witty sketches, catering to a wide range of interests and tastes. The event also featured community-

engaging visual arts experiences, allowing attendees to fully immerse themselves in the artistic community through a collective mural.

Celebrating student artists through events like All Arts Night is crucial to highlight the value of promoting a thriving artistic community on campus. It allows Lawrentians to showcase their work, build their confidence, and share their passion with others.

When Student Council Arts Representative Stephanie Xu '23 was conceptualizing what she wanted All Arts Night to look like, she knew she wanted "to make sure we gave a lot of our art groups a chance to perform, particularly the three acapella groups and the En Corps dance groups" who don't generally get to perform more than two to three times a year. Providing student artists with the opportunity to showcase their talents is a celebration of their

hard work and dedication, fostering a sense of camaraderie and teamwork among performers. Performing as part of a group, allows students to see the

product of their collective efforts and build a fierce sense of pride in their accomplishments. When discussing her experience performing

with Suave, Xu noted that although some rehearsals were at times "very chaotic and hard to manage," she had "an absolute blast" performing. This sentiment speaks to the true essence of performing arts: the joy of sharing one's passion with others. With events such as All Arts Night, the accessibility of Lawrenceville's arts community is highlighted, helping to widen the scope of student involvement and appreciation of the arts on campus.

Ultimately, events such as All Arts Night serve as a showcase of Lawrenceville's diverse arts community and a testament to the exceptional dedication and talent of its student artists. By celebrating the arts, the event underscores the significance of arts education and bolsters the already thriving artistic community that exists here on campus.



Suave at All Arts Night

Stephanie Xu '23 / THE LAWRENCE

Windows Into the Past

SONIA IVANCIC '25

Tucked in the bowels of the Smithsonian's National Museum of Asian Art in Washington, D.C., sits a six-foot-long painting from 19th-century Udaipur, India. What's so special about this massive watercolor piece? It may give us just the hope we need to tackle the growing list of climate change battles we must overcome to keep our planet habitable.

Last November, the National Museum of Asian Art unveiled a new exhibit titled *A Splendid Land: Paintings from Royal Udaipur*. This exhibit is a collection of paintings from Udaipur, India, from around 1600 to 1800 AD. This Indian region is arid most of the year, so seasonal monsoon rains provide most of the water necessary for survival. In traditional, ancient Indian art, court paintings were made to portray royalty as all-powerful and majestic. Thus, these paintings were not useful sources of information about daily life in India since they provided a skewed picture of history, only focusing on the elite.

Maharana Amar Singh II, the king of Udaipur between 1698 and 1710, completely changed the culture surrounding art. In his youth, Singh met a revolutionary artist that introduced him to a completely new world of painting. Singh saw realistic landscapes, pieces that were not solely meant to pay homage to the royal family. Once the prince took power, artwork expanded. Paintings became much larger in size, partly to accommodate the intricate landscapes Singh desired to portray. Instead of abstract and stylized objects and people, paintings showcased landscapes from daily life

in Udaipur and were rich in detail: such as a Holi festival or a tiger hunt. Through their unique details, colors, and textures, the element of Bhava is very present in these works. The emotions each painting stirs within the viewer, coupled with their story-like depictions of life in Udaipur, have proved invaluable historical data chronicles.

New research suggests that these court paintings may even become environmental data sources. Take, for example, the painting "Maharana Fateh Singh Crossing a River During the Monsoon." This painting illustrates an overflowing river with houses and greenery on the brink of flooding on either side. 13 men on horses cross the river

water collection systems that the people of Udaipur built and relied heavily on to survive.

The painting, "Maharana Fateh Singh Crossing a River During the Monsoon," has an inscription stating that the king and his officials are inspecting the monsoon infrastructure. With all this information, curators working in the exhibit realized the people of Udaipur prided themselves on living sustainably off the rains. The interconnectedness of nature and society is evident in each scene.

The numerous waterways in Udaipur's court paintings mirror current geographical data of rivers in this region, making all these paintings reliable and historically accurate. This exhibit shows an example of how the climate has changed in the past, and how societies have successfully and sustainably adapted to these changes, living in harmony

with the unpredictable nature of the environment. We can use this evidence of our past triumphs, not to overcome, but to work in tandem with nature, as inspiration and hope for the future of water management in a time where droughts and floods disproportionately pummeled areas.

While the geographical applications of these paintings are still being discovered, what is becoming clearer is the intersection between science and art. We could only fully realize the relevance of the monsoon painting through geographical details. Turning to art is a new path to explore in order to combat climate change by using windows into the past.



Painting in the exhibit

Courtesy of the Smithsonian

amidst pouring rain, their horses belly-deep in water. This painting is not, in fact, depicting a natural disaster. Instead, it showcases the abundance of the monsoon season and daily life during these months. What sets this painting apart is the minuscule waterwheel hidden at the edge of the painted river. It is there for the monsoon season, sitting just above the river's water level, and is used to scoop and feed water to nearby trees and shrubs. The fact that the artist decided to include this seemingly insignificant piece of infrastructure points to the importance of monsoon infrastructure in Udaipur.

This pattern continues throughout the court paintings. What looks like basic landscapes of buildings and lakes are complex

To Thrift or Not to Thrift

MIRA PONNAMBALAM '26

In the current fashion industry, fast fashion is king; however, fast fashion promotes the overconsumption of clothes as the clothing is cheap and not made to last, helping people keep up with rapidly changing trends—which can be difficult without buying from fast fashion companies—so a lot of young people love it. Shein, Zara, Forever 21, and other fast fashion brands push out thousands of new items every day, certainly taking a toll on the environment. According to BBC, fast fashion accounts for up to 10 percent of all carbon emissions. A new fashion trend, however, has grown in popularity to usurp fast fashion's throne: the supposedly more sustainable thrifting.

Thrifting, buying second-hand clothes at a low price, has grown in popularity in recent years, with the market expected to grow 127 percent by 2026, according to ThredUp. The trend has taken root on social media, where thrifting hauls and upcycling second-hand clothing have become common. Its popularity can partially be attributed to the guiltlessness of buying cheap clothes sustainably.

Defenders of thrifting point out that buying second-hand stops clothes from ending up as waste and that not buying new clothes eliminates the water footprint, energy use, and pollution caused by the production. It's a sustainable alternative to fast fashion—or so people claim.

In reality, thrifting feeds off the fast fashion market and isn't all that sustainable. Thrifting doesn't actually reduce the amount of clothing in circulation, which is essential for reducing the fashion industry's environmental impact. Instead of preventing people from quickly buying and disposing of clothing to keep up with trends,

it allows people to do so guiltlessly, cheaply, and easily because people can swap out their entire wardrobes through thrift stores. Popular Science mentions that "80 percent [of donated clothes are] shipped to other countries like Poland, Pakistan, and Kenya or turned into rags or post-consumer fibers," and the process of recycling textiles uses a lot of energy. Shipping the clothes to other countries also expends energy and damages the economies of the countries where the clothes are sent. Therefore, while thrifting in moderation provides an environmentally friendly way to buy clothing, with its popularization and the impact of the fast fashion industry on the rate at which people buy and sell clothes, it's ultimately unsustainable.

Thrifting isn't without its moral downfalls either. For a long time, thrift stores were exclusively used by people who could not afford clothes otherwise. With the popularization of thrifting among the middle and upper-class, more second-hand stores have emerged, driving up competition and prices. Through the process of thrift store gentrification, people who previously relied on thrift stores can no longer afford to buy the clothes they need to survive.

Despite its unsustainable link to fast fashion, ultimately harming people who rely on thrift stores, in the short term, thrifting ultimately does reduce the fast fashion market and waste from clothing. If shoppers carefully regulate their habits so that they don't harm others or the environment, thrifting can make a lasting impact on the fashion industry's environmental influence.



Aileen Ryu '25 / THE LAWRENCE

A Friendly Guide to Hazardous Species on Campus

ZACHARY KALAFER '24

Students of The Lawrenceville School are notably unaware about local plant and animal life. In order to promote awareness about the diverse species on campus, it is time to introduce profiles of the most dangerous and interesting species at Lawrenceville.

There are two common types of ticks on campus: dog ticks (*Dermacentor Variabilis*) found in the grass and deer ticks (*Ixodes Scapularis*) found in the woods, especially in the crossbow hunting grounds. Ticks have eight legs and sesame seed-shaped bodies, with two large eyes located on the front of their body below the head, what we would approximate as "shoulders." Ticks are very interesting in that their cells can divide extremely quickly. When this division occurs, their weight can increase by a factor of 200! Dog ticks are the most common type to encounter, so while they may be annoying, they fortunately do not carry Lyme Disease and are not much worse than a particularly painful mosquito bite. They can be identified by their larger size and mottled white pattern on their back. The deer tick on the other hand, identifiable by its pitch-black heads and legs and its red bodies, carry Lyme Disease and should be removed using tweezers within 24 hours to prevent infection. The Al Rashid Health

and Wellness Center (Infirm) will remove a tick if requested; however, if you choose to remove a tick yourself, ensure that you remove the head since it is the primary method of transmission.

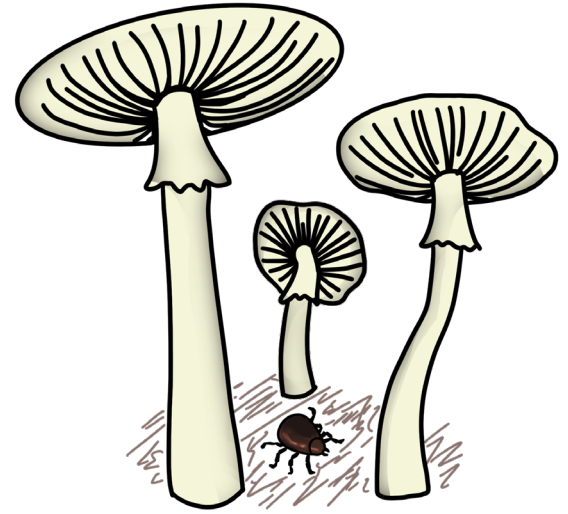
The giant stinging nettle is a rare plant to see on campus. However, it is occasionally found growing near ponds and rivers that border grass. The plant has large, serrated green leaves which grow off the sides of their singular magenta stems. If you look closely, the stems appear to have fuzzy fur covering them with scattered larger hairs: a ruse. The fuzz is actually a field of needles, each made of a glass-like substance that will snap on contact! The broken spikes have structures inside that resemble a hypodermic needle, which injects anyone who touches it with a burning venom! Interestingly, the needles will only break when touched in a certain direction. This direction varies from plant to plant, so one direction is always safe.

Everyone knows about poison ivy and its three shiny leaves with wide serrations on the edges and hairy roots that climb trees. However, what many people do not know is they themselves might be immune to poison ivy! About one third of the population does not have an allergic reaction on contact with urushiol, the toxic component of the plant, and can touch it without issue. That said, be careful regardless, because it is impossible

to tell until contact occurs! Even if you are immune, repeated exposure can increase your sensitivity to the oil and eventually cause a reaction. If you catch poison ivy, rubbing chickweed (a tiny plant with many petalled, sun-shaped white flowers) on the rash can help. Be careful when touching the blistering rash, as doing so can spread the oil to others or other parts of your body.

Three species of deadly fungus are present on campus. *Amanita Bisporigera*, a pure white mushroom with a bulbous base and a ring around the stem, is also known as the "Northeastern Destroying Angel." This mushroom, in addition to the similar-looking death cap (*Amanita Phalloides*), can cause liver failure in days if even a tiny piece is consumed. Dogs often mistake them for edible mushrooms and should be kept as far away from them as possible. A fungus with a similar effect, the funeral bell mushroom (*Galerina Marginata*) is a small, slimy brown mushroom that grows from rotting wood. It closely resembles certain desirable mushrooms, so learning the mushroom's appearance is absolutely necessary to avoid an unwanted encounter.

Datura Stramonium is a plant with large spiny leaves, growing mainly on the construction site. It has spiny seed pods that can prick you if you are reckless. Ingesting this plant is unlikely, but there

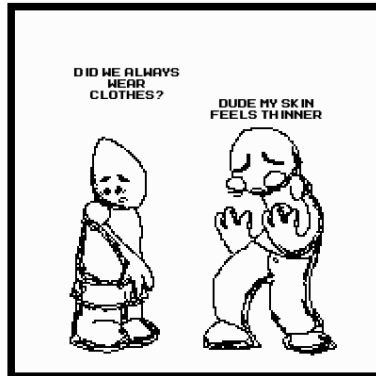
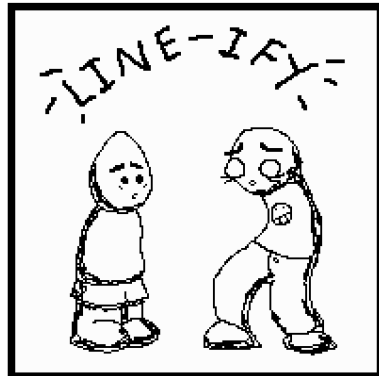
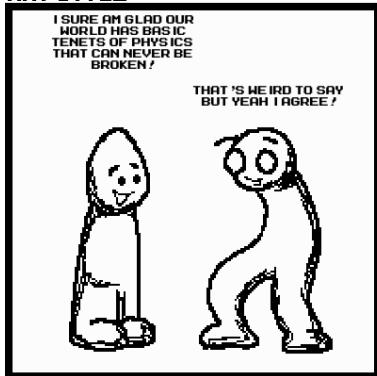


Anika Ponnambalam '25 / THE LAWRENCE

are some reports of people being poisoned from just touching the pods, so it is wise to steer clear of them entirely. This plant has some of the most brutal effects possible, causing severe delirium (terrifying hallucinations which range from friends that are not there to walls made of meat), sweating, dehydration, generalized body pain, diarrhea, fever, possible liver failure, coma, and death. Although the award for Most Deadly at Lawrenceville Species likely goes to *Amanita Bisporigera*, the *Datura* is surely one of the worst plants to expose yourself to. There are a lot of dangerous

plants, animals, and mushrooms about in New Jersey, but they are also all beautiful in their own way. Next time you brush your leg against a nettle, take a look at the gorgeous crystal spines on the stem, or when you find some beautiful-but-deadly mushrooms, marvel at their handsome forms jutting from the pine needles. As a concluding disclaimer, the more deadly organisms mentioned here can only hurt you if ingested. You are not just going to walk past a *datura* plant and die instantly, and you are really in no danger of more than a rash just from walking around outside.

ART STYLE



Art Style

ZACHARY KALAFER '24 / THE LAWRENCE

Calling All Programmers: Website Needed for Vintage Treasures

SOPHIE BILANIN '26

HELP WANTED: Donna and Tom Rago are the co-owners of Lawrenceville Vintage Treasures, a store that sells a variety of vintage and antique goods and have been running their shop on Main Street for years. Donna Rago is interested in enlisting the help of a Lawrenceville student to help her to design a website for Lawrenceville Vintage Treasures and set up an online ordering system. She is also willing to take time to personally teach the student about her business, providing entrepreneurial experience and allowing them to become familiar with the product. It is preferred that you have a background in technology and web design and a passion for vintage treasures! If you are interested, feel free to visit Rago at her shop on Gordon Avenue next to the Gingered Peach, or reach out to her via email: Donnarago@comcast.net



Lawrenceville Vintage Treasures and Donna Rago

Sienna Kulynych '26 / THE LAWRENCE

Learning to Thrive at the Big Red Store?

LOUIS PARK '26

The demolition of The Jigger in 2022 has given a sense of loss to the majority of Lawrentians. For many years, this iconic store has served as a hub for all student necessities, supplying school merch, snacks, basic necessities, and more. However, with the loss of the Irwin Dining Center, the new Big Red Store raises the question: Has The Big Red Store filled the absence of The Jigger completely, and how well it is serving the needs of Lawrentians? In the search to answer this question, many Lawrentians will explain what they miss most about The Jigger and share their thoughts about the brand new Big Red Store.

This year's new students experienced life in Irwin for a fairly short time—only through Fall Term—but still reminisce about The Jigger. Leo Soffer '26 visits The Big Red Store every few days. Soffer, a regular customer, shares that while he still enjoys “candy and chips at the Big Red Store like [he] did at the Jigger,” he misses the Jigger’s “wider selection of snacks, like Doritos.” Soffer comments that although The Big Red Store has similar offerings to students, he believes “students miss being able to grab some snacks before or after lunch,” adding that “The Big Red Store is just too far away to go there consistently

like [The] Jigger.” Soffer misses “being able to get good snacks on a regular basis without having to walk all the way to the golf shack.”

Another new Lawrentian, Henry Tsai '26, reflects on how he and his friends “stopped by The Jigger on the way back from lunch” considering it a “convenient location at the entrance of Irwin.” After the demolition of Irwin, Tsai had visited The Big Red Store a few times, but not nearly as often as he did The Jigger in the fall. Tsai’s decline in shop visits can be blamed on the store’s distance from select houses, as the store is now “much farther from The Bowl and out of [his] way than it was before.” In the past, students used to walk out of lunch in Irwin and grab refreshments from The Jigger, but now, Tsai and many others “miss the small happiness of getting snacks” with his friends. As a II Former, Tsai considers this only a “negative thing for [him],” noting that “the majority of our school’s student body lives in the Circle and Crescent, so the new location is probably more optimal.” Despite the distance between The Big Red Store and the rest of campus, students agree that the availability of the offerings itself remains almost the same.

Moreover, even though The Big Red Store is located far away from academic buildings like The Jigger once did, the store is actually closer



Big Red Store

Cindy Shum '24 / THE LAWRENCE

to the Circle and some Crescent Houses. When students need school materials right before class, or are starving in their rooms after sports, The Big Red Store is right outside the doorstep of Circle Houses with easier accessibility, though at the expense of the convenience of II and V Formers.

Returning student Samuel Huh '23 had spent two of his three Lawrenceville years with the original school store. Huh relates to the fact that the Big Red Store is “out of sight” and therefore, “out of mind.” Since Huh doesn’t walk past The Big

Red Store often, he doesn’t find the store “unless [he] absolutely needs something.” However, Huh remarks how the store is “closer to The Circle and makes it better for all upperclassmen,” although it might be “inconvenient for everyone else.” As a benefit for all, Huh pointed out that The Big Red Store is now “next to the new outdoor courts and facilities,” where he presumes, “people will need it the most.”

While several students have noted that the Big Red Store still has a variety of snacks and drinks, some miss the wider availability

of items at The Jigger. Regarding the location of The Big Red Store, many students prefer the location of The Jigger back in Irwin as it was more accessible with its close proximity to academic buildings and main campus. The demolition of The Jigger may have caused students to miss the brand and items that were once available, as well as its familiar environment. Lawrentians appreciate the Big Red Store’s new offerings and are open to new experiences and items at the Big Red Store—ultimately making the store a success.

The Daunting Role of Social Rep

ROBERT LEE '26

Being elected to the Student Council is a competitive process. The recent presidential election saw Student Council President Bryce Langdon '24 run against nine other candidates, yet despite the coveted positions of the council, the position of the Social Life Representative, or Social Rep, has been widely neglected with only one student running for the position: Grace Chu '24. While every position has its challenges, it seems the position of social rep has one too many.

Adrian Carlisi '24 is the Griswold House’s Social Representative and finds that the position is extremely rewarding but far too complicated. To Carlisi, being social rep is “the type of job you really need a passion for.” Although all positions on the House Council require dedication, commitment, and passion, the role of social rep requires “a different type of passion, which [he] feel[s] is very different.” Carlisi ran for Social Representative because of the amazing experience he had during III Form year, and focused on making sure “that [they] could get to do the same things again.” In his tenure, Carlisi has planned an off-campus trip to Field of Terror, a haunted house and hayride attraction, where students “had

the opportunity to bring someone outside of the House.” Carlisi’s accomplishments demonstrate his perseverance, commitment, and passion for the role, so one must ask, why does nobody want to be the School-wide Social Rep? Carlisi believes there are two defining factors that have created an unpopular reputation surrounding the position of Social Rep: time and criticism. To be a good Social Rep, you have to “know when to plan certain events,” to comprehend “what the environment is like on campus, and [to] understand the best time to do things,” explains Carlisi. Accommodating everyone’s schedule is a herculean task. This is all without considering the strain it has on the Social Rep’s own schedule. To Carlisi, “it’s just so hard because there are so many things you want to do.” Planning the perfect dance or trip may come at the expense of sleep, friends, or grades, and many Lawrentians do not want to risk that. Carlisi considers time the “biggest enemy at Lawrenceville” and the position of Social Rep only heightens these troubles.

Criticism is expected for any position but in the eyes of many the social rep entails too much of it. They must be “willing to get that criticism and willing to not get the respect deserved on the big scale—you cannot please everyone.” Carlisi has used the

critiques to “encourage [him] to try to align events with the best possible time” as he feels “that’s the biggest complaint that [he] will get [by] having an event on a bad time or when a lot of people are off campus or whatever it may be.” Carlisi feels this makes the position a tough job, and advises future Social Reps to be able to take the “criticism whilst trying to align events in the best possible times.”

Grace Chu '24 currently serves as the Stephens House Social Rep and is the Vice President of Social Life for the upcoming school year. Chu ran for the position as she “really enjoys planning events and like[s] seeing how happy [her] House is.” However, there were undoubtedly some issues she faced. Similar to Carlisi, Chu wanted to appease everybody, including the administration, which at times simply was not possible. Chu recounts the process of planning for an off-campus trip, which was denied by the administration primarily due to concerns surrounding the budget and timing. For Chu, “at Stephens, it’s been hard to get an off-campus trip going.” There are also a lot of differing opinions as to what events students want, “a lot of students want to see a lot of different things happen and some of those things just can’t.” In her upcoming term, Chu plans



Photo of Grace Chu '24

Emily Pan '24 / THE LAWRENCE

to address this issue through feedback forms to generate a unified opinion on certain ideas. Chu is in a unique position since she has run unopposed. Initially, nobody was running for Vice President of Social Life until Chu was approached by Langdon. Chu felt that “this [was] a great opportunity” to be social rep “for the whole school” so “even more people could have fun with [her] ideas.” Chu has admitted that by running unopposed, “there’s barely any stress,” but she wants to “make sure people know that [she is] actually dedicated to the position.” Chu plans to have engaging conversations

with the administration in response to the student body. This modern approach to social life will very much reflect Langdon’s platform by focusing on acting as the liaison between the student body and the administration. Administrative and social changes must occur for the position of social rep to be rejuvenated, so that in the future others are inspired to bear the responsibility of it. An important part of the Lawrenceville student experience is the social life, which starts with the Social Life Representative. An environment lacking social representatives is a dull one, so let’s support them

UCL Quarterfinal Preview (After The Quarterfinals!?)

LOUIS PARK '26

For over 60 years, Europe's premier club football competition, the UEFA Champions League (UCL), has been pitting the best teams Europe has to offer against each other. The teams that reached the quarter-finals played their first leg last week, and fans eagerly await this week's season-defining second-leg matchups. Which teams will fight their way to the semi-finals?

The UCL's two previous champions face off as Real Madrid plays Chelsea. Real Madrid remains the favorites to win it all this year, having won the tournament for a record

14th time last season. On the flip side, Chelsea recently hired club legend Frank Lampard as an interim coach with hopes he would steady a sinking ship, but the team has lost all three games since his appointment. These two teams went head-to-head in last season's quarter-finals, with forwards Rodrygo and Karim Benzema scoring in the dying minutes match, giving Madrid a 5-4 aggregate win. With Madrid's 2-0 first-leg win, "Los Blancos" should cruise through to the semi-finals.

Prediction: 2-0 (Madrid) / Agg: 4-0 (Madrid) Reality: 2-0/ (Madrid) Agg 4-0 (Madrid)

Two Italian rivals yet again clash on the European stage. Led by summer signings

Khvicha Kvaratskhelia and Kim Kim Minjae, Napoli has seemed unbeatable all season. Meanwhile, defending Serie A champions AC Milan have had a tough season. In spite of this Milan has defeated Napoli twice in their most recent meetings, destroying them 4-0 in the Italian league, and triumphing 1-0 in the first leg at the San Siro last Wednesday. With Napoli facing Victor Osimhen's injury and Kim's suspension, can their fairy tale season continue?

Prediction: 1-0 (Napoli) / Agg: Napoli wins on penalties Reality: 1-1/ Agg 2-1 (Milan)

Two underdogs face each other again in Milan this Wednesday as Benfica plays Inter Milan. The 2021 Serie

A Champions put themselves in a good position to get to the semifinals, with their 2-0 first-leg win being Benfica's first defeat in the UCL this season. Inter's recent form also suggests they will advance, as they are unbeaten in their last five games, four of those being victories. The two underdogs' second leg will happen in San Siro.

Prediction: 3-0 Inter / Agg: 5-0 Inter Reality: 3-3/ Agg 5-3 Inter

Two giants of the game, Man City and Bayern, will battle against each other in the Allianz Arena on Wednesday. Bayern recently fired Nagelsmann after he could not solidify Bayern's position in the league, and

appointed ex-Chelsea manager Tuchel as his replacement. Despite Tuchel's ability as a coach, he will need time to implement his style and adapt to the new environment. On the flip side, this is the seventh season with Guardiola managing Man City, and he has given the team a definite tactical identity. The first leg ended with City dominating the German champions 3-0. Can City continue to translate their domestic dominance to the European stage?

Prediction: 3-2 City / Agg 6-2 City Reality: 1-1/ Agg: 4-1 City

ELI LACEY '25

As an avid Mixed Martial Arts (MMA) fan and practitioner, I have been interested in and inspired by an aspect of the sport ever since my introduction: The relationship between MMA and spirituality. Every time I sit down to watch a UFC pay-per-view, Bellator bout, Eddie Bravo's Invitational, or any other combat sports event, people praise God all the time; So much so that I can guarantee you the next time you sit down to watch a UFC event, there will be someone thanking the Lord for their victory. During Jon Jones's inspiring post-fight interview after his impressive victory at UFC 285, my brother and I watched Jones praise the Lord for his victory, thanking those who prayed for him before the fight, saying he "felt their prayers strongly." This made me wonder what about MMA attracted so many spiritual athletes.

Although sports and religion are undoubtedly intertwined, combat athletes take this relationship to another level. Some of the sport's most well-known athletes: Yoel Romero, Islam Makhachev, Jon Jones, and Khabib Nurmagomedov,

are very outspoken about their faith. This devotion isn't just limited to the athletes but also trickles to the coaches and trainers of MMA practitioners with legendary coaches like Firas Zahabi and Abdulmanap Nurmagomedov serving as examples. Clearly, something about the nature of combat sports tends to draw in spiritual people.

There are many reasons why I think fighters rely heavily on their faith to do their jobs. The first is the

extraordinarily difficult nature of combat sports. In MMA, both mind and body are pushed and tested all the time. Practicing MMA is similar to playing a game of chess, only with higher risks and rewards. Fighters enter the ring with a game plan that uses the skills they have worked on during their training camp to win efficiently, but,

in the words of MMA legend Micheal Bisping, "The game plan falls apart when you get punched in the face." During a fight, it is necessary to display mental toughness by adapting to varying stressful situations. Factor in the physical pain that comes from getting punched, kicked, and elbowed while also acknowledging how exhausted each fighter is, and you can see pretty quickly how MMA is one of the hardest sports on

the planet. When faced with something so challenging, we often need inspiration to keep on going. In this case, fighters call on God because they feel that He gives meaning to what they are doing. They train to bring God glory so that during those long hours bathing in pools of sweat on the mat, they know that their hard work is

worth something more than just themselves. I believe that when a fighter has this as their inspiration their work ethic is doubled and often leads them to greatness.

To further understand why so many fighters are religious, we also have to look at the history of MMA. Some of the most effective and commonly practiced martial arts originated in Asia. Ancient Asia was a spiritual hotspot, with eleven major religions originating in the region. Asia's diversity in belief was no doubt woven in with their martial arts, with many believing the acts themselves were a spiritual practice. By far the most popular voice for the connection between martial arts and spirituality was Bruce Lee, who showed the West that martial arts were more than just punching and kicking and that it was a legitimate outlet for self-expression. I personally believe wholeheartedly in this connection. From watching

and practicing MMA, I have learned so many things about life. MMA has made me more competitive and has helped me with problem-solving in intense situations. Not to mention the people you come across in the gym are some of the most interesting people in the world, and it's hard not to befriend someone when you're both breathing heavily drenched in each other's sweat after a nice long roll. MMA also gives you an outlet to express yourself, and it is this feature that makes many practitioners view MMA as a spiritual experience. Because your fighting style heavily depends on who you are as a person, fighters channel their different styles to express themselves in the cage. For fighters like Alexander Volkanoski, fans can tell he is warrior-like; whilst others like Sean O'Malley are more flamboyant. You can shape your fighting style to embody how you want to be perceived and this freedom makes many fighters view the act of Mixed Martial Arts as a religious experience. So whether it is the difficulty of MMA, the long spiritual history, or the sport itself, an undeniable link exists between spirituality and Mixed Martial Arts.

Religion & MMA



Sustainable Board Picks

	Claire Jiang Tyrant	Nichole Jin News Person 1/2	William Wang Features Person 1/2	Sofia Carlisi Arts Person	Garrett Heffern Opinions Guy 1/2	Bryan Boanoh Sportsball Person	Emily Pan Drawing Person
What's one way you can be sustainable in your everyday life?	 Read printed copies of the Lawrence	 Not showering or washing your hands	 Stop eating instant ramen and wasting plastic bowls.	 unicycle to class	 Eating more to reduce food waste (no but seriously, food waste is an actual concern)	 putting Alistair's idea in my topic email	 finish all my food, even the oil. yes, every last drop of that tj's chicken bacon ranch grease
What sustainability slogan do you live by?	live. eat. breathe. sleep.	if u see a used plastic water bottle lying somewhere, always pick it up and use it for yourself	If you can throw it out. Throw it out.	don't be trashy, be classy	Virtus Semper Viridis	Live Laugh Love the Environment	tote bags are cute. plastic bags aren't
What is your go-to water bottle? And if it's plastic why do you hate the earth?	swell	tsai paper cups	I keep on losing water bottles.	I don't drink water.	The plastic bottles the trainers hand-out as freebies	The Earth hates me too.	currently my teal mug is my go-to water bottle and outside of the house I just don't drink water