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Prep News

If nothing else, value the truth

*Dorothy*

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## 16 students travel to D.C. for Ignatian Family Teach-In for Justice

BY JOHNO JACKSON AND FITZ CAIN  
STAFF, REPORTER

This week was rife with political activity, and over the weekend students from St. Louis U. High had the opportunity to be part of the commotion. A group of 16 students from all grade levels, led by campus minister Meg Beugg, traveled to Washington, D.C. to attend the Ignatian Family Teach-In for Justice.

The Ignatian Family Teach-In for Justice (IFTJ) is the largest annual Catholic advocacy gathering in the country. Taking place in an Arlington, Va. Marriott hotel, just across the Potomac from Washington, D.C., the IFTJ was attended by over 2000 students from Jesuit high schools and universities from across the continent. IFTJ gives students an opportunity to learn more about social justice issues and practice advocacy through hearing keynote speakers, attending breakout sessions, and, ultimately, traveling to Capitol Hill to meet with Missouri senators' staffers.

The group arrived in D.C. late Friday evening following a one hour rain delay, and returned to St. Louis Monday night.

Saturday morning, the skies had cleared up and the group had time to explore the National Mall before IFTJ commenced. They visited the White House, the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial, and the National Museum of African American History and Culture. Since its opening in 2016, the museum has been notoriously difficult to get into due to its popularity.

"I really enjoyed the Museum of African American History and Culture. It was really enlightening, and I learned a lot," said junior

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## Podium Project fulfilled: drought of trophies over as XC takes second at State



The seven State finishers for XC.

BY CHRIS STALEY AND PETER LABARGE  
SPORTS EDITOR, REPORTER

Eleventh, 10th, 10th, 2nd. After three years of getting nowhere near the podium (placing in the top four), the St. Louis U. High cross country team was able to achieve its goal, named the "Podium Project," set years ago after the 11th place fin-

ish. Despite many factors that could have slowed the Jr. Bills and made them lose their confidence, their heart and drive for a state trophy pushed them to a state performance that hasn't happened since before the current seniors arrived at SLUH.

Since last January, the team has called this season the "Podium Project" to emphasize the

goal of getting the Jr. Bills back on the podium. This year was the team's 41st appearance and the 26th consecutive appearance at the State meet. In those 41 years, the team has captured 14 trophies—six of them being championships. In the last 10 years, the team has won three times with seven podium finishes, but none in the past three

years.

"After that first time we were 11th and not on the podium and didn't perform well, that senior group (Joe Laughlin, Thomas Leeker, William Kelly) really started putting things in place that we see today," said head coach Joe Porter. "There were three guys who ran in state

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## 400 students host 300 families at Open House; Innovation Lab opened for first time

BY BEN KLEVORN AND MATTHEW THIBODEAU  
CORE STAFF, STAFF

Students in grades 5 through 9 from across the St. Louis area flocked to St. Louis U. High last Sunday for the annual Open House. More than 300 families received tours, saw a wide range of clubs and activities, and interacted with many of the roughly 400 SLUH students present. The Admissions Department hoped to give prospective families a look into the various ways SLUH students can be involved and supported in their school community.

Just over 300 families attended the Open House, the majority of whom were seventh graders. This year's event saw nearly the same number of families as last year's Open House, but it continues a fairly



Junior Alex Fox giving a prospective family a tour.

photo | Louis Barnes

steady decline in attendance, largely due to the implementation of newer admissions events, such as SLUH Night and Inside SLUH visits.

This year's event retained

many pieces of prior Open Houses, but also saw several notable changes.

This year, multiple departments—admissions, tuition and financial aid, student sup-

port services and counseling, college counseling, diversity and inclusion, and Upward Bound—were present in the Danis Lobby to answer com-

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### NEWS

#### Alumni Art Show

Art can extend beyond the boundaries of well-filtered Instagram pictures, and many of our alumni from a variety of classes have contributed works of different styles and themes. *Page 2*

#### NEWS

#### PE day off

The SLUH PE Department took a trip off campus this week to discuss changes in curriculum, focusing on implementing observation, demonstration, and oral interpretation. *Page 2*

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Yes, in the eyes of the law many of our SLUH seniors are actually considered adults, and many of them used their new voting power. *Page 3*

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Students and fellow coaches reflect on their time with former varsity baseball coach Steve Nicollerat and his legacy. *Page 5*

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It's the last lap, and if the Jr. Bills swim and dive team can take first, the state title will be in their fins. *Page 6*

#### SPORTS

#### Soccer

After an autumn full of new faces, close calls, and vast improvement, SLUH soccer team looks back on its season. *Page 5*

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## Cross country returns to perennial powerhouse ways, taking second at state meet

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 Saturday who ran with those seniors, and what took place during that season took us a couple years to come into fruition, but it's definitely something we have been talking about a lot and we feel like this team could be a top four team."

Fast forward to this past week, and it all seemed to be a reality for the team. Despite two frustrating finishes at districts and sectionals, the top seven knew they still had the ability to win.

"I know some people definitely doubted us in our District and Sectional performances in losing to some very good Kirkwood and Lafayette teams but I think our guys felt like our goal was State," said Porter. "We are going to make sure we get to that line as healthy and smart as we possibly can and have our best day on the day and that's what we did."

In the past, the travel team runs the State course the day before the race to talk through race strategy, but due to rain muddying the course, MSHSAA officials did not want runners to wreck it before the meet. In order to fully understand the course, the top seven huddled around an iPad screen and watched a video of the course recorded by running journalist Chris Auckley and discussed strategy for the race.

"The guys kind of understood what the course was, what it had to offer and what it had said that would challenge you," said senior Patrick Hetlage, who has run the course four times now. "This is my fourth year in the race, and now my fourth year on this course, and I had a lot to tell the guys and we were able to do what we would have done had we run the course the day before."

Some factors that affected the varsity team was a pair of seniors who, at the time of the meet, weren't feeling their best. Senior Chris Staley was battling a right hip flexor strain for two months, and his recent heavy load of biking and kinesiology tape had prevented him from running with his familiar stride and race pace. Hetlage had been struck with a virus around the time of districts and he missed a crucial team practice because of it.

"That virus led to an ear infection, and on top of it, just being extremely sick and tired and having headaches constantly. Fortunately, I was on medicine for most of the weeks, and it helped get me back to almost healthy, but at the same time, I wasn't really there yet," said Hetlage. "I fell asleep before we even ate dinner the night before the race. It was not the best situation. I still knew I had to run well for the team."

On the morning of the big race, the team arrived to a dense fog at the historic Oak Hills Golf Center course, which has hosted the state meet for 42 years. Walking the course, the team found out that parts of the two mile were altered because of the rain, and they had to make quick adjustments to their race

plan, but the experienced runners weren't worried.

"We talked a lot this week about racing with confidence with the work we have put in," said Porter. "On Wednesday I read to them how many miles they had run in the first 12 weeks of the season to remind them of how much work they have put in, and no other team is running as we can based on the work we put in. If we put our confidence in our workouts, our workouts have been killer in the last month, and the work we have put in, we are going to have

At the beginning of the third mile, one of the hardest hills in Missouri faces the runners—Firehouse Hill. Here is where the team talked the most strategy to get moving, especially at the 4K mark. However, most of the SLUH runners died off in the final mile. Rackers' 15:42 three-mile time (5:28 third mile) put him in 6th place. Hetlage's 16:02 (5:48) put him in 22nd, Scott's 16:05 (5:42) put him in 25th, Staley's 16:19 (5:44) put him in 36th, Mittendorf's 16:28 (5:47) put him in 47th, and Milnor's 16:34 (5:50) put

102nd. After they all crossed the finish line, they waited anxiously for the official results.

"We knew we were a trophy team knowing that our guys were that close to each other," said Porter. "The question was just knowing where we were going to be."

At the team tent, the seven and the Blue Army officially found out they got second behind only Kansas City Jesuit rival Rockhurst and ahead of Lafayette and Kirkwood, two teams that beat SLUH at Districts and Sectionals. The team



photo | Mr. Jim Hetlage

a great day."

In the first mile of the race, the boys knew to take it conservatively, because the type of the race causes some runners to take the first mile out in PR-like times. Coming through the first mile, Hetlage and junior Lucas Rackers were in 12th and 13th respectively with a 4:57 time, followed by junior Noah Scott (18th) with a 5:00, Noah Scott (55th), senior Reed Milnor (57th), and junior Adam Mittendorf (58th), and the team was in second place overall.

"First mile, Patrick and I decided to take it out a little bit slower than the position we wanted to finish at," said Rackers. "We figured that first mile was a little flatter, the other two has more hills in them so our idea was to stay further back, then pick people off as we went along."

In the recent past, the team has faded and lost its position in the race in the second mile.

Appropriately nicknamed "bunny ears," the course has long stretches with 180-degree turns that, if looked at from above, look like bunny ears. The main idea for the top seven was to stay mentally strong in this mile and slowly take over runners.

For almost all the runners, it worked. Rackers and Hetlage were still together with a 10:14 two-mile time (5:17 second mile), but this time in 6th and 8th place. Scott's 10:23 (5:27) put him in 19th. Staley's 10:35 (5:27) jumped him up 17 spots to 38th place. Mittendorf's 10:41 (5:33) put him in 53rd. Milnor's 10:44 (5:36) put him back one spot to 58th place.

"I felt like we were in a good spot to move in the middle mile and they did," said Porter. "We dropped points in the middle mile."

him in 57th place.

"I was struggling on Firehouse, but I remembered what we were talking about before, just lengthening and picking people off and some people who gained a little but of ground on me on the hill, I was able to catch them at the top," said Scott. "Coach Porter was up there yelling at me and that helped too."

At the end of the race,

Rackers came in first for SLUH

with a stellar race that SLUH hasn't seen in a while. He came in 7th place with a time of 16:25. Scott was the second SLUH finisher in 24th with a 16:41 time with teammate Hetlage right behind him with a 16:43 time to place 25th and get the last All-State medal. Getting All-State is one of the highest achievements in the sport, and Scott was very happy his hard-working senior teammate Hetlage was able to get one in his final State race, and he was proud of himself too.

"I saw Patrick with around 200 to go and when I got to the three-mile mark, something in my head just made me start going really fast, I have never really found that gear before, it's a pretty cool feeling," said Scott. "Unfortunately, Patrick gave me a little bit and I passed him. I was hoping he got one of the last spots, and luckily he was able to really find something and beat Zach Reed for that last All-State spot. When I finished, I didn't know for sure that I was All-State, but I knew I was somewhere around there and I was pretty confident I made it. When I heard it, I was pretty emotional because it was just a culmination of months of work."

For the rest of the seven, Staley ran 17:03 for 42nd, Mittendorf ran 17:08 for 47th, Milnor ran 17:12 for 53rd, and junior Joe Callahan ran 17:36 for

## Varsity soccer seniors bid farewell excited for future of program

*(continued from page 5)*

how inexperience affected the team. The frequent change of keepers in the beginning of the season made it hard for one of them to adjust to the varsity level of play.

Even though many of the goals conceded were simple, a large part of it was the defense trying to do too much.

"We needed to connect through the mid instead of playing the kick and run game," said senior Brian Lymberopoulos. "Once we started to play the game simply, (our) level of soccer skyrocketed."

Even with the team's struggles, hopes always remained high. They very rarely went into games discouraged and almost always came out after halftime ready to face their opponents.

"I felt like they gave me everything," said O'Connell. "They could have quit a long time ago, but they never did."

"It was amazing to see how no one thought about giving up," said Lymberopoulos. "Most practices everyone gave up 100 percent and it was awesome to see."

Though this year's season has ended, the underclassmen are looking to improve their game as much as they can to prepare to come back next year, and hopefully find more success.

"I hope that everybody finds the best club team

that they can play on," said O'Connell. "We'll use the off-season to focus on strength and speed and things in the weight room."

The seniors, even though their time on the pitch for SLUH has ended, are hopeful for the future of the program.

"Next year, especially for the juniors, I'd say to just enjoy every single day," said Lehmann. "I remember being in their shoes like it was yesterday and now that it's all over I can't believe it went by so quick. I hope guys like Charles (Neuwirth) can really step up and lead next year's team and hopefully make a deep run into the playoffs."

"I'm excited to see where next year's team goes," said Lymberopoulos. "They have some serious potential. It was an honor to play with everyone on the team."

As for the members of the returning varsity team, they are doing all they can this offseason to get ready for next year.

"Many of the other guys and I are playing select," said Neuwirth. "We're working as hard as we can to keep the team in the playoffs as long as possible next year."



photo | Mrs. Kathy Chott

## Swim and Dive state final projections\*

**Liberty: 235  
SLUH: 210**

**Lee's Summit North: 207  
CBC: 178**

\*scores do not include the projected diving scores

—projected by Will Slatin