

Announcing the 2023-24 Student Council



The 2023-24 Student Council Representatives

Nicole Halucka '26 / THE LAWRENCE

SOPHIE CHENG '25 & MIA KINCADE '25

After a thorough review of applications and a number of interviews conducted by president-elect Bryce Langdon '24, Honor and Discipline Representative Daphne Volpp '24, Academic Representative Conan Chen '24, and Social Life Representative Grace Chu '24, the remaining representative positions on the 2023-24 Student Council have officially been selected and announced. Congratulations to IV Formers Sofia Carlisi, Cassie Dillard, Ian Lee, Chelsea Lim, Liza Strong, and Rayce Welborne. With the 2021-22 school year coming to a close, now is the time for students to familiarize themselves with the new Student Council.

Welborne, as next year's Athletic Representative, aims to serve as an "advocate and voice for the wants, needs, and concerns of the student body on all matters, not just those concerning athletics." He appreciated the current Student Council's mission of "ONE," which stands for

"Our Next Era." Looking to build on this theme, Welborne aims to enact changes that will "bring out the best in Lawrenceville." Saying that while he seeks to "rebuild and redefine the excitement and pride surrounding the athletic life of the school," he is also excited to bring positive change that will benefit student athletes in their day-to-day lives. Specifically, he wants to work toward enhancing Friday Night Lights games while also increasing student accessibility and anticipation for these events. In addition, he plans to add a 'Player to Watch' section to the weekly TWISAL (This Week in Sports at Lawrenceville). Welborne especially values school pride, with his ultimate goal being to "make Lawrenceville athletics scream 'Big Red.'"

Strong, the new Community Service Representative, is currently Community Service Representative for the Kirby House. Having organized Kirby Quesadillas and other One-Time-Events for the House, she has already "worked closely with Director of Community Service Elizabeth Fer-

guson and Sara Chiang [23]...through Halloween Party and Springfest." On Student Council, she said that she plans to work more closely with House Community Service Representatives to "weave service initiatives together" and contribute to House culture on campus. Strong noted that her main goal is to "create a link on Veracross with a running list of all community service opportunities each term, including philanthropic club events," as well as broadening One-Time-Event opportunities for the School. By working with Ferguson, Strong said she also aims to "discuss how to credit students who are involved with community service outside of Lawrenceville." Ultimately, her hope is to make community service at Lawrenceville "less of a requirement, but more of an enjoyment and opportunity," including through making Lawrenceville's community service requirements more transparent.

Lim was selected to be next year's Diversity Representative; she is "incredibly excited" to continue

this year's "StuCo's" hard work and the "positive mark they have left on Lawrenceville." Having worked with the Korean American Grassroots Conference, an organization primarily focused on uplifting Korean voices in politics, Lim already has experience in working with DEI work. She hopes to apply this prior experience to her role as Lawrenceville's next Diversity Representative. Lim said that by improving "the involvement of the student body in diversity initiatives," she aims to encourage diversity on "as many levels as possible," including in the Houses, at social events, and in class. Additionally, she said she plans to work closely with "all affinity groups on campus to help organize school wide events that correlate with the heritage months, including showcases, guest speakers and performers, and food immersion" for AAPI month, Black History month, Women's History month, and more. Moreover, she plans to "establish official Diversity House Council Representatives in each House to [include] a house perspective on diversity."

Lee, who will serve as Lawrenceville's Sustainability Representative next year, would love to "see Student Council inspire the student body to make some massive improvements" during the 2023-24 school year. Having been on the Sustainability Council for the past three years, Lee has already contributed to various efforts to create a more sustainable and eco-friendly Lawrenceville. "First and foremost, I want to establish sustainability and awareness as a fundamental pillar for every Lawrentian," Lee said. Lee also commended Lawrenceville's current Sustainability Representative, Alistar Lam '23, for being "a phenomenal Sustainability Representative and leader during the 2022-23 school year." He hopes to "capitalize on last year's successes and lessons to create the change we want to see."

Wellness Representative, a new position added to Student Council this year, will be filled by Dillard. Going into the 2023-24 school year, Dillard said she is "hoping for productive change, active listening, a constant betterment of StuCo and in turn of

campus as a whole." Dillard plans on implementing Narcan in every House, including training on how to administer Narcan in Personal Development Class." Additionally, Dillard will "send out forms for people to submit feedback and stay in close communication with prefects to identify and distill trends," emphasizing the importance of transparency and communication between the administration and the student body. Dillard hopes to continue the current Student Council's work in "re-imagining School Meeting," by advocating for more student performances that are "fun and showcase unique talents on campus." She believes the vague parameters of the job description for the Wellness Representative will enable her "to tackle a wide variety of the most crucial issues on campus and shift her role as the student body seems fit." Overall, Dillard is "extremely passionate about this role and encourages people to reach out with their ideas so we can have the most productive and beneficial year possible."

Lawrenceville's Arts Representative for the 2023-24 school year is Carlisi, whose main goal is for "next year to be, simply put, fun!" saying she plans to "work together with her fellow Student Council members to provide events to better student life and our campus spirit," as well as to "expand the arts on campus, creating events that any Lawrentians can enjoy regardless of artistic experience." Reflecting upon her experience at Lawrenceville, Carlisi said that "the arts here have had such a positive impact on me, and I want everyone to feel that art is both a stress relief and a way to socialize." Carlisi commended Stephanie Xu '23, the current Student Council Arts Representative, noting that she has "loved watching her showcase the arts on the @lvillearts account and would love to continue her legacy when she leaves."

Overall, Carlisi, Dillard, Lee, Lim, Strong, and Welborne pledge to work hard to create a better Lawrenceville for this community and future generations to come.

Kirby Music Festival

CELINE FONG '25 & CHARLES POTTER '25

Last Saturday on May 6, the Kirby House hosted the Kirby Music Festival, an annual spring event, to celebrate talented musicians on campus. Members of the Lawrenceville community gathered around the Crescent Green to enjoy ice cream from a Mister Softee truck while watching the student performances.

Reflecting on the planning for the event, Maggie Blundin '24, one of Kirby's two Social Representatives, said that it took "a lot of hours and a lot of teamwork" planning together with House President

Ava Jahn '24, fellow Social Representative Aleyna Aksu '24, and the Heads of House Mary Calvert and Christine Ding. Blundin noted that she was also looking forward to "seeing everyone dressed in festival attire." "It was a great opportunity for everyone to have a fun night on a spring evening," she said.

Aksu said that the festival required "a lot of preparation over the past four weeks." Her and Blundin's main goal was just for "everyone to have fun."

Kirby Music Festival was Busola Babatunde's '25 first time performing in front of the student body. She, along with Sofi

Keith '25, Emma Marston '25, and Tenji Sithole '25 performed the song "Daydreamer" by Adele. Babatunde was glad her friends "pushed her outside of her comfort zone to perform."

Locke McMurray Jr. '25 and Macklynn Harper '24 performed the song "Burn Burn Burn" by Zach Bryan. "I haven't played guitar since my [II Form] year, but seeing the artists enjoy themselves at All Arts Night this year made me want to start playing again," McMurray said. After hearing about the Kirby Music Festival, he was "excited to try performing."

The festival's final performance fea-

tured a four-song performance from The Disciples, Lawrenceville's student rock band. Lead singer Eric Han '24 was "very excited" as it was "the band's biggest performance of the term." The band played "Can't Take My Eyes Off You" by Frankie Valley, "Mr Bright Side" by The Killers, "Until I Found You" by Stephen Sanchez, and "If I Got You" by Alicia Keys.

Lilly Gessner '23 described The Disciples' performance as "immaculate...I was on my friend's shoulders, looking down, observing the absolute magnificence of the performance... This is exactly how I wanted to spend my Senior Spring," she said.

Other members of the community expressed feelings of anticipation, bitterness, and excitement. Lana Kim '26 enjoyed the ice cream and performances, noting that the event had "a really good environment."

Kirby prefect Ashley Lee '23 noted that she was "feeling sad" because it would be her last Kirby Music Festival, but she was "happy [the event] happened because it is the biggest Kirby event in the spring."

Overall, the Kirby Music Festival was a way for students to come together and watch musicians on campus showcase their talents.

Men in Kinnan

Mira Ponnambalam '26 reveals the mysteries behind the Kinnan House. What do the boys do? What traditions do they have? How do they get into Kinnan?



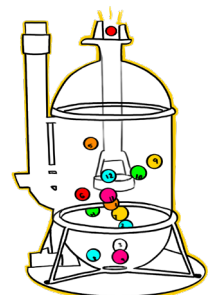
The Met Gala

Harini Venkatesh '25 envisions herself at the 2023 Met Gala.



The NBA's Next Star

Stanley Dufour '25 explains why Victor Wembanyama might be the best NBA prospect since LeBron James.



Editorial

In Greek mythology, Achilles is depicted as the peerless hero of the Trojan War. Countless legends recount his apparent invincibility; having been dipped into the river Styx as an infant by his mother, Achilles is effectively immortal on all parts of his body save his heel. Given the nature of his existence, Achilles could have easily chosen to live forever, immune to the wear and tear of the universe. Instead, he chooses a life of glory and combat. Though he dies from an arrow to the heel at the hands of Paris of Troy, Achilles becomes immortal once more, living forever through the glory of his legacy rather than the eternal life granted by his physical perfection.

Today, countless Lawrentians strive for the same level of achievement as the Greek hero. In place of battlefields and victory in combat, students aim for excellence on the field, the stage, or the Harkness table. Of course, students are not invincible Greek heroes, and inevitably, they grow weary. As the years pass by and courseloads become more rigorous, it's hard to find a student who hasn't worked to the

point of exhaustion during the time they spend in the Lawrenceville pressure cooker. Stress, however, is also the natural consequence of striving for greatness. Though Lawrenceville undoubtedly upholds a rigorous assortment of classes, the expectations we students set for ourselves result in just as many sleepless nights; Lawrenceville's collective emphasis on success and achievement has created a culture that deemphasizes the value of rest.

Make no mistake; work at Lawrenceville is intense and cumulative. As major assignments pile up, students often find themselves playing a constant game of catchup. In the process, what little free time students have gets used to complete major assignments, creating a vicious cycle of work. Interscholastic commitments, rigorous clubs, and time-consuming publications also play a large role in dramatically increasing student workloads. Sleep deprivation isn't isolated to Lawrenceville, either. According to a 2022 survey conducted on several students across boarding schools in America, students only get an average

of five to seven hours of sleep a night, a far cry from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) recommendation of at least nine.

Still, in response to these issues, Lawrenceville continues to implement a variety of initiatives to ensure that students get the rest they need. Between late Wednesdays, free periods, Pace and Quality of Life days, Head of School days, long weekends, no-homework weekends, and even reduced Saturday classes, Lawrenceville takes care to make opportunities for students to attain rest.

The problem with these initiatives, however, lies in that none of them necessarily address the cultural causes behind the loss of rest. Instead, with its Form awards, House cups, and Cum Laude rolls, Lawrenceville places success on a pedestal. Emphasizing accolades creates a zero-sum game, like gladiatorial combat; every opportunity forgone in exchange for rest is an opportunity taken by a peer, one that might even lead to awards and transcript materials. Though nothing prevents us from reducing our course

loads, giving up varsity sports, or leaving prestigious clubs on the surface, the cost of not striving for excellence ends up appearing far greater than the loss of a few hours of sleep. Like Greek warriors pushing for success in battle, students end up not getting the rest they need, simply because they refuse to.

It goes without saying that this sort of lifestyle is unsustainable. Rest is critical to the development of teenage minds and bodies; Lawrenceville students cannot truly become their best selves if they sacrifice their well-being in exchange for success. Students should also note the dangers of sleep deprivation, which can increase the risk of dementia, heart disease, and diabetes. Though Achilles sought immortality in glory, he ironically did so at the cost of his own life; that the "Achilles heel," an idiomatic symbol of one's dooming weakness, has endured longer than the Greek hero's exploits speaks volumes. Though the student body might idealize success, students can only truly achieve excellence once their basic needs are met.

Our basic need for sleep notwithstanding, is competition what we as a student body wish to strive for during our time at Lawrenceville? Do we wish to diminish every opportunity for camaraderie with our fellow students, and every opportunity for growth in the face of failure, in favor of fighting for some arbitrary goal of greatness? Though Achilles is praised for his strength and glory as a warrior, I figure the moments he truly cherished were those spent with Patroclus; after all, what use was his strength as a warrior without anyone to fight for? We as a student body thrive in the company and support of one another. In pursuing academics we should not aim to outcompete peers and should instead strive to do our best while uplifting others in the process. To properly allow the student body to get the rest it needs, Lawrenceville must also begin addressing its culture of do-or-die student competition. Life isn't a Greek tragedy; one person's victory need not be another person's loss.

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

How to Combat Simmering School Spirit

ARYA VISHWAKARMA '25

This Wednesday, Lawrenceville hosted Community Day, a day designed to tackle the school's cultural problems with our usual strategy: students gathered around Harkness tables, coming up with solutions in small, approachable settings (unusually, though, while painting, making pasta, or watching the Matrix). This day was an important time to reflect on our culture at Lawrenceville, and specifically on our school spirit. From the outside, Lawrentians seem awash in school spirit. The intimacy of our learning model—class sizes in the single digits, close student-teacher bonds, and the limited size of the school itself—fosters deep personal growth through connections with other equally motivated students. Our alumni seem passionate about giving back to the School, collectively contributing over 7 million dollars a year. Our teams consistently compete at a high level in athletic championships and academic competitions in order to bring glory to Big Red. However, current and former Lawrentians' sense of investment in the well-being of the community is not a strong enough force to unite students from different social groups; our spirit only func-

tionally extends to the circles we've been invited into.

Lawrentians have very strong ties to certain subsets of campus: athletic teams and active clubs come to mind, but the organization with the strongest influence on one's identity is their House, which ideally provides them with a built-in support network of friends and trusted adults and infuses them with a cultural tradition that is, in some cases, centuries old. Unsurprisingly, the House system also seems to fulfill its mission statement, dividing students into smaller subgroups that each create a unique sense of pride and community. House Councils take interest in the well-being of the house by planning events, a marker of their commitment to a community they did not choose but grew to love. If this isn't spirit, what is?

The Circle and Crescent houses propagate community by being inescapable. However, other groups on campus became surrogate family structures by being selective—the Boards of publications and large clubs, varsity athletic teams, and even the academic Scholars programs are all opt-in structures that Lawrentians apply to be accepted into. For those who scrape a spot in one of these groups, the

experience undoubtedly provides its fair share of challenges, rewards, and bonding with peers. What about those who don't? If it's even worth it to look, where should we be able to find a



Rehana Yakubu '25/THE LAWRENCE

sense of Lawrenceville spirit that connects students with different interests?

Students in different Houses, sports, and clubs don't usually get a chance to interact beyond the mandatory school meetings every week. Yet I think I speak for many when I say most of my school meetings are spent wish-

ing I was sitting with my friends. If our major gathering event serves to only drive us apart and make us wish we were sitting with the same people we choose to spend our time with, what does that say about the baseline of community we feel with an arbitrarily chosen Lawrentian? When excitement about simply being a part of the School is low, the mood left in its absence is often apathy, which can be incredibly isolating. Feeling disconnected from the greater community means that one's only pillars of support are the kids closest to them, if they exist at all.

School spirit would mean more than coming to pep rallies—it would mean a feeling of trust and amiability even with Lawrentians one doesn't know. Every year, the Student Council promises to create social events that are appealing to wide swaths of the population, because they are some of the only opportunities to spontaneously meet people outside of your social circle. In my opinion, true school spirit is compassion—it is an investment in the well-being of others because everyone here needs to thrive for the school to flourish. It's possible to experience this motivation towards collective success at sports games where people cheer Lawrentian teams for sports they don't play, or the raucous applause at the

end of every Periwig production. Passion is scoring a game-winning goal or bringing an audience to tears; spirit is feeling a personal win while watching your friends do the same. Spirit is approaching someone in Tsai who's struggling or sitting alone, or offering to study with someone in your French class you don't know but would like to. It is the broadening of who we care about to the school at large.

Even though the transitional nature of the spring might work to "clump" students and isolate friend groups through announcements of leadership positions and Scholarly designations, its weather and hopeful atmosphere make it in some ways an ideal time for the administration and student leadership to work to foster more diverse relationships. A stronger connection to Big Red would make students feel valued as unique parts of a greater community instead and not just amalgamations of smaller ones. In order to foster more school pride, the administration could fund buses to major sporting events, or design more events that propagate unlikely friendships such as Splash. Inter-school dances or socials are one way to reinforce Lawrentian identity, and community service another. In any case, the steps we take must be deliberate in provoking change; school spirit can't bloom if we don't tend to it.



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Corrections

Readers who notice errors should contact the Executive Editor lpark24@lawrenceville.org

The Lawrence would like to formally apologize for errors in its previous issue. The News pages incorrectly listed the previous issues' blurbs, and listed incorrect images for its "Outside the Bubble" section and for its article on the Philadelphia Ballet.

The Obesity Epidemic in America

Investigating the Causes and Solutions

LEO MAHE '26

Americans often view obesity as a personal issue that people must resolve for themselves. While it's all too common nowadays to blame overweight individuals for their weight gain, obesity rates are increasing on a societal scale. While only 13 percent of adults were considered obese in 1960, around 42 percent are obese today and 70 percent of adults are overweight. Obesity has become a societal issue. Accordingly, the factors that most significantly contribute to obesity are societal rather than individual.

The amount of sugar in modern-day foods represents the largest contributing factor to Americans' weight gain. Excess sugars in the human body transform into fat, directly linking sugar consumption to weight gain and increasing the risk for diabetes and obesity. With these health effects, the rise in annual added sugar consumption from just four pounds per capita in the 1800s to well over 180 pounds-per-capita today has become extremely concerning. Sugars increase people's appetites, their food consumption, and weight gain. Despite the known risks of added sugars in processed foods, sugary foods are both inexpensive and highly addictive, leading food and beverage companies to use them as much as possible in their products from cereals to salad dressings.

“Obesity has become a societal issue”

Furthermore, high-fructose corn syrup has a stronger correlation to obesity and diabetes than other sugars. Annually, Americans consume around 42 pounds of high-fructose corn syrup, commonly through popular drinks like Coke and food items like bread and sauces. While the evidence is not fully conclusive, several studies have found that high-fructose corn syrup increases consumers' appetites and thus contributes to obesity far more than typical sugars. Though harmful to humans in excess, High-fructose corn

syrup is cheaper than other sugar bases, leading many food producers to take advantage of this economic benefit.

Sugars are not the only substances added to foods at the expense of human health. Foods often contain pesticides that enter the bodies of consumers, and although pesticides used today have been cleared to be safe for human consumption, there have been multiple cases in the past when supposedly “safe” pesticides have been found

pesticides currently used may be the next highly carcinogenic pesticide waiting to be discovered. Sadly, corporations often don't check for safety in products like DDT, which were considered so safe that people would stay outside and feel the chemicals on their bodies before later discovering just how carcinogenic and unhealthy it was.

However, there are major cost issues relating to choosing healthier foods. Organic foods are around

will not remove the real problem—the prevalence of processed food products.

Naturally, several other issues have contributed to increased obesity in recent years, including a decline in exercise due to less physically intense labor. In an era of desk jobs and cars, exercise has become optional. People still need to exercise more and maintain their health, and going on walks or to the gym is certainly helpful. But changes can be made on

improve Americans' health and lower obesity rates. Furthermore, stricter regulations on chemicals like BHA will improve the health of average Americans and lower obesity.

There are also some more personal actions to take while waiting for legislative action. While health-conscious food choices nowadays mean making grocery trips more expensive, there is a middle ground. Homemade meals with nonorganic but unprocessed ingredients and healthier snack options are still useful solutions when financially feasible. As previously mentioned, exercising several times a week and moving around during the day will be greatly beneficial, especially as most jobs now involve sitting and looking at a screen all day. While many of these choices will not solve the problem completely, they are small steps to personally take while advocating for more significant legislative action.



dangerous. Some foods include obesogens (chemicals that significantly contribute to weight gain) like Butylated Hydroxyanisole (BHA) and food contaminants from farms like Bisphenol A (BPA). BHA, a food preservative which moonlights as a carcinogen, has been banned almost everywhere in the world but in the United States—Europe, Canada, Australia, Japan, and New Zealand all restrict BHA from consumer foods. To reduce obesity and just overall promote public health, the United States government must heavily regulate known unhealthy additives and further investigate chemicals used on farms.

However, Americans themselves can take advantage of unhealthy and sugary product alternatives. Buying foods that are proven to be grown without dangerous pesticides and buying grass-fed meats is much healthier. But these alternatives aren't solutions; for one, dangerous pesticides from surrounding farms can travel into these organic farms, and the ‘harmless’

Sophie Yang '26 / THE LAWRENCE

50 percent more expensive than their nonorganic counterparts, and that's only when looking at unprocessed food products. Processed foods, like bread and sausages, are far more affordable for low-income individuals and families who must keep food costs low to save money for other necessities like housing or raising children.

Furthermore, foods like frozen pizza are easier to cook, and fast food chains like McDonald's are much more convenient than making a healthy meal at home. Grabbing burgers off takeout counters is much easier than spending hours cooking with unprocessed ingredients, organic or not. Snack products, like potato chips or candy, are delicious and can be consumed on-the-go. Simply put, pre-packaged food products are simply far too enticing for people to avoid, and even though some people both can afford and have the mental fortitude to avoid processed food, relying on an individualistic approach to address obesity

a national scale. Legislatively, the US government can take several relatively simple measures to reduce obesity and improve health in the country. Through increased funding for food programs, subsidizing healthier food manufacturing, and regulating high-fructose corn syrup and other added sugars within food and beverage products, the American government can help limit obesity rates. The government should work to subsidize health-conscious food products and tastier, healthy alternatives to the sugary snacks of today. An added sugar tax, similar to proposed carbon taxes, could dissuade companies from using cheap sugars and instead incentivise them to use government-subsidized fruits and vegetables to create these healthier alternatives. Furthermore, labels should be required to display the amount of added ingredients in their items without misleading names like agave nectar or evaporated cane juice. Measures resembling the EU's food safety regulations would significantly

“An added sugar tax, similar to proposed carbon taxes, could dissuade companies from using cheap sugars”

It is important to advocate for changes to the food industry that are possible—from decreasing the use of more harmful added sugars to increasing funding for healthier, natural food programs—which can lower obesity rates in America. The rapid increase in obesity over the past decades has only occurred with changes in society: the increase of immobile desk jobs and the overload of unhealthy additives. America must address the root of its obesity epidemic—profiteering on food production at the expense of public health—instead of blaming individuals for obesity on a societal scale.

The 2023 Big Red Race

ALAHNA KIM '26

This past Saturday, on May 7, members of the Lawrenceville community gathered outside the Bowl for The Big Red Race. The race is an annual 5K held on campus to fundraise for School Camp (SCamp), Lawrenceville's two-week summer camp for underprivileged children from New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. Since the first Big Red Race in 2004, it has become an annual spring tradition that many students, faculty, and parents participate in.

For almost two decades, Directors of College Counseling Holly Burks-Becker P'06 '09 '12 and Jeffrey Durso-Finley P'13 '14 '19 '22 have been in charge of organizing the Big Red Race; they first came up with the idea while they were preparing to run a marathon together. Becker thought that hosting a 5K on campus would be the "ideal opportunity for the school and community to unite and raise money for a good cause."

"Community races are healthy, supportive, and a whole lot of fun," Becker said. She noted that participating in such events can serve as a "great way for students to connect with each other," especially for Lawrenceville students who have never ran in one. According to Becker, the event has grown from just 75 participants in 2004 to over 250 runners this year.

Becker is especially grateful for the "generosity of decades of School Camp Counselors who donated to the cause," which had made the race

a "resounding success." This year's Big Red Race was "especially noteworthy" due to the participation of the entirety of the Kirby House and the Boy's Crew Team and Boy's Track and Field Teams. Looking ahead, Becker envisions next year's race to surpass all expectations and "be bigger and better than ever."

Reflecting on her experience running this year's Big Red Race, Ashley Lee '23 said that she was "glad" she attended and "had the opportunity to help the kids at Scamp."

Alice Kizilbash '25 echoed Lee's sentiment, claiming to have "loved every second of it," with Kirby House's full participation making it a "bonding experience." "I would hundred percent do it again," she said.

Bastian Bocklage '26, the winner of this year's race, enjoyed racing with his teammates from the Boys Track and Field Team, noting that it was "fun and helped [him] bond with the community."

Kyle Park '23, who also ran the race as a member of the Boys Track and Field Team, appreciated that the race "was a good event for a good cause." He also mentioned that everyone was "hyped to show up," emphasizing the excitement of the event and the anticipation leading up to it.

The Big Red Race is a tradition that brings the Lawrenceville community together while supporting an important cause. Students and faculty alike are encouraged to participate in future races.



Photo of The Big Red Race

Courtesy of The Lawrenceville School

Visiting Poet Aimee Nezhukumatathil

SYDNEY WANG '25

On May 1 and 2, Lawrenceville hosted Aimee Nezhukumatathil, this year's Thornton Wilder Visiting Writer, who presented to all IV Formers in the Edith Memorial Chapel. Nezhukumatathil has published four poetry collections all centered around her perspective on everyday topics such as love, food, and loss. Her works have won many awards, including the 2003 Global Filipino Literary Award, the 2007 Balcones Poetry Prize, and the National Public Radio 2020 Best Book of the Year.

Each year, a small committee of English teachers gathers to discuss potential visiting writers whose works relate to the content taught in the IV Form Advanced Poetry and Essay Writing classes. Candidates are selected based on how "passionate and enthusiastic" they are towards writing and whether they can provide "concrete advice [to] young writers who are trying to figure out what they want to write about," English Teacher Maggie Ray explained. Nezhukumatathil was chosen because she could "act as a model for students, teaching them how to keep creativity alive in their lives," Ray said. Her writing is often centered on themes of "joy and wonder," which the English teachers agreed would remind students of the "cheerfulness" of spring, Ray said. Ray's hope was for Nezhukumatathil's focus on "wonder and curiosity in the natural world" to give students inspiration in writing and

a new perspective on their surroundings.

At the Chapel, the IV Formers listened to Nezhukumatathil read some of her poems and essays, with a Question and Answer session at the end of the presentation. Anabel Guerreiro '24 noted that she "really liked" Nezhukumatathil's writing style because many of her works—especially her book *World of Wonders: In Praise of Fireflies, Whale*

that burns you with passion."

Although Chiedza Mupita '24 had already read most of Nezhukumatathil's poems in her Advanced Poetry class, she still found the readings "interesting and engaging." Specifically, she enjoyed the content of the poems and the essays' "connection to Nezhukumatathil's childhood and upbringing."

According to Ray, the tradition of hosting Thornton



Photo of Aimee Nezhukumatathil

Courtesy of Aimee Nezhukumatathil

Sharks, and Other Astonishments—featured "nature imagery."

However, Guerreiro's favorite part of the event was the question and answer section. "Someone [had asked] if she had advice for writer's block, and she said, 'I don't believe in writer's block because the world is just so rich,'" Guerreiro recalled, "You don't want to wake up at 40 years old and realize you are waiting for the week to end. Find something

Wilder Visiting Writers aims to provide students with a better idea of what writing might look like as a career path and some of the challenges professional writers face. "Writing never comes super easy; it's just something that you work at your whole life," she concluded, "and that doesn't have to be a daunting feeling. It can be joyful or cheerful once you realize nobody's first drafts come out perfect."

Celebrating AAPI Month With Cathy Hong

ANGEL XIN '26

On Thursday, May 4, 2023, Pulitzer Prize Finalist Cathy Park Hong spoke at School Meeting, where she presented her book *Minor Feelings* and her experience as an Asian-American author. Following School Meeting, Hong had lunch with members of the Pan-Asian Alliance (PAA) and hosted a follow-up reading at the Hutchins Gallery for interested students to learn more about the experiences that inspired her to write her book. Hong was invited to speak in honor of Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) month.

In addition to her all-School presentation, Hong hosted a workshop for the current Creative Writing courses. English Teacher Victoria Stitt described Hong's workshop, part of which was having students write with inspiration from two prompts, "one sincere and one playful." This



Photo of Cathy Hong and Sujin Seo during School Meeting

Courtesy of The Lawrenceville School

activity "was great at breaking open everyone's creativity and getting everyone engaged," Stitt said. Stitt found Hong to be a "brave, honest, [and] intelligent" speaker who is a "wonderfully fitting representative" of the AAPI community. She admired the "bravery" that Hong demon-

strated when writing *Minor Feelings*, an autobiographical book of essays that are a reflection of her complicated and multifaceted identity, and was fascinated by the "theme of belonging" present throughout the book.

Churan Xu '25, who attended all three events

hosted by Hong, described her delivery as "clear, elegant and poised." Xu was already familiar with Hong's poetry before her visit, but the event gave her the opportunity to have a more "intimate and engaging" interaction with Hong. During Hong's reading at the Hutchins Gallery, she elabo-

rated more on her writing process. She emphasized the idea of coalition, encouraging aspiring artists to "form a community" to support each other rather than "viewing everyone else in the room as competitors." Hong also elaborated on her struggles recovering from the "trauma and memories embedded in her subconsciousness" that writing about her experiences brought back. Xu found Hong's recount of her writing process and her advice to be "incredibly powerful and useful." Although Xu described Hong as an "excellent and interesting" speaker, she also noted the danger of "generalizing Hong's experience to the wider AAPI community at Lawrenceville."

Reflecting on Hong's visit, Stitt noted that the school was "very lucky to have someone so honest, forthright, and deeply aware come speak."

The Met Gala: Fashion's Biggest Night

The Legacy of Karl Lagerfeld

LOUIS PARK '26

The Met Gala, also known as 'Fashion's Biggest Night,' is regarded as one of the most prestigious and glamorous events in America. Hosted by the Metropolitan Museum of Art's Costume Institute, the Met Gala is one of the largest charity gala

Met Gala was "Karl Lagerfeld: Line of Beauty" in memory of the genius fashion designer Karl Lagerfeld, who passed away in 2019. An icon in the fashion world, Lagerfeld worked as a chief designer for Chanel and Fendi. However, Lagerfeld's past homophobic, misogynistic, and anti-immigrant comments have raised criticism about the Met's globalization of his legacy. Attendees took inspiration

Many celebrities spotted black and white, as Lagerfeld rarely designed pieces outside this binary color palette in his lifetime. Jennie from BLACKPINK, a global ambassador of Chanel, wore an iconic Chanel white dress with black ribbons and a hair band with white flowers, an outfit reminiscent of the classic Chanel 1990 Fashion Week collection. Celebrities like Margot Robbie and Dua Lipa also wore Lagerfeld's vintage Chanel haute couture outfits from the early 1990s to honor his achievements. Other celebrities like Rihanna, Kim Kardashian, Cardi B, and Bad Bunny exhibited their unique looks, adorning themselves in beads and faux flowers.

As such, the entrance fee for the Met Gala, which attracts attention from people all over the world, is over \$50,000 and known to raise an average amount of \$12 million every year. Currently, the proceeds benefit the Metropolitan

Costume Institute. However, it might be a more valuable gala if the proceeds that sprang from the numerous contributors and attendees were used in more meaningful and diverse fields to aid other artists. For example, if the Met used part of its revenue as prize money to aid student designers, wouldn't its intentions and long-term impacts outshine the fancy clothes and jewels we saw? Let's all look forward to the next gala, which will surely shine even more next year.



Doja Cat at The Met Gala 2023

Courtesy of Getty Images

shows. Each year, Andrew Bolton, the chief curator of the costume institute, selects a dress code or theme that attendees must abide by. The most prominent celebrities from all over the world are invited to the gala, their display of unique and often peculiar fashion bringing fun and excitement to the lives of curious viewers. Which celebrities showed off their fascinating and eccentric styles at the Met Gala this year?

The theme of this year's

from Lagerfeld's pieces but also his cat, Choupette, whom he cherished dearly. Actor Jared Leto, who appeared wearing a full-body fur suit and a large mask resembling Choupette's face, made the audience laugh. Leto wasn't the only one with the cat theme. Lil Nas X was dressed in a tight silver bodysuit, along with a bejeweled cat mask. Living up to her name, Doja Cat also came as a cat, wearing a jeweled hood with pointy cat ears attached to her dress.

Outfit Design

HARINI VENKATESH '25

The annual Met Gala is one of the most highly anticipated events in the fashion calendar, with celebrities and fashion icons coming together to showcase their style and creativity on the red carpet. Each year's theme brings a new wave of inspiration and innovation, and the pressure is on for attendees to push artistic boundaries and make a statement with their outfits. As I immersed myself in the post-event coverage, I couldn't help but imagine what it would be like to walk the Met's steps myself, clad in an outfit of my own design. I grew enamored by the idea of creating the perfect ensemble—one that would capture the essence of my personal style while paying homage to the rich history and glamor of Karl Lagerfeld and Chanel couture.

For the 2023 Met Gala, I would draw inspiration from Karl Lagerfeld's *Boclé* take on the iconic Chanel jacket. My design would feature a fitted, sleeveless, cropped double-breasted jacket with a white-gray pattern and black pockets, which debuted in Chanel's Cruise 2022 Collection. To create a more accentuated silhouette, the jacket would also include peak lapels and a deep V-neckline, revealing a statement necklace.

The jacket would be paired with a floor-length plain black skirt layered over a petticoat with a gold tulle layer at the bottom, creating a subtle shimmer effect. On top of the plain skirt, I would layer an intricately embellished shorter black skirt that opens to reveal the gold

tulle underneath. This layered effect would add dimension and texture to the overall look, drawing attention to the intricacy of the embroidery and the depth of the tulle.

To elevate the ensemble, the gold embellishments on the skirt would be complemented with chunky gold jewelry, like oversized hoop earrings and the aforementioned statement necklace with gold and black accents. The jewelry would accentuate the gold embroidery and add a bold twist to the classic palette. To complete the look, the hair would be styled in a sleek low bun, highlighting the jacket's neckline.

For makeup, I would opt for a simple smokey eye, using shades of black and gold to add depth and intensity to the eyes while matching the color scheme. A bold red lip would finish off the look, creating a pop of color and adding a touch of classic Hollywood glamor to the outfit.



Anika Ponnambalam '25 / THE LAWRENCE

Meet Me at Midnight: An Album Review

LUKE PURICELLI '25

Since 2006, Taylor Swift has been selling out shows worldwide and rocking the music scene with her stellar songwriting. More recently, Swift has embarked on her US stadium tour, called the Eras Tour, performing songs from each of her 10 studio albums, including her new concept album, *Midnights*.

As a fan of all types of music, I was very impressed by this record, as Swift demonstrates her creativity more than ever on *Midnights*. On the opening track, "Lavender Haze," Swift finds a way to describe the feeling of falling in love perfectly, with a catchy pop beat that is ideal for both dancing and casual listening. The third track, "Anti-Hero," is a love letter to Swift's insecurities. However, with an energizing rhythm, the song distracts listeners from its true meaning, making it relatable but still fun to listen to. When the clock strikes 12:00 AM, it is easy for one's mind

to wander to discouraging thoughts; the song "Midnight Rain" explores Swift's superstar lifestyle as she tells the story of how a relationship failed due to her stardom. Reminiscent of her album *Reputation*, Swift channels

her inner snake on "Vigilante S**t" as she sings about finally getting revenge on those who wronged her. The song's ominous beat and tone illustrate her anger and fierceness in the face of her enemies. Similar to her albums

Folklore and *Evermore*, Swift and her former partner, Joe Alwyn, co-wrote together. In this album, they created "Sweet Nothing" together, describing their once unconditional love for each other.

As the standard album of *Midnights* contains 13 tracks, Swift dropped seven surprise bonus tracks at 3:00 AM on October 21, 2022, hours after the album *Midnights*' release. On the 3:00 AM edition, *Midnights* turns slightly alternative, still with her signature pop sound. In "Bigger Than The Whole Sky," Swift dives deep into a heartbreaking loss in her life and the struggles of moving on from something so devastating. With the same producer from her *Folklore* and *Evermore* albums, Swift received help from Aaron Dessner on three tracks on the 3:00 AM edition, including the fan-favorite "Would've, Could've, Should've." On this track, Swift writes about a past relationship that was tainted due to a cruel lover, a partnership she now regrets. *Midnights* by Taylor Swift is an entertaining roller coaster of emotions, ideal for listening at night but suitable for any time of day. I highly recommend that you listen to *Midnights*; whether you are a Taylor Swift fan or not, I bet you'll soon have this album on repeat.



Taylor Swift in concert

Courtesy of Flickr

Man's in Kinnan

MIRA PONNAMBALAM '26

The Kinnan House, small and sometimes overlooked, is filled every year with a completely new group of boys. With gray stones and white columns, this V Form house sits tucked away at the edge of campus; just like every other house, Kinnan has a unique spirit that shapes the "Lawrenceville experience" for its residents.

Eric Vivinetto '23, a member of the Kinnan House, described the house as "bold, fun, and free." Every Spring, rising V Form boys are given a choice: do they go to Upper with the majority of their class or do they opt to join Kinnan? Prospective members make this decision by filling out a Housing card, where they select whether they would like to join Upper, Kinnan, or to give no preference. "If we're lucky, enough will choose Kinnan to fill our house," says Dave Wilcox P'20, the Head of House of Kinnan, when describing the Housing card situation. Vivinetto chose Kinnan so that he could bond with his friends more closely, as he "liked the group of guys and wanted to spend [his] year with them." Due to the way the Housing cards work, the people

who are placed into Kinnan usually come from one friend group, as there is only enough space for 10 boys. Members of one friend group collectively decide to put Kinnan as their choice and all stay together, allowing them to continue to cultivate their connection throughout their V Form year.

One of the things that sets Kinnan apart from the other houses is its small size. With just 10 boys this year, it is by far the smallest house on campus. Because of its size, the V Formers get a chance to develop especially tight bonds. "The small group in the house makes it possible to get close with all of the guys and have nine other best friends... you really get the chance to know everyone," Vivinetto explained. The small size also allows for intimate activities that might not otherwise be possible. For one, Vivinetto recalled "watching movies as a house in the common room."

The closeness of the group allows the residents of Kinnan to cultivate a strong relationship based on trust. "Everyone has each other's backs because we are such a tight-knit group... Kinnan is a house about trust—what happens in this

house stays in this house."

Despite the tight-knit community, having such a small house comes with its own flaws. For one, there is only one way to enter and exit the house, so Vivinetto recommends they add another door. Additionally, Kinnan doesn't have a house kitchen and its farther placement on campus results in many long walks for residents. "Our common room is tiny," Wilcox mentioned, "we are on the periphery of campus, it's a very small house, and Kinnan is not usually in the spotlight." Even with these minor flaws, Wilcox says "there is nothing that [he] would change about Kinnan House."

Every house has its traditions, which help improve House spirit and bonding with housemates. For years, Kinnan's most treasured tradition has been the weekly grill. Wilcox says, "Each year one of the guys in Kinnan takes the lead [with grilling], and this year it is Hale Brown '23." The House gathers to enjoy the burgers, hotdogs, and occasional steaks that Brown grills. "It gets everyone together and is a great time," Vivinetto adds.

Wilcox said, "When considering the possibility



Kinnan House

Sienna Kulynych '26 / THE LAWRENCE

of becoming Head of House, Kinnan was my top choice. I would like to think that most of the V Form boys who have lived here will look back on the House as one of their best memories at Lawrenceville." As Kinnan will undergo renovation for the upcoming school year, Haskell House will serve as the

temporary replacement for the house. While the memories will be made in a different building, the experience will be just as special. For the current IV Form boys, rather than going to Upper, consider a different senior year experience, one characterized by especially tight bonds and weekly grilling: the Kinnan experience.

Senior Profile: Praachi Chakraborty '23

ELLIE TURCHETTA '25

A prefect of Kirby House, the President of Math Club, Quizbowl, and Microfinancing Club, and the Vice President of the Allegro Council: the one and only Praachi Chakraborty '23 comes to mind. If you haven't seen or heard of Chakraborty, where have you been? Her experiences at Lawrenceville have taught her many invaluable lessons both in school and in even broader aspects of life.

As Chakraborty reflects on her time at Lawrenceville, the activity most meaningful to her has been being a Kirby prefect. "I felt like my prefect [Lauren Kim '22] made a huge impact on my life and my Lawrenceville career, and I really just wanted to emulate what they had made of my experience," she says. "I just wanted to spend another year in Kirby, connect with the next generation, and really help integrate the community that I love."

Being a prefect, however, is no easy feat. It is the skills that she has learned throughout her time at Lawrenceville that have led her to be the prefect that she is. After



Praachi Chakraborty '23

MyAnh Hisaeda '24 / THE LAWRENCE

leading the Math Club in her III Form year, "[she] found [herself] learning how to speak up more and be confident in [her] own abilities to be confident in what [she] had to bring to the table." She also learned the value of being able to organize events that are more meaningful for everyone involved through open communication and collaboration. "That kind of sentiment which I had the opportunity to learn early on through The Math Club has really helped me later on as a prefect and as a friend"

With her four years at Lawrenceville coming to a close, Chakraborty has a lot of advice for incoming II and IV Formers. To II Formers, she urges students to "really spread yourself out, put a foot in every single door, figure out what you want to do at Lawrenceville." She additionally notes her own experience, as "when [she] came in, what [she] thought [she] wanted to do was nothing like what [she's] doing now." However, for IV Formers, she recommends something slightly different. "Rather than trying every new thing at this point, do things

you really care about," she says. "Only keep the activities that really matter to you, because you won't have time to do everything. Senior year is rough, it's packed and there's so much going on, so keep doing the things that you care about." Chakraborty reflects her time on campus by fondly recounting all the people and faculty that have made Lawrenceville so special. "I don't think I can come across one person on this campus and not list something that they are better at doing than I am. Being able to join all these different clubs and activities while meeting all these people has helped me learn and grow, which I will be forever grateful for. Having this growth mindset and open-mindedness is really a sign of having done Lawrenceville right and if you leave Lawrenceville without having been able to recognize this it's a bit of a loss. That's the core of the Lawrenceville experience."

While her presence as both a leader and prefect will be sorely missed here at Lawrenceville, we know she will go on to do amazing things in the next chapter of her life at the University of Pennsylvania.

Bittersweet Goodbyes and Fresh Hellos

SOPHIE BILANIN '26

With the warm weather and growing restlessness on campus, it's apparent that the school year is coming to an end, bringing summer break along with it. Saying "goodbye" is always bittersweet, especially for the V Formers who will not be returning to Lawrenceville in the fall. Anushka Chintamaneni '23 is really going to miss the people at Lawrenceville. "What makes this place so special is the connections you make throughout your journey in high school. I will miss the amazing teachers, friends, staff, and classmates that made this place feel like home." When reflecting on her time here, Chintamaneni notes her favorite memory was participating in two years of House Olympics, but also that she wishes she could relive her II or V Form year because she "loved all the carefree and happy memories [she] was able to make." If she could change anything about her time at Lawrenceville, Chintamaneni said she would have further prioritized her mental health and appreciated the hard classes a bit more. "The amount that I learned about myself while taking some of the hardest classes here is unmatched. I love learning, and I shouldn't have



Gloria Yu '26 / THE LAWRENCE

focused on the grades as much." When asked what advice she has for the underclassmen, she responded, "don't worry about college until your junior year. As someone who stressed a lot about it, I promise everything works out how it's supposed to. I thought people were lying when they said this to me, but really, it turns out alright." And for the rising V Formers, Chintamaneni

said, "Start your college apps over the summer, even if you're busy. You'll be busier in the fall, trust me." As for the III Formers who will be entering the supposed "worst" year of high school once they return in the fall, only the current IV Form class can provide insight into next year's horrors. IV Former Avery Bilanin '24 says her advice for the III Formers is to "take some time doing

things you enjoy and make time for yourself. It's hard to do and very easy to get overwhelmed, but there are things outside of work and they are equally, if not more, important." IV Formers are also nearing the end of their Lawrenceville experience, so with their last high school summer right around the corner, emotions are overflowing. Bilanin explained that she is excited to finish IV Form year as it's been the hardest year academically while she also looks forward "to having more freedom as a senior and moving into senior housing." On the other hand, Bilanin is "sad because [she] feels like [her] time at Lawrenceville is coming to an end soon, even though [she] hasn't been here long at all." II Formers have the opposite outlook as they face another three years ahead. As their first year at Lawrenceville finally draws to a close, the II Form class anxiously awaits summer with mixed emotions. Ciela Goldman '26 is "sad that it's ending because [she] feels like it went by really fast. [She] remembers the first day [the II Formers] got here and it seems like not that long ago." She also expressed excitement to "go to the Crescent next year, redesign my dorm room, meet the new students, and play fall sports." When looking back on her II Form

year, Victoria Slavov '26 said she doesn't have a definite favorite memory. "I'm going to miss just hanging out with friends in the Bowl—playing frisbee and football, blasting music in the dorms, getting ready for dances, taking and posing for photos with friends, late-night popcorn sleepovers, and morning runs." When asked what advice they have for the incoming II Form class, both freshmen had the same answer: the first week, don't just sit with one friend group; get to know everyone you can, including people in different houses. Try not to immediately limit yourself to one group of people right away. In terms of academics, they also emphasized the value of developing study habits early on and utilizing consultation periods. According to Goldman, "even if you're not struggling in a class or need help, it is still important to build that relationship with your teachers." Although we may say goodbye to the 2022-23 school year with heavy hearts, it is not in sadness that we move forward. Remember to look back on all of the amazing memories made, people befriended, and challenges overcome throughout the past months, and smile. Let's be grateful for the time we've had together as we prepare for summer break!

The Sounds of Spring

LUKE PURICELLI '25

Spring is a time of relaxation for some whilst for others it can be a time of madness and chaos. Nevertheless, for everyone, music releases that stress, helping set their minds at ease. Music brings Lawrentians together, and Spotify, the Instagram of music, allows its users to follow their friends' accounts so they can see what everyone is listening to. Spotify even lets people make playlists with your friends. Curious to see what people are listening to, I passed through the gates of Spotify to find what music truly defines our spring.

For Augusta Sagebien '24, one way she has been preparing for summer is through making a playlist named "Summer's Coming." Her playlist is filled with classics that scream fun, including artists such as Zara Larsson and Calvin Harris with hit songs like "Ruin My Life" and "Slide," respectively. For relaxation, you can find many Taylor Swift songs on her other playlists from the albums *Midnights* and *Reputation*. However, other Lawrentians have been listening to different genres of music.

Desirée Karlströmer '25 has been listening to musicians like ABBA and Amy Winehouse on repeat. Her playlist, "Oldies but Goodies," features music prior to



Emily Pan '24 / THE LAWRENCE

the 2000s like the works of Billy Joel, KT Tunstall, Katrina & The Waves, and Marvin Gaye. You will also find many Swedish artists on Karlströmer's playlists with artists such as Zara Larsson, Tjuvtakt, September, ABBA, and Veronica Maggio. Some of Karlströmer's favorite songs include "Tandtråd" by Tjuvtakt, "Mikrofontåt" by September, "Dancing Queen" by ABBA, and "17 år" by Veronica Maggio. Similar to Sagebien,

Karlströmer also has been listening to "Lush Life," and other hit songs by Zara Larsson. You will even find many songs from Taylor Swift on her playlist, including "Lavender Haze" and "Anti-Hero," her most popular singles from *Midnights*.

Celine Fong '25 has been loving the songs of Lana Del Rey in recent months. Her new album, *Did You Know That There's A Tunnel Under Ocean Blvd*, has been in her top five favorite albums of the year.

Her three current favorite Del Rey songs are "Peppers," "Taco Truck x VB," and "Fishtail." Fong loves Del Rey's lyricism and considers Del Rey her favorite artist. In fact, Fong's favorite Lana Del Rey song was her collaboration with Taylor Swift in "Snow On The Beach." Fong has also been enjoying Melanie Martinez, as she loves her new songs "Light Shower" and "Void," featured on her brand new album, *Portals*. Even though Fong

considers herself to have a wide range of music taste, Fong admits that her favorite artist is still Lana Del Rey, as she is a major fan.

Touring across the United States, Taylor Swift has made her mark on many Lawrenceville student's Spotify pages. Laney McDowell '23 recently attended Swift's "Eras Tour" in Atlanta this April, and has not stopped listening to her music since. McDowell has been listening to Swift's entire discography, but she finds herself putting the album *Speak Now* and *Reputation* on repeat, as her favorite songs include "Enchanted," "Last Kiss," and "Don't Blame Me." McDowell has also been enjoying country music, with artists like Zach Bryan and Morgan Wallen sprinkled throughout her playlist. Her favorite songs include "Something in the Orange" and "You Proof" by Bryan and Wallen respectively.

With spring almost over, it is safe to say that Taylor Swift and Zara Larsson are just some of the many artists who have defined Lawrenceville this term. With so many people sharing new found interests for artists like these two, Spotify allows Lawrentians to come together through music, as it is the perfect place to spread your love of music, and to introduce others to the musicians you love!

From Aspring Volleyball Player To MVP!?

The Journey Of Joel Embiid

NIKHIL DHURU '26

Moments before game three of the Eastern Conference Semifinals, National Basketball Association (NBA) commissioner Adam Silver, stood beside the MVP of the 2022-23 season: Joel Embiid. After being the runner-up for the award last year, Embiid finally climbed to the top of the ladder and received one of the most prominent awards in the sports industry. Before going in-depth about this phenomenal award, let's take a step back and review the key moments that ultimately led Embiid into winning MVP. Growing up in Cameroon, Embiid wasn't exposed to basketball. In fact, Embiid had high aspirations to play professional volleyball in Europe. He had never even picked up a basketball until he was 15 years old, when he started to play with his friends for fun. During the summer of 2009, Mbah a Moute,

a Cameroonian NBA player, invited Joel Embiid to a basketball camp in his native country. Things only got better for Embiid from there. During the camp, Embiid showcased his basketball talents and dominated the court. Embiid played so well that Mbah a Moute took it upon himself to get the young and talented kid into the league.

In 2013, Embiid moved to the United States to play college basketball with the Kansas Jayhawks. Embiid made his only year with the Jayhawks one to remember by winning Big 12 Defensive Player of the Year. Unfortunately, Embiid was not able to compete at either the Big 12 or the NCAA tournament due to a stress fracture in his foot. Embiid had already declared for the NBA draft at this point and was projected to be the first overall pick by most fans. Scouts, however, were hesitant that Embiid would be unable to return to his original form after his injury,

Embiid and his son on 2022 All Star Weekend



Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

leading him to fall to the third overall pick in the 2014 NBA Draft, where he was picked by the Philadelphia 76ers.

The 2014-15 and 2015-16 seasons were rough for Embiid as his foot injury required surgery, causing him to miss his first two seasons. Luckily, he was able to play in his third season. Embiid made his first appearance with the Sixers on October 4, 2016, where he had six blocks, four rebounds, and two points as the Sixers won over the Celtics. Embiid averaged 20.2 points (PTS), 7.8 rebounds (REB), and 2.1 assists (AST) in his rookie season, good enough to make All-Rookie 1st Team. Despite Embiid's great play, the Sixers finished with a lowly record of 28-54, the second-worst record in the Eastern Conference.

Embiid's role on the team has continued to grow more and more significant as the years go on. He was named an NBA All-Star for the first time in his career in the 2017-18 season. Since then, Embiid has made the All-Star team every year. He made the All-NBA second team that same season. In the 2021-22 season,

he won his first of two scoring titles. His 2022-23 season featured his best numbers such as averaging 33 PTS, 10 REB, and 4 AST per-game earning him his first MVP and first ALL-NBA first team.

The title of MVP is described often as someone who plays an important role on their team, but what often goes unnoticed is all the work MVPs do off the court. In 2021, Embiid won the March NBA Cares Community Assist Award in recognition of his \$100,000 donation to organizations that feed the homeless. Embiid continues to give back to this day as he recently donated some money to an organization that helps underprivileged kids in Cameroon. Embiid will continue to be a dominant force in the league, and it will be interesting to see how he will progress as the years go by.

The NBA's Next All Time Great?

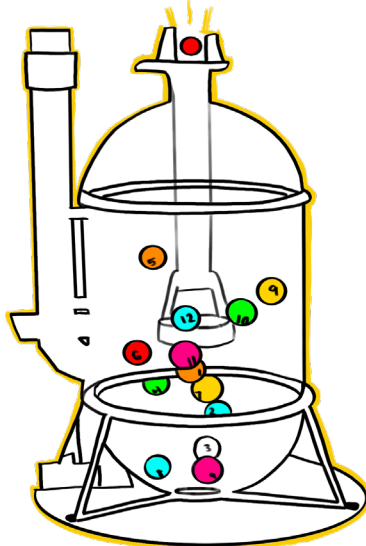
Understanding The Hype Behind Victor Wembanyama

STANLEY DUFOUR '25

With the NBA season ending in just a week, the NBA teams with the best standings are neck and neck in an attempt to secure the best playoff positions, but it isn't only the elite teams who are locked in-contest. On the other end of the spectrum, the lottery teams are looking to better position themselves for the upcoming NBA draft. While the 2023 draft class is projected to be one of the deepest and most talented of all time, these bottom feeders have their eyes set on one player in particular, a player who has left scouts and General Managers drooling since he was 14, a prospect more hyped than Zion Williamson or even, debatably, LeBron James—Victor Wembanyama. The 7'3 Frenchman with an eight-foot wingspan has been dominating the European leagues for years, using his astonishing frame and impressive athleticism to burst to the rim on offense and hold down the paint on defense. His large frame alone would be enough for any NBA team to see him as a potential asset, but his ability to play as a guard is what makes him a generational

talent. Imagine having to guard an athletic seven-footer who can also dribble confidently and shoot the lights out. It is no wonder that lottery teams see him as the ultimate prize—Wembanyama possesses all the skills needed to dominate the modern NBA. Nonetheless, for all of Wemby's upside, some doubts and concerns still surround him, the biggest one being his weight and strength. While Wemby has put on significant weight over the past few years, now weighing in at around 220, he is still underweight for his height. While Victor does play in competitive leagues, their level of physicality and intensity pale in comparison to that of the NBA. Thus, questions regarding his durability in the NBA and his body's ability to adapt to the league naturally arise. It's a given that Wemby won't score nearly as easily as Giannis Antetokounmpo or Joel Embiid, and there is some fear that he will spend much of his career injured from the constant beating that his body will take if he doesn't bulk up. Skinny seven-footers in the NBA have been historically proven injury prone, exemplified by players such as

NBA Draft Lottery Machine



Anika Ponnambalam '25/THE LAWRENCE

Bill Walton, Arvydas Sabonis, Yao Ming, and Greg Oden. Just recently, Thunder rookie Chet Holmgren, who is similar to Wembanyama in frame and playstyle, missed his entire rookie season after suffering a Lisfranc injury he sustained due to his skinny frame. Wemby, like Chet, would likely have to bulk up in order to handle the physicality of the NBA. At the end of the day though, these concerns

don't nearly outweigh the potential upside that you could get from having a player like Victor on the team, and he will almost certainly be selected first overall come June. With the high lottery teams basically locked in nearing the end of the season, certain teams are better poised than others to hear their name called for the first overall pick in the draft lottery. The favorites are the Pistons, Rockets, and Spurs, each with 20 wins or under, followed by the Blazers, Hornets, Pacers, Magic, and Wizards, who all have a realistic shot at the first pick. Out of all these teams, some would be better landing spots for Wemby than others in terms of system, coaching, and timeline. One such team is the Pistons, a team loaded with young talent that fits perfectly with Wemby. With a backcourt that features Cade Cunningham and Jaden Ivey, two players that can create high-level scoring opportunities for both themselves and their teammates, and a more traditional big man in Jalen Duren, who can allow Wemby to stretch the floor, they would prove to be a difficult team to beat in the upcoming years. The Hornets and Pacers are two more

intriguing options, each led by elite young playmakers in Lamelo Ball and Tyrese Haliburton respectively. Both players would form unstoppable duos with Wembanyama. Another team worth noting is the Spurs, who are very early in their rebuilding process and would give Victor all the time and space needed to develop, not to mention their historical elite development of players, especially bigs, having produced the likes of Tim Duncan and David Robinson. Then there are other, in my opinion, less exciting options, such as the Magic, who are already overloaded with promising bigs, the Rockets, who have no system, just a group of good young players that don't fit together, and of course, the Blazers and Wizards, who are still to some extent looking to compete with the top teams of their respective conferences. Some teams may be a better fit than others, but really, with a player like Victor Wembanyama, there's no putting a ceiling on any team that acquires him. A player unlike any before him, he truly could become the greatest to ever play the game.

Men On Boats Picks

Name Role	Lauren Williams O.G. Howland	Harry Lynch Tech	Na'imah Ford Old Shady	Sydney Wang Tech	Clara Khabbaz Tech	Emma Marston Goodman
Photo:						
What part of the show should people get excited for?	My boat capsizing	Whiskey whiskey whiskey, whiskey whiskey whiskey.	The most exciting part of the show is when there's explosive energy! Waterfalls, arguments, laughter and more!	we are committing snake murder	the whisky dance	bradley's briefs
Who has the best costume?	Nico. What a spiffy young man	Me	The best costume has to be given to Jess and Lauren when they dress up as Just Jim and Johnshon	obviously the production crew	nico	Powell
Best part of tech week?	raiding the KAC fridge	Mimi's unrelenting concern for cast and crew hydration as well as our status	The best part of tech week would certainly be the feeds! :)	Harry panting loudly into his mic	deck crew	Chinese food feed