



Hutchins Center for Social Justice Hosts Michael Patrick MacDonald



Michael Patrick MacDonald.

NICHOLE JIN '24

This past Friday, Lawrenceville welcomed author Michael Patrick MacDonald to speak to the school community as part of the Hutchins Center for Social Justice's mini-residencies. Having known Executive Director of the Hutchins Center Zaheer Ali, who hosted Friday's meeting, since before he came to Lawrenceville, MacDonald said that he was "excited" to see the social justice work Ali was doing at the school and wanted to help "further develop" the Hutchins Center for Social Justice by serving as a speaker. The entire school congregated in the Kirby Arts Center auditorium to hear MacDonald speak on his experience with social injustice and racial divide growing up, as well as how it influenced him to become an author later in his life.

MacDonald comes from an area of Boston known as "Southie," an insular, impoverished community that harbors the highest concentration of White poverty in the U.S. "At the time, Boston was pretty Black and White... there was a lot of racial division," MacDonald said. Most American communities were still becoming accustomed to desegregation, with many people responding with violence and brutality. The

bloodshed and racial tensions that plagued Southie led to the development of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and other mental health issues in a large number of individuals. "A lot of people were suffering from PTSD and could not voice their pain," MacDonald said.

Having grown up in such a violent and racially-divided community, MacDonald experienced issues of social and racial injustice firsthand. He first became involved in activism in 1990; "I crossed over to the neighborhood across town with a predominantly Black community called Roxbury, where the people were working on resolving these problems," he said. Meeting and working with the Roxbury community motivated MacDonald to start building justice movements and communities of other individuals that had grown up in similar conditions as him. Elaborating on his motivations, he said, "The justice issues I faced also impacted other families in Boston. [Those families and I] worked and crossed racial divisions together... We worked from the notion of solidarity and mutuality."

After ten years, MacDonald published his first book, *All Souls*.

Courtesy of The Lawrenceville School

Through his community work in Boston, MacDonald learned the power of storytelling, so he seized the opportunity to write about his experience and tell his story to the broader world. He returned to Southie after becoming an accomplished author; "Now, it was me coming back as a storyteller and helping other people tell their stories and transform their trauma into agency and power," he said.

MacDonald wants the Lawrenceville community to learn about the power of stories from his talk. "We can build empathy and compassion with other people through pain by being honest about it and voicing our pain. This is where we can connect with each other. This is where we can build communities, and it all starts with telling our stories," he said. MacDonald emphasized the importance of realizing the value of storytelling in bringing people together and forming stronger communities, especially at Lawrenceville where students come from many different backgrounds, saying, "We should share our stories rather than putting up more walls... and competing with each other to see who is more oppressed or who has it harder." He concluded, "A lot of assumptions keep us divided."

BioBlitz Logo Winners!

STAFF REPORT

The 2022 BioBlitz Logo Competition winners were announced this past week.

Maddy Laws's '23 logo will be featured on the 2022 Lawrenceville School BioBlitz iNaturalist site as the banner image on the portal. We did not use this logo as a basis for the prizes, but the use of her design makes her one of the three winners.

Sergei Kudriavtcev '24, who drew an abstract leaf, and Kelly Lu '23, who designed a squirrel logo, are the two winners whose logos will be featured on this year's BioBlitz swag.

Kudriavtcev and Lu's designs are the basis of the BioBlitz prizes—necklaces and bracelets—all of which

are hand-carved from Tagua by artisans in Ecuador. Tagua is a natural product from the hardened triploid endosperm of *Phytelephas aequatorialis*, which is a relative of the coconut tree.

Each member of the Houses of the three winners, namely Hamill and Stanley, will receive a necklace as a prize.

Many thanks to those who served on the 2022 Lawrenceville School BioBlitz Logo Committee, listed below.

- John Clark P'20 '22
- Chloe Kalna
- Kim McMenamin
- Julie Mellor
- Noelle Niu
- Jennifer Parnell P'23
- Annie Wilcox P'15 '18 '19
- David Wilcox P'20



Kelly Lu's '23 swag logo.



Sergei Kudriavtcev's '24 swag logo.



Courtesy of John Clark P'20 '22

Maddy Laws's '23 banner image.

Presidential Endorsements

IV Formers Grant Shueh, Yan Tsenter, Daniel Zhu, and Kieran Yeatman-Biggs '24 endorse the two presidential finalists.



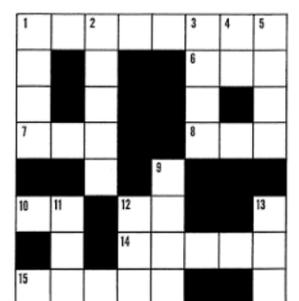
Radish Strips

Susan Lee '23 puts a fun twist on the Arts Section with an adorable comic strip.



Crossword Puzzle

Try out Claire Chow's '24 *New York Times*-inspired crossword puzzle!





THE LAWRENCE

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CORRECTIONS

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

In our April 8 issue, we published a map of Ukraine without Crimea in the Opinions section. All online versions of the graphic have been amended to reflect Ukraine's true territorial extent.

Our April 8 editorial also contained a number of inaccuracies that we would like to address:

Firstly, tour guides at Lawrenceville are instructed to show their own Crescent House or the one closest to their next tour stop, not Carter.

Secondly, during the Discovery Days Parent Sessions, members of the administration made sure to acknowle

dge the stresses and hardships associated with boarding life and elaborated on the resources that Lawrenceville provides to support those who need help.

Lastly, the Covid-19 restrictions during this year's Discovery Days necessitated that visiting families dine together in a space separate from the rest of our community. Additionally, as Irwin will soon be demolished, it was decided that showing a building that would no longer be a part of campus next fall would be redundant.

Complain culture is a common aspect of daily life at Lawrenceville, but rarely do students see changes to the rules and policies that are the source of our grievances. Now, we may finally see the changes that students have been looking for. As Lawrenceville enacts its "Envisioning 2025" program, the School has been working towards tangible solutions that students may actually see within their time at Lawrenceville. But why only now? What is different about this year—this February—that has finally inspired the School to change its policies? The end of this past Winter Term was the first time that students took or threatened to take direct action on their discontent with the administration. The timing of the administration's commitment to change, however, highlights a big issue: change at Lawrenceville only becomes public when the administration reacts to widespread controversy, convincing students that we must act in an extreme fashion if we want the administration to listen to us.

Recently, student discontent and desire for change has been stronger than ever. On February 17, Lawrentians found copies of an anonymously written poem posted across campus. The poem, which lamented the administration's treatment of students, sparked intense discourse among students on the School's recent decisions regarding student life. After the poem, Head of School Stephen Murray H'54 '55 '65 '16 P'16 '21 sent out an all-student email with the subject line "Listening to Your Concerns," which promised meetings with Student Council and prefects, followed by a town hall. The town hall was moderately successful;

both administrators and students remained respectful as students calmly voiced their concerns. Yet this town hall, and the subsequent House and group conversations, only happened after months, if not years, of student dissatisfaction.

The School's response to the poem was purely reactionary; it only happened after students had already been suffering. This instance, however, is not the only time the School has failed to take preemptive action. Despite years of students pushing for systematic change, the administration underplayed or ignored their concerns, many of which affected students on a daily basis, until the Instagram account "Black at Lawrenceville" first went public. On the account, current students and alumni anonymously disclosed incidents of racist behavior that the School had not addressed. In response to the account's widespread publicity, the administration sent several school-wide emails, held meetings and lectures, and initiated programs to begin educating and attempting to mend some of the issues. But the administration only responded and made changes to its racial justice strategy after students placed their concerns on a public platform.

The administration's reactionary method of change has warped students' understanding of how progress should be made. Rather than knowing progress to be a cooperative conversation that prevents traumatic experiences, we view change as a result of drastic public outcry. If public outcry is the only method of change, students who may not feel comfortable being vulnerable with the entire Lawrenceville community at large may be forced to suffer in silence. Additionally, this understanding of change implies that students

must take extreme measures to change an institution that is supposed to foster their confidence. When the administration is forced to react, they have to react quickly, leading to band-aid solutions that are prone to falling apart. On the other hand, when the administration fails to respond quickly, students are discouraged from advocating for progress because it seems as though the School won't change. Reactionary change implies, even encourages, the idea that something must go terribly wrong before students feel like things are changing.

Although the burden of enacting preemptive change lies on the administration, students still need to speak up when something is wrong. However, the way in which they voice their concerns should be different. The first step is mending the relationships between the administration and students, so that students can have cooperative, productive conversations to voice their concerns. The chain of complaint should also be a trickle-up system, where students can go to teachers or Heads of House, and those faculty can continue advocating for students' concerns. Change at Lawrenceville should be a conversation as soon as a problem with mental health or campus culture begins to emerge—not just one that only happens after years of discontent. Ultimately, the School must work to help students before the issues they face become ingrained in the institution itself.

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

A New Approach to Sex at Lawrenceville

How Lawrenceville's Current Sex Ban Breeds Silence and Shame

SOFIA BONILLA '24

After the Wellness Council announced its plan to hold a panel of sexual assault survivors on April 8, I found myself drawn to the Heely Room, where the panel was being hosted. As I sat down in my seat, I briefly pushed aside my personal struggles with sexual assault—the ones that made me question whether I should attend the event in the first place—to listen wholeheartedly to the panelists' stories. As each panelist spoke, I felt a surge of respect for their courage in sharing such painful experiences. Yet after the panel, I began to wonder how the School would handle similar sexual assault cases on campus in the future. What measures would Lawrenceville take to ensure our right to feel physically and emotionally safe at all times? The more I began to think, the more disillusioned I became. Through its policy of stigmatizing all sexual activity, the School unwittingly exacerbates the difficulties in preventing and reporting sexual assault cases on campus.

Flip to page 32 of the Lawrenceville Student Handbook and stop at the section titled "Sexual Conduct." This section details the School's expectations for sexual activity on campus; namely, it asserts that students will "prove worthy of the trust" the School has given them by "refrain[ing] from sexual activity." Somehow, this oddly-worded statement is Lawrenceville's catch-all for disciplinary action against

sex. No matter the situation, students must remain celibate to present themselves as good Lawrentians; if they dared to participate in sexual activity, which the School admits is an "[aspect] of healthy adolescent development," they will not be accepted as members of the Lawrenceville student body. Even worse, this unconditional repression of sexual activity not only could lead to immense guilt about perfectly natural sexual desires, but also force students to seek unsafe ways to act upon said desires. Students know that they can face disciplinary actions for being caught in sexual activity, so they often go to places on campus that give them a better chance of avoiding scrutiny, such as the woods or the cornfields. Yet the numerous safety concerns that stem from engaging in sexual activity in these areas are not just limited to the lack of hygiene; Lawrentians also feel pressured to hide their activity no matter what physical and emotional dangers they risk.

This anti-sex environment forces stu-

dents to fret over the possibility of disciplinary action rather than their sexual safety. One would feel incredibly uncomfortable to report a sexual assault case to an administration that seems extremely averse to any sexual activity. Students may fear being questioned by the administration of how they came to be in that position, as well



Emily Pan '24 / THE LAWRENCE

as punishment for being associated with an act that the School so strictly forbids. Countless victims of sexual assault already deal with self-blame and guilt. They would not want to exacerbate these sentiments

by detailing their traumatic memories to a school that asserts that all forms of sexual activity will prove students unworthy of their trust. Survivors also struggle to classify their experience as sexual assault in the first place. This struggle would only render students more unwilling to report their case to the administration. After all, if they feel as though they cannot decisively prove to themselves that sexual encounter was nonconsensual, they will believe that attempting to prove the same to School would only result in harsh questioning and punishment. For victims, it often seems as though not speaking is by far the better option.

Technically, the resources that students currently have on campus—from counseling at the Health Center to support from individual administrators, teachers, and Heads of Houses—are sufficient to a degree. Their presence not only reaffirms the School's desire to mitigate these experiences, but openly acknowledges that even our community is

not immune from the dangers of sexual assault. However, given the sheer severity of sexual assault, the School must fortify and expand their existing support system to build spaces for sexual assault survivors on campus. By establishing sexual assault hotlines, a greater number of emergency light boxes, or even student safety applications in which students can easily text Public Safety, the School can both reduce the number of sexual assault cases on campus and guide survivors through the traumatic aftermath of their experiences.

But what must ultimately change is Lawrenceville's overall approach to sexuality. A step forward to such change would be to stop actively stigmatizing sexual activity. While such a lack of stigma would inevitably make some students feel encouraged to engage in sexual activity, it would benefit the community by making students less afraid to practice safe sex in comfortable settings. That way, students would be at far less of a risk of suffering from the dangers that the School is concerned about, whether they be unwanted pregnancies or sexually transmitted diseases. Ultimately, this change in attitude would assure the community that the administration will not antagonize any student for "explor[ing] their developing sexuality." Instead of shrouding the entire topic of sex in fearful silence, Lawrenceville would openly pivot to discover ways to ensure that their students are emotionally and physically safe as they undergo "healthy adolescent development."

Drumroll, Please...

Presidential Candidate Endorsements

Kyle Park '23

YAN TSENER '23
KIERAN YEATMAN-BIGGS '24

As I thought about whom I wanted to see as School President, I could only consider one question: Which candidate could truly fulfill their promises?

When I first joined Kennedy as a new III Former in the fall of 2020, Kyle Kyungwon Park '23 stood out to me as one of the most affable and caring students in the House. Ever since, he has become not only one of my closest friends but a model Lawrentian whom I look up to. I have had the privilege of playing the same sports, attending the same classes, and serving on the same House Council as Kyle. In doing so, I have been able to admire how Kyle skillfully balances immense pressures and workloads with an astonishing level of personal character and citizenship.

Kyle's integrity is simply unparalleled. It all comes down to the smallest things: For instance, he will always be the one student patiently picking up and throwing out the litter across campus. In the Kennedy House, he has been an incredible Community Service Representative. From organizing countless community service events for Kennedians to bolstering our traditional rent-a-friend program, Kyle has both expanded Kennedians' options to aid the community and cultivated their appreciation of community service.

Yet despite his plethora of accomplishments, Kyle is his own biggest judge. He always pushes



Kyle Park '23. Courtesy of Kyle Park '23

himself to be better, and he will push himself to go above and beyond our expectations for a School President. He will work to fulfill every promise he has made on his platform; he will be the very best president he can be for a community he cares so deeply about.

Simply put, Kyle is an all-around leader for whom I have the ultimate respect. I wholeheartedly endorse Kyle Park for President.

Andrew Boanoh '23

DANIEL ZHU '23
GRANT SHUEH '23
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Andrew Paul Boanoh '23. A man of courage and virtue, encapsulated in the physique of a Greek god. When I gaze into the beautiful depths of his eyes, what do I see? A pulchritudinous soul, the tenacity of a lion, and the courage and dignity to match his statuesque physique. Mr. Boanoh offers Lawrenceville something beyond empty promises. He has vowed to deliver sweeping changes to our community.

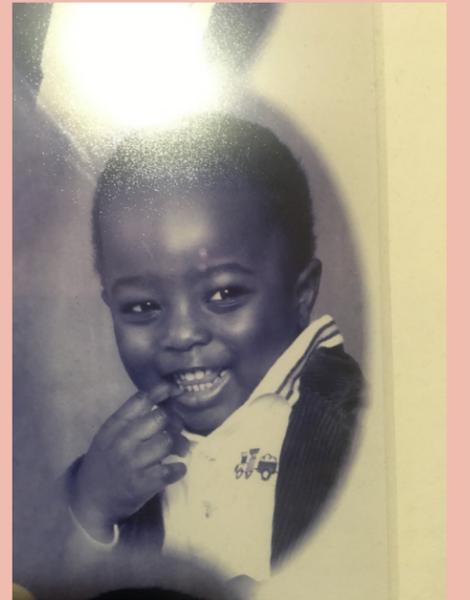
Hyperbole is the currency of presidential campaigns, and few can deliver on expansive promises. But Mr. Boanoh is different. He juggles academics with athletics and social life, all the while maintaining approachability and dignity. He acts with a high standard of character while still being able to have fun. He understands all facets of Lawrenceville life, recognizing the pressure of maintaining perfect grades as well as the need to release stress and have fun. A born leader, he has led almost every group on this campus, from the day students of Raymond House to the denizens of the Griswold House.

Mr. Boanoh acknowledges that Lawrenceville's current trifecta of crises—a deteriorating social life, an opaque disciplinary system, and a lack of community—requires massive reform.

He reimagines how the student body engages with the administration as a whole and aims to reshape the lens through which we students perceive community and school spirit. Mr. Boanoh's initiatives prudently tackle the frustrations of the ordinary Lawrentian.

Mr. Boanoh has met challenge after challenge, growing as a leader and showing the unshakeable iron in his veins. We believe he has the will and the ability to harness popular consensus in order to find solutions to this school's problems.

Andrew Boanoh '23. Courtesy of Andrew Boanoh '23



Dear Future StuCo President: Be Real With Us.

BEN CAVANAGH '23
CO-COPY EDITOR OF THE
141ST BOARD

For all its virtues, democracy is essentially about convenience. It is about a group of citizens, or a more localized population like the Lawrenceville student body, collectively demonstrating their trust in a few selected leaders. It is about giving people the power to organize and direct things so that you can spend time focusing on other parts of your life.

It is with this in mind that I question the platforms of many of this year's Student Council (StuCo) presidential candidates. As I watched the formal debate this past Monday, many questions were cleverly dodged, and vague answers seemed to be a running theme. One commonality stood out to me above all others; over the course of the night, the appeal to feedback and community workshoping of solutions became an almost universal talking point. Almost every candidate, at one point or another, assured prospective voters that crowdsourcing ideas was a fundamental part of their campaign. We were told multiple times how our own ideas would come to fruition through their leadership as president. Every candidate wants to portray themselves as open-minded, receptive, and considerate—essential traits of any school president. But I ask in response: What, then, are we voting for?

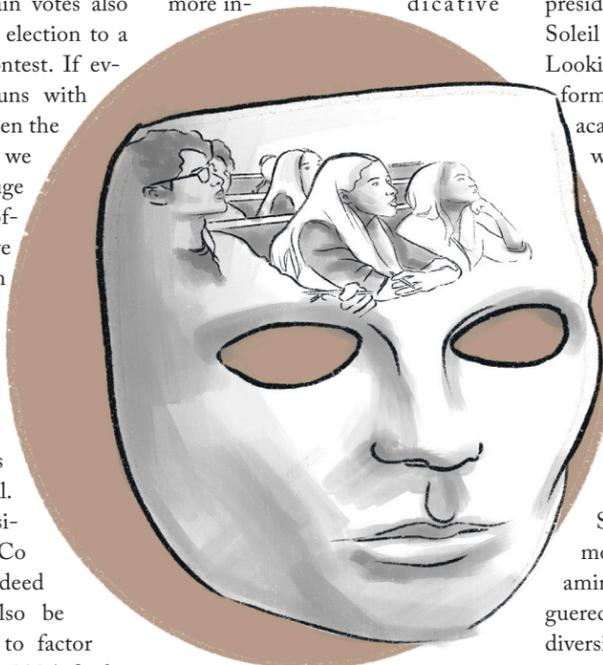
A central facet of the role of StuCo President is how they plan to implement their new ideas. Each

candidate runs on a platform, and by participating in this democratic vote, we as students indicate our trust in them to carry out their plan. If a campaign depends purely on ideas from the general populace, surely we could simply have a public forum with the administration instead? This strategy that candidates use to gain votes also begins to reduce the election to a simple popularity contest. If everyone essentially runs with the same platform, then the only metric on which we can effectively gauge their ability to hold office is how much we like them as a person in power.

This criticism is not to say that elections' reliance on popularity and student feedback is purely detrimental. Personality, for a position as public as StuCo President, should indeed matter. It would also be unwise for me not to factor in the recent Lville 2025 feedback discussions and Winter Term town hall that were so cathartic for many students. The Irwin Dining Center's cheeseburger soup, which a candidate referenced as part of a large discussion on dining services, has come to symbolize that general sense of the student body's collective discontent; candidates cannot and should not ignore the feedback-focused cultural climate amidst which they are running.

But without two or three well-defined, actionable, and actually helpful ideas of their own, each of my classmates' candidacies is reduced to the demonstration of their ability to serve as a suitable puppet for the students.

Such overwhelming focus on students themselves is, perhaps, more indicative



Stephanie Xu '23/THE LAWRENCE of the general role that StuCo has come to play on campus as little more than a group of faces for students to look up to. The monolithic "administration" so often referenced these days does and always will have the final say in decisions on campus, and it is debatable how much change a president can really enact. It can sometimes feel like the Deans are too conservative in

their receptiveness to change and end up being overly restrictive. Yet I believe that it is actually these ubiquitously and vaguely-presented explanations of each student's own candidacies that are themselves part of the problem.

Take these last two years' Student Councils, spearheaded by presidents Annie Katz '22 and Soleil Saint-Cyr '21 respectively. Looking back at the original platforms they ran on, promises like academic workshops along with weekly updates (House Letters) and bi-termly Pace and Quality of Life days (the latter two of which were actually part of VP of Social Delaney Musgrave's '22 presidential platform) were kept. Diversity representatives were also elected in most Houses. However, arguably more important initiatives like a StuCo check-in session for more communication, a reexamination of the much-beleaguered academic schedule, and the diversification of Saturday night events were all mostly ignored.

It would be very easy to once again bash the administration for their apparent reluctance to properly consider and carry out student-led plans, and the administration no doubt plays a role in the problem. But the likely more influential reason is the simple fact that without distinctive and confident platforms to refer to, most students are quick to forget about the proposed initiatives that got

these School Presidents to office in the first place. Ask any current Lawrentian what Annie's or Soleil's main running points were; they are unlikely to give you a definite answer. Without well-defined expectations, it becomes easier for things to be swept under the rug. When it is the middle of the election process and candidates are unable to directly defend their ideas against drawbacks (or at least concede potential oversights) during a debate, it becomes even harder to really weigh candidates against each other and avoid slipping into the trap of "Who do I like better as a person?" While popularity is an important leadership quality, it is not indicative of what we actually need from a Student Council President: The potential to make actual, beneficial change on campus.

Harsh? Possibly. But this issue—vaguely-presented candidates superseding those with really definitive ideas purely to appeal to a wider audience—is a difficult one to overcome. Even elections as high-profile as the recent 2020 Democratic primaries arguably fell victim to this trap. To the candidates, then: be bold in your ideas, fight for your own ambitions, and stick to your beliefs. We all have different ideas of what we want this campus to be like for our final year at Lawrenceville; lay out your main ideas and convince us of why your vision stands out instead of becoming a catch-all figurehead in an attempt to gain the most votes possible.

Student Spotlight: Tristan Wan '23

HELENA CHEN '24

This past March, Tristan Wan '23 qualified for the national round of the U.S. National Chemistry Olympiad (USNCO) after scoring a 53 out of 60 on the local exam, far exceeding the qualifying threshold of 40 out of 60.

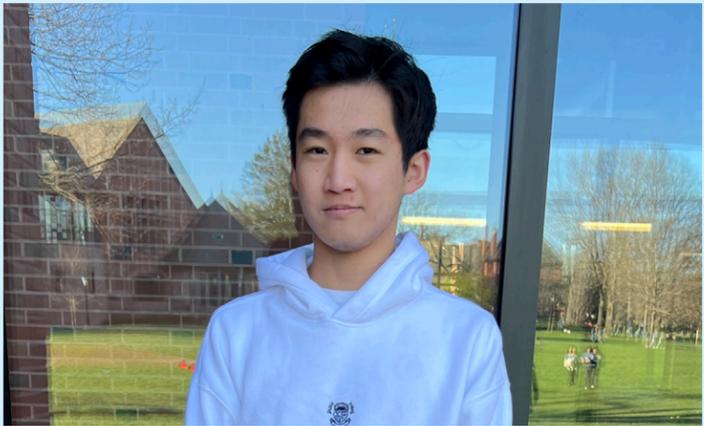
The USNCO is a competition that aims to motivate young scholars to further pursue their interest in chemistry. Wan has been interested in math and science ever since he was in middle school, and after taking Inquiries in Chemical and Physical Sciences during his III Form year, his passion only grew. "That [class] was my first introduction to chemistry, and from there, I just got really excited about [the subject] and decided to continue by taking Honors Chemistry," Wan said. Wan became specifically interested in the Chemistry Olympiad because he is "a really competitive guy...[and] wanted to see how far [he] could go in chemistry," especially because he "was really interested in seeing how [his] skills and knowledge fared against other people's."

Wan prepared for the USNCO over spring break, during which he attended a few online chemistry classes. However, he said, "It was mostly my own practice and using

online resources. I'd also like to say that my chemistry teacher, [Mary] Calvert [P'04 '05 '06], was really helpful in providing materials and information to help me in studying. But it was mainly just practice, practice, and more practice."

After finding out that he qualified for the national round of the exam, Wan said that he "was a little surprised...because [he] hadn't expected to have done so well." Wan believes he has been given a great opportunity to have qualified to go to the National Olympiad, and he is very excited continue applying his skills in a highly competitive environment.

Looking forward, Wan hopes to continue expanding his knowledge of science "There's a lot of fields I'm interested in exploring, and chemistry is one of them. In the future, if I were to do anything else with chemistry, I would hope to experience a real laboratory setting." Wan concluded, "As for now, I think the most direct path would be to continue going to the USNCO. I want to see how far I can go." Finally, Wan wants to shout out to Calvert for giving him and other students at Lawrenceville the opportunity to take the USNCO and taking the time to help them prepare for the competition.



Tristan Wan '23.

Autri Basu '23/THE LAWRENCE

A Report on the Strange New Jersey Weather

AARUSHI ATTRAY '23

"Severe thunderstorms could spoil big spring warmup," reported New Jersey news channels on a chilling March morning—March 30, 2022, to be exact. The word "spoil" perfectly sums up the inconsistent weather at Lawrenceville during the week of March 27, as students anxiously awaited each day's "Please Read: Inclement Weather Schedule" email from the athletic department.

On March 28, Boys' Varsity Tennis Coach Kim McMennamin wrote to the team, "A reminder that practice begins at 3:45 PM today. Be sure to layer up—it's going to be chilly out there!" Two days later, she wrote once again, "Meet at 3:30 PM in Irwin lobby. It's looking like the rain may hold off so we can get on the courts afterwards, but regardless, the lift will happen, rain or shine!" The team never made it to the courts, however. McMennamin's first email was written on a day full of clear blue skies; the second was written on a warm spring day, though it was eventually ruined with obnoxiously loud thunder and lightning. Even as days below freezing ceded to tastes of summer weather, our hopes were destroyed as beaming sunshine led into snow squalls, making it clear that New Jersey's weather had outdone its madness once and for all.

According to the National Weather Service, Lawrenceville's sudden drop to icy, "record-cold" temperatures dur-

ing the week of March 27 was due to an arctic blast, when pockets of the polar vortex drifted down from the North Pole. As for the rain blowout on March 31, experts said a strong cold front and a wave of triggering thunderstorms were traveling south after moving through the Great Lakes region.

Even as New Jersey's climate struggled to find its feet,



Lawrentians' disdainful attitude towards the weather remained the same as it has always been. Even those who have lived in New Jersey for a substantial amount of time were surprised by the weather. New Jersey resident Kishori Shah '23 noted that she had "never experienced the weather changing from 30 degrees to 70 degrees" so quickly. Shah was upset that "Carter House handball couldn't represent" on the day that the team's game got canceled. She went on to firmly conclude that she "hated [the weather]." Gloomy thoughts remained common across campus as

Praachi Chakraborty '23 said that the weather made her feel "terrible, awful, cold, [and] depressed," as all her "hopes and dreams of nearing spring were crushed." In an even bolder statement, Addison Hensler '24 said the weather was so "up and down" that it reminded her of "a teenage boy's voice going through puberty." However, while some hid in their houses during these desperate times,

Anika Ponnambalam '25/THE LAWRENCE

other Lawrentians still found a way to make the most of the little sun they got. Hensler noted, "I saw someone tanning outside on the chairs outside of [the] Woodhull [House] when it was 40 degrees, just cause the sun was still out."

The week of March 27 was full of guesses and unpredictability—nonetheless, the humdrum of the weather didn't stop Lawrentians from uniting to give a warm welcome to future Lawrentians during Discovery Day. We may say "L'Yeah" to Lawrenceville, but we'll be giving a great "L'Nah" to the weather!

Students Bedazzled by Philly Pops Extravaganza

FRANCES HSU '23

Last Sunday, Lawrenceville's Reach Out to the Arts program hosted a trip to see the Philly Pops at the Kimmel Cultural Campus. Led by Performing Arts Teacher Matthew Campbell and Visual Arts Teacher Chloe Kalna, Reach Out to the Arts is dedicated to exposing students to different arts experiences, including music, visual arts, and dance. That day's Philly Pops concert was dedicated to the treasured American composer and lyricist Oscar Hammerstein II, and it featured many of his works.

Before walking into the Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts in Philadelphia on Sunday, none of the Lawrentians in attendance had any idea of what they should expect. Although Hammerstein is such a celebrated lyricist, many of the students had never really had the chance to interact with his work in such an engaging way. Featuring mu-



Students watched the performance at the Kimmel Cultural Center.

sic from Hammerstein's entire repertoire, from earlier plays like *Showboat* to later plays like *Carmen Jones*, *Oklahoma!*, or *The Sound of Music*, each and every moment of the performance was a surprise.

Lily Hooge '23 recounted,

"The concert and the setup were stunning. [Students] got to learn about a whole new side of classical American musicals, which made me want to go watch the famous Hammerstein movies." The auditorium was a breathtak-

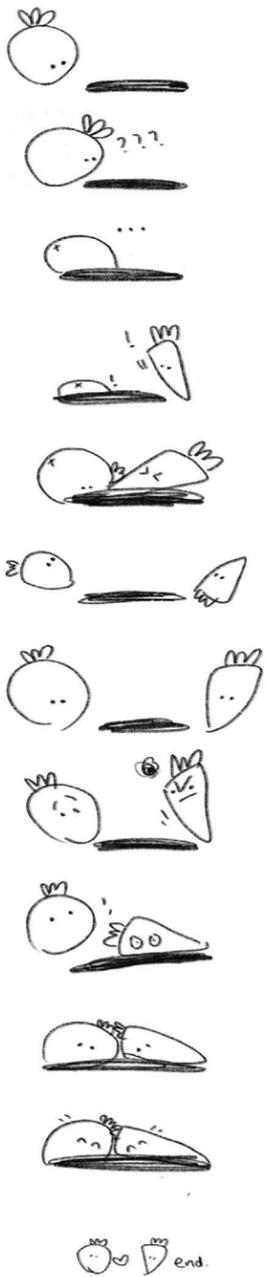
ing scene, featuring a full orchestral setup with a chorus standing behind. The concert opened with one of Hammerstein's most famous works from *The Sound of Music*, and the show featured famed vocalists like Liz Callaway, Rosena M.

Sofia Bonilla '24/THE LAWRENCE

Hill Jackson, and Damian Humbley. Hooge noted, "I never grew up around theatre much, but [after] being able to be around an entire orchestra, I [became] enthralled by the music."

The performance was especially unique because of how between each song, the orchestra conductor explained the stories between Hammerstein's songs and musicals. Quincy Leung '22 said, "My favorite part of the whole concert was the interactive element of it. The conductor explaining the story behind each song that Hammerstein composed really made [the experience] more engaging and interesting." The conductor perfectly narrated Hammerstein's life and used each song to accompany a specific moment of his life, whether it be the beginning of his career or his finding his true love. Leung noted, "The concert really deviated from your usual orchestral concerts. It surprised me in a good way, and I would definitely go again."

'RADISH' STRIPS



Comic strip by Susan Lee '23

Shameless: Representation of the Real World

JOELLE VERMUT '25

With over 40 award nominations, including 14 Emmys, *Shameless* made its TV debut on January 9, 2011. The *Shameless* cast includes two-time Emmy award winners William H. Macy, who plays Frank Gallagher, and Emmy Rossum, who plays Fiona Gallagher. Set in southern Chicago, the story revolves around the poor Gallagher family, with six children and two adults, and follows the lives of each character and their daily struggles. Influenced by key points from his own childhood, screenwriter Paul Abbott created *Shameless* to describe and show the struggles that he had to face each day as a child growing up in poverty.

A huge theme that *Shameless* conveys is how having a tough childhood can affect people in many different ways. For example, Fiona, the mother of the Gallagher family, had to raise five children as a teenager. Her children and other characters in the show continued this cycle of struggle, as all of the kids are forced to grow up too fast; they are all compelled to take care after themselves while Fiona struggles to care for her other five younger siblings alone. Throughout the show, Debbie has a child at the age of 15, Lip struggles with alcohol abuse, Ian endures various life obstacles while also living with bipolar disorder, Carl becomes a drug dealer and a delinquent, and Liam must face injustice because he is African-American. All of these children grow up without parental



The main cast of *Shameless*.

figures or good role models in their lives. Despite the dark topics discussed in each episode, by the end of the series, each child grows up to make a life for themselves and breaks free of the cycle of poverty. Debbie, the third Gallagher sibling, is the only character who isn't able to put her traumatic childhood in the past and move on with her life, and though unfortunate, her story realistically shows how people can be impacted by trauma. With all of the Gallaghers growing up and fending for themselves, Debbie alone resorts to bad survival methods, only looking for short-term solutions. Debbie's struggles raise awareness for people not to judge someone based on past

trauma, as well as the difficulty of comparing the struggles of different individuals.

Shameless points out that not everyone's lives are perfect—especially in comparison to the privileged lives of many Lawrenceville students—and exemplifies the many struggles that a lot of people face, explicit or not. Unlike many other shows, *Shameless* brings comfort to its audience because it spotlights people and areas that usually aren't represented in the media. Despite encountering difficulties with drug abuse, the coming out of LGBTQI+ family members, teen pregnancies, bipolar disorder, racism, poverty, and absent parents, the Gallagher

family always accepts one another and stays together through tough times. *Shameless* does not hesitate to represent the real issues of today, and the representation of these problems leaves an impact on so many people's lives.

Overall, I give *Shameless* a 10/10 rating and could not recommend any show more. Abbott's personal experiences that inspired this series, along with his dedication, really showed through in how the series came together. The astonishing acting makes the audience get a genuine feel for the show's experience every step of the way, and one cannot help but press "next" at the end of each episode.

The Lumineers: The Journey of a Band

SOFIA CARLISI '24

With the lyrics "I belong with you/You belong with me/You're my sweetheart," folk band The Lumineers carved a space for themselves within the music industry. Even after a decade, their 2012 hit "Ho Hey" constantly plays on the radio, and its beautiful lyrics cannot soon be forgotten.

The co-founders of The Lumineers, Wesley Schultz and Jeremiah Fraites, met at a small-town high school in New Jersey. Throughout their youth, the two played together in various bands, but their decision to seriously pursue music led them to Denver, Colorado. After posting an ad on Craigslist, Schultz and Fraites pulled in Neyla Pekarek, a classically trained cellist. Together, they formed The Lumineers, a name inspired by a band called Lumineer that played at a club in Jersey City the week after they did.

I have always felt that the name The Lumineers fits their music perfectly. It reminds me of the Latin word for light, *lux*, and the word pioneer. It is as if they are creators of light.

Even though for much of their early years, The Lumineers were restricted to playing five-dollar house concerts, their talent was easily recognizable. One music blogger, Heather Browne, knew that they were "pretty dang amazing and destined for much bigger things than a living room show."



The Lumineers.

Courtesy of Times Union

In 2011, The Lumineers went from an unheard band to a radio sensation. Their single "Ho Hey" played in an episode of the CW's *Heart of Dixie*, and jumpstarted the band's success almost overnight. Since then, "Ho Hey" has been featured in hit TV shows like *The Vampire Diaries* and *Bones*, and the song has close to eight hundred million streams on Spotify today.

Following the release of "Ho Hey" came their first studio album in 2012, titled *The Lumineers*. Telling the tales of young love during wartime, each song feels timeless and like a snapshot of a different era. A debut album rarely follows such a clear narrative, and when songs tell stories,

I cannot help but be drawn to them. I love the vintage quality of this album; listening to it is like going through old picture books or hearing stories of my grandparents' youth. Even the album's cover, a Polaroid picture of Schultz's mother and grandmother, creates a feeling of looking into a time capsule. Not only does the album have an intriguing vibe, but with songs like "Stubborn Love," "Slow it Down," and "Dead Sea," the Lumineers created the perfect contrast of joy and pain through their music. As The Lumineers celebrated the 10th birthday of this album over the past month, they reflected on their last decade of making music, posting on their Instagram account, "to all of our

fans out there, here's to another 10."

After the success of their first album, The Lumineers toured for over three years. Once the tour came to a close, the band knew they had to start working on a second album. They wrote "Ophelia" first, which Schultz said came from "scraps of ideas we worked out over that time." Once "Ophelia" came together, it became the light that guided the rest of the album. Four years after the release of their debut, The Lumineers put out *Cleopatra*, which created an in-depth storyline similar to that in their first album. It follows a taxi driver whom Schultz dubbed Cleopatra, a woman reminiscent of her past and of all the love she missed out on due to fear. The release of a four-part music video series accompanied the album, which further examined Cleopatra's life through film. By creating songs that you could both laugh and cry to in *Cleopatra*, The Lumineers successfully avoided the common second album let-down.

The Lumineers also released "Gale Song," a part of the *Hunger Games: Catching Fire* soundtrack. "Gale Song" examines Gale Hawthorne's point of view as he watches Katniss fall in love with someone else. Although I am personally a member of Team Peeta, this song is a personal favorite, and anyone who has ever "stood in line for love" will connect

with it.

It took another three years for The Lumineers to release their third studio album, *III*. It came out in three parts, detailing the life of different characters from the fictitious Sparks family. Through the eyes of three characters: Gloria, Junior, and Jimmy Sparks, *III* explores how addiction cycles through families. Although every song on the album adds to its cohesive storyline, they can all be listened to separately. Coupled with the album was a short film cinematically displaying the life of the Sparks family. *III* comes from a place of personal experience for both Schultz and Fraites, and this album is not for the faint of heart. It is not 'happy,' per se, but it is the type of album that sticks with you long after your first listen.

Shortly after the release of *III*, I became addicted to The Lumineers and have anxiously awaited new music from them for the last two years. This past March, they put out *BRIGHTSIDE*, an album completely different from anything they have done before. *BRIGHTSIDE* is a hopeful album that makes you want to get in your car and drive with the windows down.

I think that over the past two years, many have lost hope, but the Lumineers are here to remind us that we are all "headed for the brightside."

Tending to Teachers' Tots: Lawrenceville's Childrens Center

NICHOLE JIN '24

One aspect of Lawrenceville that sets the School apart is the connection students are able to make with their teachers and families. That being said, do you ever wonder where your teacher's two-year-old kid is while their parent is teaching you how to factor quadratic equations? The Lawrenceville Children's Center, run by Dana Petras P'17 '23, is responsible for taking care of about 25 faculty children Monday to Friday while their parents are busy teaching students.

The Children's Center has been in continuous operation since it was established in 1993 to help care for faculty's children. As the center's 29th year comes to a close, Petras said, "It's been fun to watch our center grow over the years." As its inaugural director, Petras helped plan the center and how it operates. "The fact that I have spent my entire career here speaks volumes as to how much I care about this place," she said. As of now, there are 10 teachers on the team at the center. Each day, they come to work and are greeted with "lots of hugs and enthusiasm"

from the kids. Describing her experience at the center, Petras said, "I get to come to work each day and spend time with children who are full of wonder and just learning to discover the world around them." She continued by saying, "We have the privilege of watching many

safe and fun environment for the children, the Children's Center is also hugely beneficial for adults involved. Mathematics Teacher Stephen Wallis has been sending his son to the center since November of last year. "He loves it there," Wallis said, continuing, "He

describing his time with the center as "awesome." History Teacher Clare Grieve has been sending Ruby, her two-and-a-half-year-old daughter, to the center since she was just six months old. "We've seen her grow and develop so much," Grieve said, "She

the center is for faculty living on campus, especially during the pandemic. With childcare being a huge challenge for faculty due to Covid-19, having a daycare center on campus made a significant difference. "Our campus Children's Center has remained safe,

From Petras and the rest of the team's perspective, keeping the center open and safe while adhering to safety precautions was not an easy feat. "The Covid-19 pandemic has certainly [made it] difficult to make sure we could provide in-person care in the safest way possible," Petras said. Despite the dangers of the pandemic, ensuring that the faculty had a team of teachers they could rely on to support their children while they worked was of the utmost importance. Even during Covid-19, Grieve said that her daughter was able to enjoy a somewhat-normal experience at the Center. "Ruby brought home tons of projects—the teachers do art and yoga with her and her friends," she said. Elaborating further on her family's experience with the center, Grieve said, "My husband and I always joke that we wish we could get a video feed of Ruby and all of her friends playing during the day...it's truly an incredible place." Wallis shared the same sentiment, saying that the Children's Center is "phenomenal." The Children's Center is a crucial part of Lawrenceville life and will continue bettering the lives of both faculty and their children for years to come.



Sally Lee '23/THE LAWRENCE

of these children begin as three-month-old babies, and [then] they stay with us until kindergarten. We certainly become very attached to each child in our care." In addition to being a

lights up every time he sees one of his teachers or other kids." Wallis's experience with the center as a parent has also been pleasant. "The teachers there clearly care about the kids," he said,

comes home every day talking about her teachers—Ms. Karla, Ms. Kathy, Ms. Jeanne, and Ms. Wei: they are household names!" Grieve appreciates how accessible and convenient

open, and filled with the same wonderful teachers that worked there before the pandemic started...it's a testament to our school community, and, of course, to the staff there," said Grieve.

House Sports: The Most Elite Form of Athletics

CONSTANCE SHARP '24

As you walk to your sports practice each afternoon, you may often see students clad in various shades of colors, whether it be blue, green, or red. These dedicated athletes, however, are not headed towards the Lavino Field House or Getz Sports Complex to represent Big Red; they are instead going to Green Field, where they, hoping to defend their House's honor, play games against their peers across the Circle and Crescent an astounding three times a week. We at *The Lawrence* were able to get exclusive interviews with House all-star athletes Krish Mehta '24 of Kennedy and Stacey Saavedra '24 of Stanley to learn more about the inner workings of House athletics. Here it is, folks: the good, the bad, and the ugly.

Saavedra shared that she and her teammates on the Stanley House team undertake a serious training regimen leading up to each game day. While gearing up for an intense upcoming Handball match, Saavedra gave us the inside scoop of the rigorous standards House athletes set for themselves. "We are always, always [going to] the training room [and] getting those lifts in," she commented, "It is honestly sometimes overwhelming." The lifts are just one part of the team's intense exercises, however; during our

interview, Saavedra confessed that, "practices can go on for as long as 50 minutes, and it gets really tiresome."

Mehta shared a similar sentiment to Saavedra, noting that he has been "putting 100 percent in [to House Disc]"; his preparations include lifting, running, and frequently scrimmaging the V Form All-Star team.

In order to achieve

a long series of experiments, he and his fellow Kennedy House athletes have found that [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] perfectly balances tasting good with yielding high-tier results.

Saavedra has had to make some changes to her own nutrition plan in

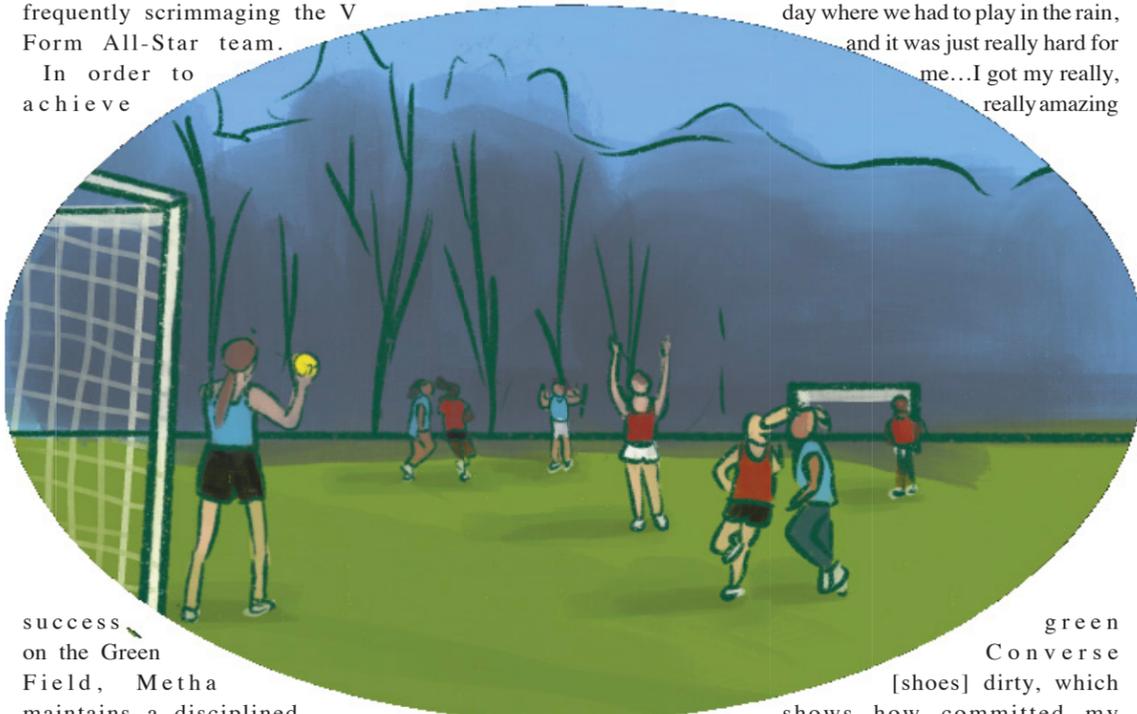
continuing, "I should really cut down on the Hot Cheetos because [I have] got to stay in shape for the season."

Both athletes have made enormous sacrifices to pursue their passion for House sports, but they made sure to note that that the activity is not all fame and glory. "There was this one day where we had to play in the rain, and it was just really hard for me...I got my really, really amazing

about two weeks ago when I joined the Kennedy [House] team; as soon as I hopped on the field, I knew what I was going to do. We started off by throwing the disc, and by the end of the day, we were able to make plays that even Olympic athletes could not do," Mehta informed your correspondent.

Saavedra has played on the Stanley House team for two terms at Lawrenceville, starting off during this past Fall Term with Coach Philip Jordan '85 P'24. She said, "[Jordan] really inspired my passion for House... Unfortunately, in the Winter [Term], I had to [play] basketball... but I am so glad to be back."

When asked which House would end up winning the tournament at the end of the season, Mehta and Saavedra gave us completely unbiased opinions: the Kennedy House in the Circle, and the Stanley House in the Crescent. Neither player would divulge their strategies and plays, but they both assured your correspondent that they have spent significant time and resources building up their House's strongest teams in years. As a completely neutral writer myself, I have to agree with Saavedra on the strength and promise of the Stanley House team, but I would like to give good wishes and lots of respect to all of our hardworking House athletes for the rest of the season.



Stephanie Xu '23/THE LAWRENCE

success on the Green Field, Mehta maintains a disciplined lifestyle, eating a diet exclusively consisting of salads and his secret key to victory, [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. "They [say that] green foods are the best for you," Mehta shared, and after

order to fully embrace the rigor that House sports entail. "Being part of such an intense sport has definitely caused me to make some tough decisions," Saavedra said,

green Converse [shoes] dirty, which shows how committed my fellow athletes and I are to the sport," Saavedra said.

However, both athletes agreed that their love for the game makes the sacrifices and hardships worth it. "[My story with Disc] started

Saying Goodbye to StuCo '22: A Look at Their Senior Year

NICHOLE JIN '24

As Lawrenceville slowly transitions to normalcy, Student Council President Annie Katz '22 and the rest of the Student Council have been tasked with the complicated job of planning and facilitating events that are engaging for the student body, while still adhering to Covid-19 guidelines.

One initiative that has been implemented this year is Katz's "Big ReDiscovery," an idea that she first introduced on her platform last Spring Term. "With all of our virtual and hybrid terms during the height of the pandemic, we really wanted to help everyone remember—or discover for the first time—what Lawrenceville is like when we don't have masking or gathering restrictions," said Vice President of Academics Arthur Li '22. This rediscovery included reviving traditions such as House Olympics, the Hill hockey game, and spirit week. New events like the Big Red Gala, which took place two Saturdays ago, were also introduced as part of the initiative. The Student Council was able to successfully organize and host the events despite having to "work around...Covid policies." An important part of Big ReDiscovery was deciding which aspects of Lawrenceville were most valuable and which aspects could be temporarily removed. "There is no longer the excuse of saying that an event should be done because it's tradition...we have the opportunity to pick what we value as a community," Katz elaborated. Katz first came up with the idea

of Big ReDiscovery last year during a conversation with both a II Former and a prefect, where she heard that both of them were unaware of what the Spring Dance Concert was. "I freaked out... it's one of the biggest traditions of the year," said Katz, "and that led me to the realization that my class would be one of the only people to have the full memory of what this place used to be like." Her goal with Big ReDiscovery was to ensure that all the underformers would have the chance to experience the Lawrenceville that she knew and loved. "Student Council does have a unique opportunity to shape the core memories and events of what Lawrenceville looks like for a lot of

underformers, so I wanted to play a role in that," Katz continued.

Even with the implementation of Big ReDiscovery, there are still aspects of Lawrenceville that are different from what they used to be due to the pandemic. "It has been interesting to see the juxtaposition of this community and the community that I grew to know Lawrenceville as," said Katz. For example, while the House banner competition for Hill Day was immensely popular when she was a II Former, it wasn't as well-received this year. Katz continued by saying that "It has been overall just really fun and enjoyable to figure out our identity as a community." While some see Big ReDiscovery and similar

Student Council initiatives as part of Lawrenceville's transition back to normal, Katz holds the view that campus life as it is currently is "the new normal." "This is our reality now; we're always going to be facing issues related to Covid and all of the fallout from Covid," she continued. Rather than viewing current campus life as a segway back to normal, Katz emphasizes the importance of embracing our "new normal" and adjusting to it as a community.

Homecoming was one event that was reintroduced this year, with a couple of alterations. "[Vice President of Social Life] Delaney [Musgrave '23] did a wonderful job with Homecoming and reinventing it to add

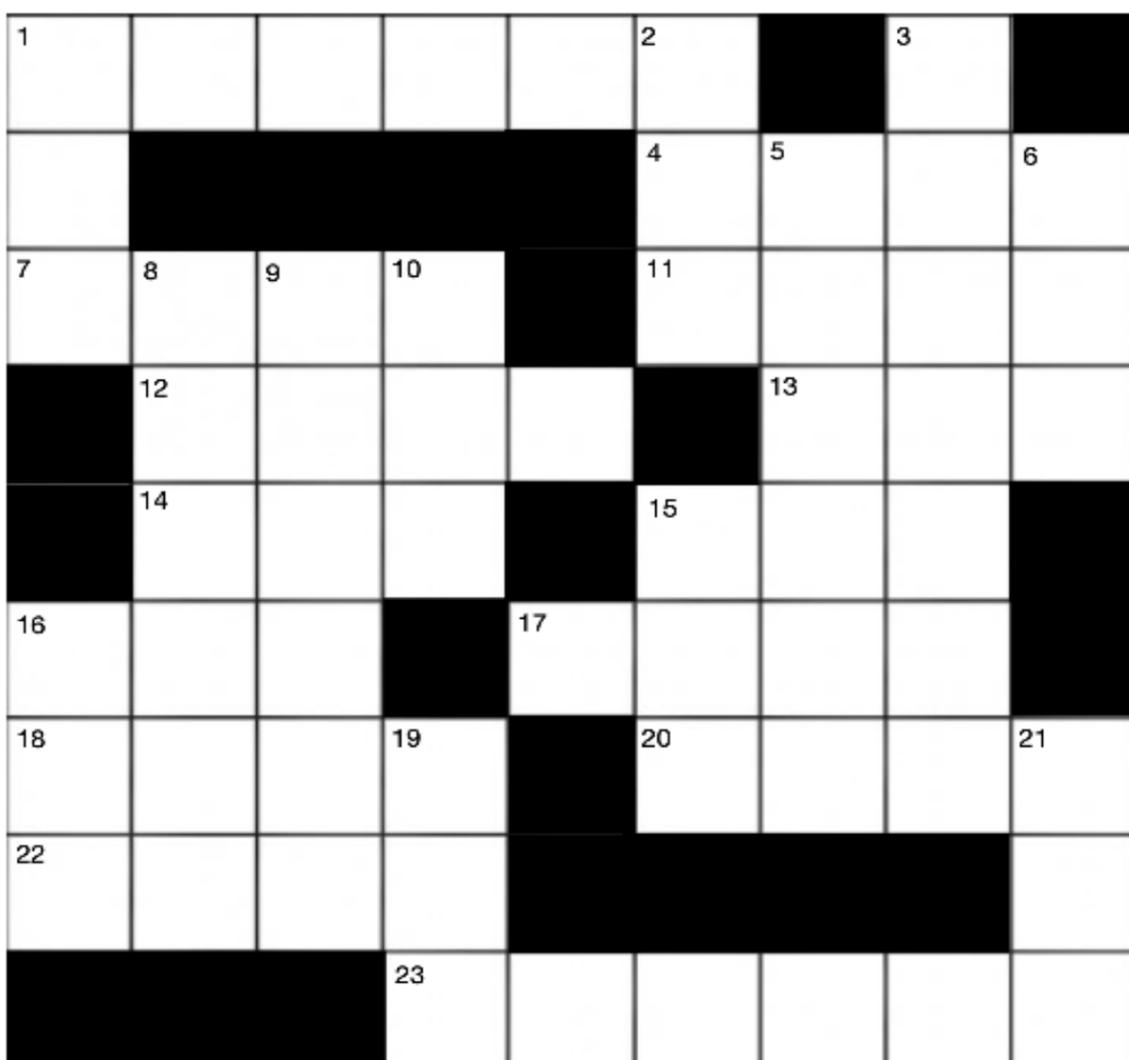
new traditions like the proposals," said Katz. On the other hand, in terms of academics, Li said that his main initiative this year was hosting academic workshops. "The [workshops] were designed to help the students who weren't here before the pandemic get acclimated," said Li. In addition to this, Student Council also communicates regularly with Dean Easterling P'20 and the other deans to ensure that student voices are being heard.

For the spring, StuCo is busy with a host of new initiatives. According to Katz, one event that's on the table is a "mini Hill Day." She and Arts Representative Scarlett Tapiero '22 have also been planning Senior Week, and the whole Student Council is currently occupied with the election and selecting Student Council representatives for next year. According to Li, the Student Council is also communicating with the administration on the process of implementing suggestions from the town hall. "One of the biggest things that I'm really excited about is that this kind of town hall has sparked intense conversation at all levels of Lawrenceville, whether that be at the highest level of the administration or just casual conversations in the house," said Katz, expressing her enthusiasm in continuing to work towards ensuring that the voice of the student community is heard. With Student Council working hard, there will be plenty of upcoming events to look forward to in the spring!



Ellie Turchetta '25 / THE LAWRENCE

The Lawrence Crossword Puzzle: Lawrenceville & Misc.



CLAIRE CHOW '24

Across

- 1. Most iconic mustache on campus
- 4. Actor _____ Miller who plays Credence in Fantastic Beasts
- 7. What street are we on?
- 11. See (past perfect)
- 12. Freshman hangout
- 13. That's so deep (acronym)
- 14. Opposite of "girl's night out" (acronym)
- 15. Article used before a noun to specify
- 16. Me (Fr.)
- 17. Word that identifies things
- 18. The _____ - bitsy spider
- 20. This (Sp.)
- 22. Object
- 23. School Mascot

Down

- 1. English building
- 2. No (opp.)
- 3. "Yesterday's the past, tomorrow's the future, but today is a gift. That's why it is called the _____," - Master Wu Gun
- 5. Twin of Amphion in Greek mythology
- 6. Conjunction to connect words in sentences
- 8. Senior dining hall
- 9. To convert an atom into an ion (British spelling)
- 10. Conspiracy theory that hypothesizes a secret emerging totalitarian world government. (Abbr.)
- 15. Fingers are to hands, as _____ are to feet
- 16. Avatar on Wii
- 19. You mad bro (acronym)

The first person to email a completed, correct photo to both ekim23@lawrenceville.org and ajung23@lawrenceville.org will receive a mystery prize!

The Difficult Road to Division I Through the Eyes of Lawrentians

ADRIAN CARLISI '24

There's a fine line between big goals and unrealistic dreams. Children with a passion for competitive sports often fantasize about being one of the greats or playing in the professional league. As one grows older, though, and latches on to reality, they learn that competing in college is a much more attainable dream. According to the National Federation of State Highschool Associations, about 7.9 million high school students participate in athletics. But how many of these inspired athletes will go on to play at NCAA Division I schools? People unfamiliar with the difficulty of reaching the Division I level might be shocked to see that less than 2 percent of these students actually play in the NCAA's top division. Out of all sports, both tennis and volleyball are the most difficult to play in Division I. According to ScholarshipStats.com, only 0.6 percent of high school athletes in these disciplines go on to play at the top level in college. Even though lacrosse and football have the highest percentage of high school athletes playing in Division I teams, this number is still ridiculously low at

a mere 2.8 percent.

There are many past and present Lawrentians who have gone through this difficult, trying experience. Rayce Welborne '24, a Lawrentian with a passion for soccer, can give his insights in how he hopes to beat the odds. Welborne has always had the goal of playing soccer in college, and while having talent is very important, the only way to be recognized by coaches is through putting yourself out there. Coaches are not permitted to contact athletes until their junior year of high school, so Welborne and many others often find themselves emailing coaches without being able to receive a response. Welborne knows how important it is to be proactive, and he finds himself trying to attend as many College ID Clinics and

showcase games as he can. Having participated in the ECNL Florida College Showcase this past January, Welborne can recall the intense amount of pressure that exists. When playing a game with 40 coaches on

Although moments like these have a lot riding on them, without composure under pressure, it can be impossible for some people to get noticed.

Chuck Rawson '23, a member of the Boys' Varsity Lacrosse team, shares a similar experience to Welborne while also proving that success stories are possible. Much like Welborne, Rawson put himself out there and was thus able to commit to Johns Hopkins' Division I Lacrosse team. Rawson has always wanted to use lacrosse as a tool for his academics, and he chose Hopkins because he knew it would help set up his life past college. Due to his small stature, Rawson always needed to work twice as hard to even be able to keep up with the competition,

but once he caught up to his peers in size, his years of hard work paid off. When making his decision on attending Hopkins, Rawson claims that he "had an instant connection with the coaching staff [he] knew he would not find anywhere else." Rawson's work isn't over just yet, though, as all committed high school players will be thrown into a pool of talented athletes just like him from all across the country.

Both Welborne and Rawson carry a positive mindset, as they each know that the decisions they make will benefit their lives to come. In fact, according to Welborne, "One of the most difficult things is knowing how far you want to go with it and how much you want to dedicate your life to it." Both of these student-athletes share a desire to use their favorite sports to further their academic careers in college. Anyone trying to play in the NCAA should be rewarded for the difficult—and often underappreciated—journey they all endure. While playing Division I sports is an unrealistic dream for many, the journey of playing the sport you love is worth it, no matter the result.



Stephanie Xu '23 / THE LAWRENCE

the sideline breathing down your neck, "it can be difficult to break that initial barrier of nerves and play as if no one is watching," Welborne said.

Contenders vs. Pretenders: The NBA Playoff Scene

DYLAN SINGLA '24

Every NBA season, upstart teams who didn't look so great in the previous season look to stake their claim to the coveted NBA championship. Every year, however, some of these competitors fall short of their ultimate dreams.

Eastern Conference

Miami Heat: Contenders

The Miami Heat is currently one of the most in-form teams in the NBA. The Heat currently leads the Eastern Conference with a 52-28 record and is loaded with star talent, especially after big-man Bam Adebayo significantly stepped up his game; this season, he has averaged 19.0 points per game (PPG) and 10.1 rebounds per game (RPG). Adebayo is arguably now a top three center in the NBA. The Heat is also led by all-star small forward Jimmy Butler, who carried the team to the

NBA finals in the 2020 season, and it certainly looks like he just might repeat that success. This season, Butler has averaged about 21 PPG, six adjusted assists (AST), and six RPG, creating a strong momentum that will push the Heat to victory this year. Upstart Tyler Herro has also much improved from last season, averaging 20 PPG, while veteran Kyle Lowry has been a big help on offense with his 7.6 assists per game (APG). The biggest concern for this team is its size. The Heat doesn't have the luxury of many big players on its roster who dominate on defense, which could potentially be its downfall against larger teams like the Philadelphia 76ers and the Milwaukee Bucks in the playoffs. However, the Heat's perimeter defense is incredible, and its offense gives the team the potential for a long playoff run.

Boston Celtics: Pretenders

The Boston Celtics have had an spectacular regular season, as they currently sit in third place in the Eastern Conference. This team is very young and will be exciting to watch in the playoffs in years to come, but I don't think they will make a far run this year. While they are led by a great backcourt in the likes of Jaylen Brown, Jason Tatum, and Dennis Schroder, like the Chicago Bulls, they lack a significant big-man presence. This team, also being young, has been inconsistent throughout the season, routinely struggling to beat teams with losing records. The Celtics' coach, Ime Udoka, is also in his first season coaching an NBA team. The lack of a significant big-man presence, inconsistency, and lack of experience will cause the Celtics to struggle throughout the playoffs. They will be an exciting team to watch in the future, but this is not their year to win it all.

Western Conference

Memphis Grizzlies: Contenders

The Memphis Grizzlies might be one of the most exciting teams to watch in the NBA in a decade. Ja Morant, who has averaged 27.6 PPG and 6.7 APG, leads the team in both aspects of play, consistently playing like Derrick Rose during his 2011 peak. Morant did pick up an injury earlier this year, but that didn't seem to matter, as the Grizzlies have gone 20-4 without their spark plug. Desmond Bane, Dillion Brooks, and Jaren Jackson Jr. are stepping up on offense, while Jackson and Steven Adams are raising their level on the defensive side of the ball. The Grizzlies have the advantage of both generational talent and an impressive supporting cast. The only worry I have is that the Grizzlies are a very young team. They don't have a lot of veteran leadership for the playoffs. However, this lack of leadership hasn't been a problem in the regular season, so I believe that the Grizzlies have a real shot at winning the championship.

Utah Jazz: Pretenders

The Utah Jazz has always been a consistent playoff team the last several years. The Jazz has a star-studded lineup, with Bojan Bogdanovic and Donovan Mitchell on offense; Rudy Gobert playing defense, averaging over two blocks per game; and Jordan Clarkson sometimes coming off the bench to help with the offense. This team looks good on paper, but its road to the final is challenging to say the least. The Jazz must play Luka Dončić's Dallas Mavericks, Ja Morant's Grizzlies, Stephen Curry's Golden State Warriors, or the stacked Phoenix Suns squad just to make the finals. The Jazz has historically not performed well in the playoffs, as just last year the team was defeated by the Los Angeles Clippers 4-2, even as the Clippers were missing all-star player Kawhi Leonard. The Jazz's route to the finals and its history of failing to live up to expectations make the team pretenders in my eyes.

Board Picks

	Adi Jung Co-Features Editor	Cindy Shum Photos Editor	Kyle Park Managing Editor	Emma Kim Co-Features Editor	Andrew Boanoh Sports Editor	Sally Lee Co-Web Editor	Noah Trupin Co-Web Editor
Are you living with free will?	ofc not	Hopefully?	i'd like to think so	big brother is always watching...	no comment	not unless I become the only person on the board	not with Autri in charge
More blades of grass or strands of hair in the world?	hair	grass	hair	grass	hair	hair	hair