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Moderator | Mrs. Shannon Dufresne



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Student Prints Gets a New Look! | By Quinn Pasmantier '22

Student Prints has taken a step into the future of student-run news! In light of the recent pandemic, Dominican Academy (D.A.) has decided that no physical papers are to be handed out to students. This presented a challenge for the members of *Student Prints*, whose quarterly publications traditionally had been distributed by hand. Dr. Petit decided that the best course of action would be to fully convert to a digital format. “The digital paper will be used as a marketing tool for prospective students as well as a connection and touch point for D.A. parents, alumnae, and donors” she said. “It will be now feasible for students and the outside world to have materials accessible in a searchable electronic format.”

This change will likely be permanent as it proves to be a more efficient way of distributing the publication. Firstly, it is slow work to print and assemble dozens of copies; with a fully digital version, less time would be needed for publishing. Secondly, color photos can now be added, allowing for a wider range of pictures to be printed. Finally, and most importantly, it is environmentally friendly. “It is extremely cost-effective and environmentally conscious to not use paper material.” said Dr. Petit “*Student Prints* online will allow for a link to the newspaper to be published on the website.”

Not only will production be easier, but this new digital paper provides some advantages to students interested in journalism as a potential field of study. Members who have written for *Student Prints* could utilize this digital format as a resource for their future. “It will enable students interested in pursuing journalism to provide prospective colleges, employers, etc. a link to their articles and work” says Dr. Petit.

Alongside the new format comes new leadership. “Now that we are moving to a digital publication, I am pleased to announce that Mrs. Shannon Dufresne is now the moderator of *Student Prints*” said Dr. Petit. “I would like to thank Mr. Charles McDermott for all his dedication and contributions over the years. All of us at D.A. are grateful to Mr. McDermott for inspiring so many talented student writers and editors.”

“From everyone in Student Prints, thank you Mr. McDermott! Your hard work will not be forgotten.”

From everyone in *Student Prints*, thank you Mr. McDermott! Your hard work will not be forgotten. Additionally, readers may notice certain changes added to this new format. *Student Prints* now has sorted topic areas, not present in the original paper. The first four topics discussed in the first-ever digital publication are: COVID-19, D.A.y in the Life, In the News, and Fall Features. We encourage you to support our reporters by reading all the articles listed within! We are hopeful that these new enhancements will help to further extend news to the D.A. community faster and more efficiently than ever.



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2020 Brings New Nurse and New Challenges | By Keira Muller, '24

School at Dominican Academy looks a little bit different this year: students and teachers are socially distanced and everyone's face is covered with a mask. Another difference is the first-time presence of a school nurse at D.A. The school community sees Ms. Lawler everyday when coming into the building as each person gets their temperature checked.

This is not only a first for D.A., this is Ms. Lawler's first time working as a school nurse. Before this year, her roles as a nurse were in patient and family care, staff education, and unit management. Ms. Lawler is very excited to be part of the D.A. community. She said, "I am now delighted to be part of D.A. in a role I had hoped for and worked towards." Ms. Lawler strives to create a safe and healthy environment for D.A. students to thrive in, which she does by keeping up with rapidly changing guidelines and precautions.

"I think that learning during the pandemic has made our freshman year very unique. It's presented a lot of challenges, like making friends when you can't actually see them in person," she continued, "However, I think there are some positives..."

- Demetra Chudley, '24



D.A. is taking many steps to stop the spread of COVID-19 in our community including staggering schedules, spacing desks six feet apart from others, implementing a mask mandate, and placing sanitizing dispensers throughout the building. Students reflected on the necessary changes implemented and noted the positives and negatives of life at D.A. this year. A freshman, Demetra Chudley, said "I think that learning during the pandemic has made our freshman year very unique. It has presented a lot of challenges, like making friends when you can't actually see them in person," she continued, "However, I think there are some

positives, like the fact that I can do class from anywhere or the new ways we've been able to spend time together, like playing Among Us. I highly doubt the freshmen class would have been having Among Us tournaments if there wasn't a pandemic." The freshmen responses reflect the spirit Ms. Lawler explains is so important through their determination to make this year a good one. Ms. Lawler described the significance of the role of each person during the pandemic. Ms. Lawler notes, "I believe each individual can make a difference and have an impact, to think otherwise is a misconception. Change begins with one person's idea. I also believe that there is more to just getting the job done."



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Finally, Ms. Lawler wanted to say a special thank you to the D.A. community for their patience and cooperation with all the new protocols and for doing it with such a positive attitude. We return the thanks to her for commitment to our safety and well-being.

Coping with COVID-19 | By Melanie Robichaux, '23

The problem with boredom is motivation, or lack thereof. After a while of moping around the house and checking the fridge five minutes after you checked it for the fifth time this hour, hoping the perfect snack just magically appears, you start to lose hope that today is going to be a good day. You lose your concept of time, and every single day gets morphed into one long endless cycle of school, phone, food, sleep, repeat. It's hard to strike up motivation after days, or months, or however long COVID-19 has been around, but if you're looking for ways to cope with the boredom factor of quarantine, you're in luck. Almost everyone fell victim to boredom while staying inside. After a while it felt like there was absolutely nothing left in the world to do. The motivation to do anything had gradually been swept away. After days on end of sitting in the same room, breathing recycled air, maybe you'll realize, it's time to change this cycle. Going outside is a great way to inspire change. The crisp air revives you and clears your mind. Walking around by yourself can be a serene experience of clearing your head of all the stress and focusing on you. Music is known for its calming properties, but it really depends on the music. This is why making playlists can also be a great activity. Discovering new music is fun and exciting if you're up to the challenge. It can be time consuming and frustrating to find music that soothes the soul, but overall, a fun time. Deciphering what music goes in what playlist is difficult if you have a hard time adding too much or too little; but once the playlists are completed, it can be an extremely satisfying experience.

Learning a new skill is also a great way to combat boredom, and as childish as it may seem, crafting is an awesome area in which you can expand your novice or experienced skills. There are so many aspects of crafting to discover, like crocheting, painting, embroidering, collaging, and more; the list goes on forever. If all goes well, these projects' outcomes will reward you with something to be proud of. Crocheting new articles of clothing, blankets, trinkets, etc. by hand is one of the most rewarding and satisfying experiences. If you are completely new to the crafting world or just need a refresher, there are tons of youtube videos and channels to guide you through the process. Another great resource for staying sane and safe is talking to friends and family. Even if being alone is your preference, it's important and healthy to communicate with those you love. Although quarantine definitely put up a barrier for connecting with your friends, there are still ways to have fun virtually like facetime, Netflix party, online quizzes, and so many more. Finally, if you get desperate enough, there's....reading (scary, I know). Contrary to popular belief, reading can be fun?! Immersing yourself in a good book can make you forget about the pandemic outside and all of the stress that comes with it. It's a great distraction from reality and a great habit to have. Buying new books is expensive, so going to the library is an affordable and convenient option. If you're looking for a good book, sometimes libraries have book recommendations, or



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look on the New York Times website, or on any social media book accounts. Overall, these methods of keeping busy might not work for everyone, and that's ok! You know yourself better than anyone, so do what's best for you!

Normalcy in Uncertain Times at D.A.: Fall Focus on Activities | By Daisy Whiting, '23

Despite the current circumstances surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic, Dominican Academy has partly returned to school, sports, extracurriculars, and events, restoring a sense of normalcy in our community- one that we haven't felt since February. Through our fall sports, school Halloween celebrations, and demonstrations of school spirit and self expression, some may say it's becoming easier to rediscover our old routines amid the aberration of this global crisis.



Fortunately, D.A.'s soccer season was not cancelled this year, due to it being a low-contact, outdoor, and mostly socially distant sport, and the team has been able to play safely. Soccer has become a widely popular sport among the students this year, especially among the freshman, who make up half of the twenty-six players on the team. Sophomore Alison Giebler, an offensive player, discussed the team's stats and wellbeing in an interview. The soccer team won three games this season, and as Giebler said, "We won't give up, everyone is cheering and laughing and having a good time." After winning the title of state champions last year, the team was excited to be playing in a new division, and they hope for more victories in future seasons. Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, D.A. and other schools have taken the necessary precautions to ensure each participant's safety through extensive health check-ins and by wearing masks when not on the field. "It's been okay, everyone's totally fine with it, everyone's having a good time. It hasn't affected us like crazy," Giebler says.

For many, the continuation of the soccer season has been one more contributing factor towards the sense of normalcy that is returning to D.A. in this new school year. Dominican Academy is so proud of its accomplished student-athletes who represent the school community and talent. We look forward to cheering on the team again next year.

Along with soccer, the cross country season has resumed due to its similar low-contact, outdoor, socially distant aspects. With meets every weekend since October, in venues like Van Cortlandt Park and Staten Island, it has been a busy season for these athletes, who spend weeks preparing to compete. Their hard work and dedication has paid off. They have been running well both individually and as a team, often placing second or third altogether at various meets including the Hackshaw CHSAA Opener, NYCHSAA Champs on Halloween, and the CHSAA Intersectionals. When asked to comment about cross country this year, Ryan Torres, a sophomore runner, said that this team is "one of the most committed and hardworking teams I have been on."



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The running season has also adapted due to COVID-19. There are concrete safety measures in place and the runners are able to take off their masks while running, to ensure safety and efficiency while competing. Even though these cross country meets are significantly different from the large, social, day-long meets of previous years, D.A.'s spirit and effort is overwhelming, and we applaud the runners for being able to adapt to these uncertain circumstances. "The motivation that our team has is amazing, even in light of the stress of this year," Torres says. For the runners especially, the happening of the cross country season has brought back a familiar sense of school spirit and competition that we have seen so evidently in the past. We look forward to the spring track season when we will see our talented runners compete again.

It is no easy task to accomplish what our athletes have done this fall, and we acknowledge their efforts and courage while facing these circumstances with a positive attitude. We take pride in D.A.'s sports community, and it's encouraging to watch as they power through the many challenges that COVID-19 presents. The continuation of these fall sports has played a significant part in bringing back the sense of normalcy that we want so badly, and for this we cheer them on.



D.A. is striving for normalcy in other activities as well; Halloween is always a lively and celebratory day at D.A., as the students and faculty are given the opportunity to dress up and spend the day celebrating together. This year, Halloween was different than years past, but still a sight to behold. The students and faculty were encouraged to dress up on the two days leading up to Halloween, whichever day that grade happened to be attending in-person school, according to the new hybrid schedule. There was a wide variety of costumes and decorations, some chose to wear black and orange, while others dressed up as their favorite movie characters. The faculty similarly decided to display their take on Halloween, dressing up with patterned socks, witches hats, and fun masks. Senior Georgia Cropper commented on the holiday saying, "Even though, because of COVID, we had to be cautious and stay socially distant, we were able to keep the tradition of dressing up, celebrating, and doing fun activities with teachers in class." Despite the restrictions that the current pandemic places on our social activities, the D.A. community was nevertheless able to celebrate with the same enthusiasm as previous years. As Georgia mentioned, we

were able to enjoy time together just as we have every year, and it's reassuring to know that we have continued an enjoyable tradition despite the current health restrictions. This year's Halloween at D.A. was a great success, and one more thing that reminded us of our old community routine.



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This fall has been a successful adjustment to our new schedules and routines, but the continuation of old events, sports, and extracurriculars has restored some of the normalcy we crave in times like these. When certain aspects are beyond our control, we come together to make do with what we have: a united community, talented students, and a myriad of support. Through the hard work and effort of so many students, faculty, parents, and volunteers, the community of Dominican Academy has been brought together. We may be six feet apart, but spiritually we are closer than ever.

D.A. Clubs...Virtually | By Lauren Mlicko, '22

It seems like a lifetime ago when, back in March, the entire D.A. community was together celebrating Culture Day. At the time, we all knew we wouldn't be seeing each other again in person for some time, but none of us quite anticipated what was to come. On the other hand, it seems as if COVID-19 has made time elapse much faster than usual. How in the world has it already been eight months since this almost apocalyptic episode began?

Perhaps one of the most daunting experiences of this pandemic is that of entering a new school environment. Freshwoman Julia Garcia-Lascurain says her two most significant challenges are not being able to meet her teachers and classmates in person, and missing out on the quintessential 'high school experience.' Freshwoman Giselle Gelis expressed that one present challenge she faces is, like many of us, developing "effective study and homework habits during such unpredictable times." Luckily, just as they recognize their current difficulties, these freshwomen also remain excited to more fully immerse themselves in the D.A. community outside of class time. Garcia-Lascurain expressed in particular how she is "looking forward to the clubs as it is a way to get involved with other students who I could not meet otherwise because of the pandemic."

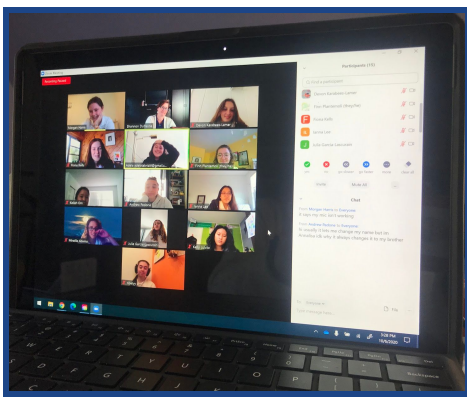
Speaking of club involvement, D.A.'s student-body centered clubs, namely Student Council, Students of Color Alliance (S.O.C.A.), Rainbow Connection, and Women's Empowerment, have been working to keep up D.A.'s spirit in the midst of so much uncertainty and unease. These clubs in particular have also remained proactive in light of current events in the U.S. over the past few months, especially with regards to race, identity, and prejudice in America. According to Student Council Co-Presidents Cameron Sullivan, '21 and Audrea Crowley, '21, "Student Council has been working to promote Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in the D.A. community along with S.O.C.A. and Women's Empowerment. We are staying active with regular meetings and have many plans for community building events in the future." Similarly, Sullivan adds that "Rainbow Connection will be staying active with virtual meetings and discussions about current events that affect the LGBTQ+ community."

In speaking to the President and Vice-President of Women's Empowerment, Gabriella Montalvo '21 and Ana Winston '22, respectively, I found this same message of both eagerness and responsibility. Women's Empowerment is a discussion based, intersectional feminist group, which this year will be taking on the discussion theme of Feminism in the Wake of the Black Lives Matter. As said by Montalvo, "The definition of feminism already implies intersectionality, but



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we really want to make that known.” Now more than ever, Women’s Empowerment is able to widen its reach over Zoom, as limited cafeteria availability for film viewings is no longer an issue. With this accessibility, says its leaders, comes an exciting sense of increased comfortability in talking about something as “nuanced” as social justice. Students seem to truly want to share their thoughts and experiences, and thus are able to find unique connections with others.



Similarly, Chess Club Co-President Morgan Harris, ‘21 is finding creative ways to use technology to her advantage. She says her club members “will be able to better [their] skills through engaging resources online,” such as “video platforms to watch matches and play online games with players of variant skill levels.” Evidently, there are still silver linings during these times.

In my discussion of these matters with Guidance Counselor and Director of Student Life, Miss Dee, it has become even more clear to me how she has been working particularly hard to facilitate D.A. 's club scene, whether it be by spearheading the Club Slideshow for D.A. students in place of the annual club fair, or by helping to organize monthly Community Days and Club Days to make things more consistent for everyone. I asked Miss Dee what advice she has for D.A. students, particularly new students, when it comes to maintaining a sense of community and involvement in this time of COVID-19. She emphasized the importance of quality over quantity, saying “the goal is to give to each club you belong to, [and] focus on the quality of time and effort you can put in.” She also noted that the next Club Meeting Day is scheduled for Thursday, December 17th.

“Students seem to truly want to share their thoughts and experiences, and thus are able to find unique connections with others.”

-Lauren Mlicko, ‘22

Finally, Miss Dee left me with the consolation that “There will be growing pains. No one’s done this COVID thing before, but things are starting to become a little more normal.” All things considered, the way D.A. has been able to prevail in the midst of so much adversity is truly remarkable, and it makes me so excited to see what D.A. clubs have in store this year.



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Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at D.A. | By Gabriella Montalvo, '21

When necessary conversations are difficult

2020 has staked its claim as the most seismic year many of us have experienced. Twin pandemics have demanded not only the attention of the global community, but also direct action on individual, local, state, and national levels. Spring and summer 2020 saw millions of protestors take to the streets, clad in face masks and shields, picket and cardboard signs in hand.

Coronavirus and racism have worked in tandem to reveal the structural cracks in our foundational systems. However, where the former has wreaked havoc for almost twelve months, the latter had grounded itself in the bedrock of American society some odd four hundred years ago and continues to express itself today. The magnitude of racism's history and influence makes confronting structural inequality seem an impossible feat. Though seemingly overwhelming, the process of deconstructing the deep roots of racism in our society and personal lives is within the grasp of every student, teacher, parent, and otherwise. The Dominican Academy community has committed itself to this process in its recent Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) initiative.

What is the DEI initiative? How should it support BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) members of the D.A. community? How will it foster healthy, albeit difficult conversation? To find out, I interviewed D.A.'s president Sr. Margaret Ormond, O.P., '60, and several D.A. seniors of color on their perspectives.

What is the DEI initiative? Simply put, Sr. Margaret characterizes the initiative as a process of unlearning, listening, and learning again. As the first International Coordinator of Dominican Sisters International (DSI), Sr. Margaret emphasizes the value of appreciating the richness of cultures unlike one's own as spiritually and socially transformative. On her travels, she remarks, "They opened wide my heart, made me aware that I am just one of the many brothers and sisters in this world, and that I must do what I can to be as peaceful, loving, and inclusive as possible." As a staunch believer in our interdependence as global citizens, Sr. Margaret recognizes that the pursuit of global justice must begin within the D.A. community. The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Initiative is D.A.'s first step in that pursuit.

What does this first step look like? A Spring 2019 appeal to the Board of Trustees by D.A.'s own Student Council and Students of Color Alliance (S.O.C.A.) called attention to the necessity of professional development dedicated to recognizing and deconstructing racism within educational spaces. Beginning at the start of the 2020-21 school year, Dominican Academy faculty and staff have attended and continue to attend monthly Teaching for Equity and Justice seminars by Facing History and Ourselves, an organization committed to confronting bigotry in and out of the classroom through studying pivotal moments in history. Seminar modules include the following: Cultivating a Brave Space for Social, Emotional, and Academic Development of Teachers; History, Race, and Educational Inequity; Developing Mindsets for Equity Based Work; Facing History in Ourselves and Culturally Responsive Teaching. In focusing first on professional development, the DEI initiative acknowledges the long-term impact faculty and staff have on shaping D.A. policies and practices against racism.



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Through the guidance of these seminars, Sr. Margaret anticipates a much more intentional Dominican Academy. She urges further implementation of Black history and literature into curricula, presentation of potential speakers from nearby colleges and universities, and decision-making by students, faculty, and staff of color, thus emphasizing the majority's responsibility to know and appreciate the cultures of minority groups.

How should the DEI initiative support BIPOC members of the D.A. community? Upon interviewing Sr. Margaret, I presented the following question: According to Admissions, 45% of the D.A. student body is of color. What action is D.A. taking to ensure these students feel supported and welcomed, emotionally and mentally? She replied, "Whatever we are doing is minimal compared to what we could be doing and should be doing." The DEI initiative catalyzes the "could" and "should" to which Sr. Margaret refers.

When asked how best to support them emotionally and mentally, the students of color interviewed reached a general consensus: if the D.A. community intends on ensuring its BIPOC students feel loved, valuable, and important, it must first listen to those students directly. Only in considering the concerns of BIPOC seriously can a community convey its basic respect and appreciation for those people. Through active listening, one student asserted, D.A. will create a comfortable and safe space for its students of color. What does it mean, then, to listen? Interviewees found the answer to that question in specifics; for example, several students communicated the value of a curriculum inclusive of perspectives of color. To see oneself in a lesson plan, whether that be through a Black author or indigenous art, is to see one's own potential and capacity. Another suggested the creation of coalitions for BIPOC students as a more concrete extension of D.A.'s Students of Color Alliance. Similar to Yale's *La Casa Cultural* or Boston College's *Black Student Forum*, such organizations would be available for open houses and school events, as well as accessible to students of color beyond weekly meetings as a space for self expression.

How will the DEI initiative foster healthy, albeit difficult conversation? To discern the initiative's role in fostering conversation, we must first ask why such conversation is difficult. The answer lies in the reality that in having participated in a society built by injustice, each of us has been either complicit in or victimized by structural injustice. Discomfort undoubtedly follows a reckoning of one's own role in racism, though growing is rarely a comfortable process. We must find comfort in the uncomfortable as we continue to learn, correct previous behaviors and ideas, and navigate the structures of white privilege.

"One student defined it as 'a salad, not a melting pot,' asserting that diversity is most valuable when separate groups can come together without forfeiting their own identities."

What does white privilege look like in a New York City Catholic school setting? One student described it as being able to see yourself in your teachers, classmates, and curriculum. What white populations take for granted is something our students of color reported they felt was missing the most: being seen. A healthy dialogue about race and inclusion cannot start without the majority recognizing its white privilege and validating the real need to feel seen in one's community. A lack of awareness of this privilege has detrimental effects; consider the microaggression. Columbia University's Dr. Derald Wing Sue defines microaggressions as "everyday verbal, nonverbal, and environmental slights, snubs, or insults, whether intentional or unintentional, which communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages to



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target persons based solely upon their marginalized group membership.” Regardless of how subtle or unintentional an underhanded comment or gesture may be, its effects and implications are felt strongly by BIPOC students. “At that moment I feel underestimated, like I’m not smart enough to be here. [Microaggressions] make it extremely difficult to learn,” said one student.

The surface level microaggression speaks to much deeper rooted biases in our culture and society. It is these biases which BIPOC have learned to be wary of since childhood, and have come to expect from predominantly white institutions (PWIs). When asked what is expected of NYC Catholic schools regarding efforts to combat racism and foster diversity, the students interviewed meekly responded, “not much.” They continued, explaining how students of color anticipate feeling isolated and tokenized by PWIs, regardless of where they are. Thus, it is the duty of the Dominican Academy community to far exceed such low expectations. Sr. Margaret addresses these low expectations, insisting that “once we recognize the beauty of the other, we cannot go back to our old ways.” She affirms that the unlearning of racist patterns encouraged by the DEI initiative will enable D.A. to continue in its progression forward. Let us hold ourselves to a higher standard, because we are capable of doing such.

The term “diversity,” charged with historical and social significance, takes on a new meaning in a Catholic school within the heart of New York City. One student defined it as “a salad, not a melting pot,” asserting that diversity is most valuable when separate groups can come together without forfeiting their own identities. D.A.’s DEI initiative, in its impetus to unlearn, listen, and learn again, seeks to shed light on the beauty of identity, as well as the beauty of a community united not despite various identities, but because of them. As President of a service-oriented school, Sr. Margaret acknowledges that care for others cannot begin without respect for ourselves and our intimate community. She remarks, “our goal is to fall in love with everyone we meet, that way we can see them as our brothers and sisters. Only when we see that, can we get to the real work.” The recently introduced Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion initiative urges the entirety of the D.A. community to reckon with the shameful history of racism in the United States, and to actively combat it with love for the other to create a Dominican Academy that “gets to the real work.”

A Wonderful Life | By Grace Marks, '21

Although it would be more normal to discuss a Christmas movie at the end of December, perhaps this can be forgiven in light of how *abnormal* life has been of late; if there was ever a time for Christmas cheer, it is now. When I think of Christmas, I think of Christmas movies, such as the classics *A Christmas Story* and *Elf*, or even the disputed *Die Hard* and *The Nightmare Before Christmas* (because are these even Christmas movies?). However, nothing captures the spirit of Christmas more than *It's a Wonderful Life*. This movie has themes not only of faith, love, and Christmas joy, but also of hope triumphing over despair, gaining the will to live, and persevering in times of trouble. It even touches on the struggles of the Great Depression, which has relevance to today’s unprecedented times, and the struggles of many modern families.



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In *It's a Wonderful Life*, an angel-in-training takes on the case of a man called George Bailey who has lost all hope and is considering suicide. This leads to a journey through his life. In his youth, George is so sensitive and willing to help others, that anyone watching the movie can't help but fall in love with his character. Does such a person even exist? George makes sacrifice after sacrifice for his family, often with a smile on his face. We see how happy he is as we follow him through his childhood and his first love. He gives up his dreams of traveling and getting out of his hometown because he feels called to stay and help the people he loves, but in the process he digs himself into a financial hole that, along with his crushed dreams, weighs him down into deep despair.

This movie then pulls a reverse *A Christmas Carol*, in which the angel (called because of the many prayers said about George by those who care for him) helps the hopeless hero to see all of the *good* that he has done for those he loves. His true calling was never to travel, it was to do exactly what he did, and be exactly who he was.

The message of this movie, while it might seem cheesy, is incredibly relevant to today, when the future seems more unclear than usual, and when depression rates are higher than they have ever been. Things happen that are unexpected, and that are not the way you wanted them to or the way you always thought they would. You, like George, might have an idea of how you will live all planned out. However, it is not the adherence to this plan that makes your life wonderful. The viewer can plainly see that George's life is beautifully lived because of his kindness. What makes life wonderful is what you do with the situation you are given; even when that situation is hard (like the Great Depression, or like COVID-19) there is something wonderful in the trying.

"...it is not the adherence to this plan that makes your life wonderful...What makes life wonderful is what you do with the situation you are given; even when that situation is hard..."

-Grace Marks, '21

Even when dealing with struggles ranging from concrete financial disaster to the more elusive—and therefore all the more sinister—mental health difficulties that are so prevalent in our world, our lives are wonderful; even when we cannot see how wonderful, it is likely that others can. As we approach one year since the start of the pandemic, we also approach the Christmas season. Hopefully, this will serve as a reminder to all that when we welcome the unexpected, in a similar way to Mary's welcoming of Jesus on Christmas, we make our lives just that much more wonderful. And of course, to quote *It's A Wonderful Life*, "no man is a failure who has friends."



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What is Past is Prologue: A Trip to the National Archives | By Ava Filocamo, '23

Quarantine and national lockdown really put a lid on a successful and lively social life. My nights and weekends were limited to family game nights, reading, and movies—lots of movies! My favorite by far was *Hamilton*. I had been listening to the music for years, and I was lucky enough to see the Broadway show in December, right before the pandemic hit.

After many long months of a national shutdown, life started returning to a new normal in phases, slowly but surely. The world seemed to be opening its arms to us again. My family decided to take a road trip to Washington, DC., and visit the National Archives and Records Administration. This is where several of the original documents that are the foundation of our nation are preserved. The Declaration of Independence and The Constitution were the documents that officially declared our independence from England and directed the creation of the new government. Without these valuable sources, the United States of America would not have existed. They were the first step into being a successful nation, and I was about to take a trip back in time. I became emotional even as I was just standing before the beautiful and majestic building; right behind the huge gilded doors was so much history!

I've learned about American history multiple times in school, discussing what these documents meant for the founding fathers. I was about to get a first-hand glimpse of these 200-year old documents! I was struck by the originality of what I was about to see -- so many times I saw photos in textbooks or replicas at gift shops, but these were the exact papers signed by these heroes of history. As we were led to the rotunda where the documents were displayed, I immediately noticed the walls. The walls were decorated with two paintings that were each 14 feet long, the size of a city bus! One painting represented the writing of the Declaration of Independence and the other showed the writing of the Constitution. Both paintings depicted the founding fathers discussing the future of the new country. The paintings conveyed hope, determination, and national pride. It was a clear story of what these men were trying to accomplish. The tour guide explained to us that the artist, Barry Faulkner, portrayed George Washington in a Roman setting, wearing regal white and gold clothing, including a long cape, as a way to fit the fledgling government into a deep historical tradition.

As we started to make our way around the exhibits, the first document we saw was the Declaration of Independence. The document was enclosed in an imposing and very expensive gold case. The document was extremely faded so we couldn't read much at all. After it was first written, the document traveled throughout the states to spread the news, often hung prominently in shop windows. The sun's light damaged the ink and the





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parchment. But we could make out many of the names signed at the bottom, including John Hancock's very large signature.

I then eagerly moved on to the Constitution of the United States of America. Just like the Declaration of Independence and the Bill of Rights, it was faded and difficult to decipher. This document is four pages long! I was able to clearly see the first line of the Preamble, which I learned about so many times in history classes -- "We the people." For so long it was just a phrase I memorized, but now it was as real to me as the marble that surrounded it. "We the people" is the voice of our democracy, and it was as though I was hearing it for the first time. It rang out and echoed against the stone walls of the hall -- I got goosebumps as the gravity of those words weighed on me. As I made it to the last page with the many signatures of our founding fathers, my view settled on the New York signatures. Right there, a few feet away from me, was Alexander Hamilton's signature. After so many years of listening to Lin Manuel Miranda's take on Hamilton's life, and singing along to the lyrics of the songs written about Hamilton and his struggle to build our nation, I saw history written in his own hand. It was as though the ghosts of history came to life before me that day—between the original documents, fading ink, imposing buildings, and regal paintings, I understood for the first time that the government we have now was built by real people eager for change.

As I stood there I was moved by the parallels between the radical fight for independence at our founding, and the struggles today for equality and freedom from racial injustice. They are not too dissimilar a fight, and I couldn't help but wonder what documents could be in the Archives 200 years from now, that will have made our nation even stronger. Alexander Hamilton may have set the stage, but the show isn't over, and I can't wait to witness the next act.

Campus Ministry Keeps Pace During COVID-19 | By Isabella Quatela, '21

With the start of a new school year comes the start of clubs at D.A. While we have seen many changes to our school life, we have thankfully been able to keep the spirit of clubs alive, one of those being Campus Ministry. I am especially thankful about this opportunity being one of the Co-Presidents of this club. This year, our first quarter project was bound to look different than previous years, but the other board members and I were excited nonetheless. With help from our moderator, Ms. McCann, we were able to organize a school community-wide 5k in association with the International Samaritan Foundation. The International Samaritan 5k works to ease the newfound struggles of students around the world during these unprecedented times. With new safety precautions and social distancing rules, many students are now forced to participate in remote learning. While remote learning seems feasible, not all students around the world have the technology needed to take part in this new learning style. The goal of the 5k was to raise money to purchase devices, whether it be a laptop or tablet, for students in need, globally. After spreading the word via email, and reaching out to our newly appointed grade representatives, we accumulated a group of D.A. girls and faculty to participate in the 5k. We were pleasantly surprised to see the number of participants rising each day. As Co-President, I was touched



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to see how many of my peers were willing to step up and participate. As the weekend of October 24 approached, our grade reps worked tirelessly, communicating with their classmates, sending out reminders, and inspiring people to sign up. Our new freshman grade reps, Lucia and Giselle Gelis, took their job a step further when they organized a freshman meet-up in the city in order to walk the 5k together.

“If you have the right leadership in any situation, you can make a difference.”

- Lucia Gelis, '24

When asked what inspired them to do this, Lucia and Giselle said that it was a good way to get to know their classmates, who they were not able to become acquainted with due to the hybrid learning schedule. They also were eager to make this a fun event, instead of making it seem like a chore. This was not just a walk; it was a “fun group experience,” said Lucia and Giselle. They met at D.A., walked down the Museum Mile, stopped to get snacks along the way, and... just were able to talk to new friends. The two said that some girls were having such a good time, they ended up staying longer than they initially intended. When asked what inspired them to organize this event and participate in Campus Ministry, the girls spoke about their upbringing and their love for serving the community. They also spoke about their passion for social justice and their excitement for future service events Campus Ministry will hold. As we were closing up our conversation on serving our community, Lucia said “If you have the right leadership in any situation, you can make a difference,” which thoroughly represents the morals we uphold not only in Campus Ministry, but at D.A. We cannot wait to see what Lucia, Giselle, and our other members bring to the table this year.

Student Poll: D.A. Quarantine Activities | By Shaun Smith, '21

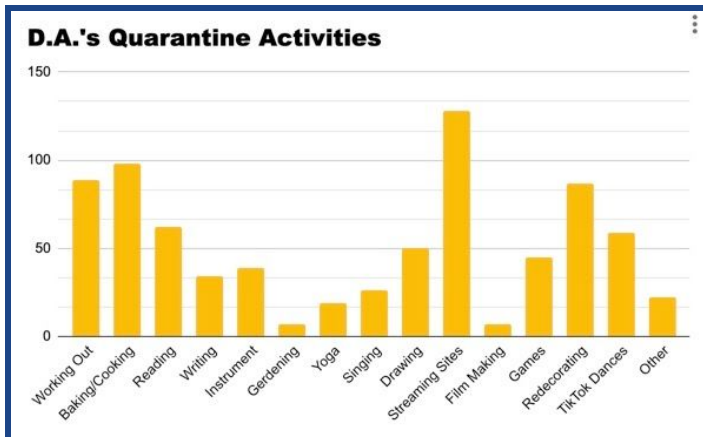
March 12th is widely regarded by New Yorkers as the last day of regular life. It is the last day we were in D.A. before the building closed, and shortly after, the rest of the city followed. Most of us expected to be home for two weeks—14 days—and then see our lives return to normal. Nobody expected the nine month lockdown that ensued.

At this point, while wearing masks to see your friends and getting your temperature checked every time you walk into a building is routine, it may be hard to imagine what exactly we did to pass the time during the worst of New York's lockdown, namely March through May (before NYC entered reopening phases). With the chaos of this year, things like the 7 P.M. clap for healthcare workers, the nationwide toilet paper shortage, the whipped coffee frenzy, and the “nature is healing” memes may have slipped your mind, but they were only a few short months ago. My family started a weekly tradition of Friday “Happy Hour” to finish off our long, stressful weeks. After our online classes ended, my sister and I would make homemade focaccia bread and mocktails, and my family would sit on our front porch—bundled in blankets,



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hats, scarves, and winter coats while it was still cold out—munching on breads and cheeses and sipping our drinks. I thought it would be interesting to take a look at how the D.A. community spent their time at home.



I recently shared a poll with the student body as well as the administration to gather information about how *you* all passed time. The results confirmed my suspicions that in many ways, we all did the same things while stuck at home. 98 of the 144 respondents (68%) shared that they got into baking and cooking in their free time and of them, at least 78 claimed they attempted at least one type of bread. In addition, over half of the D.A. community, including myself, also confessed to trying the whipped coffee trend. Other popular activities included working out, learning instruments (one person even started a band), reading and writing, home redecorating, playing

board games and card games, and of course, learning new TikTok dances. A significant bunch told me that they took up sewing, embroidery, knitting, and similar activities and one person even took up hunting and fishing. A whopping 38% of students dyed their hair—around 14% went for an unnatural color. I myself attempted to dye my hair blue with my 12 year old sister in the first month, but after a week it turned into a dirty shade of green. Only 44 respondents said they consistently took daily walks, but 74 others said they took them occasionally. Only 12 people said that they got dressed every day while the rest admitted to changing from pajamas to sweatpants or not getting dressed at all.

128 people (89%) spent a significant amount of time on streaming sites, and of those, nearly 40% said that they gave into the absolute chaos that was *Tiger King*. *Outer Banks* and *Grey's Anatomy* were tied for the second place title of most popular series to binge-watch, closely followed by *Avatar: The Last Airbender*, *Gossip Girl*, and *Criminal Minds*. A number of respondents shared that they got into anime and a few even said they began to learn Japanese.

While quarantine was a trying time for everyone, a good amount of people found it relevant to mention the way being stuck at home put things into perspective. Some connected with old friends, others felt a deeper appreciation for nature or got closer with their siblings. Longing for normalcy seems to be an ongoing battle, especially with recent re-spiking of cases throughout the state, but it is important that we all continue to support each other and keep each other safe and remember—as at least 87% agree—Carol Baskin killed her husband.



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RBG: What Her Story Means to My Generation | By Damaris Lindsay, '23

"I ask no favor for my sex, all I ask of our brethren is that they take their feet off our necks." A statement made by abolitionist Sarah Grimke back in the 1800s, and a personal motto for what women's rights activist Ruth Bader Ginsburg believed in and fought for. Notable for being the second woman to hold a position on the U.S. Supreme Court, Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg was a little woman with a strong voice that fought for equality for women and minorities across the nation.

Being a native New Yorker, Ruth Bader Ginsburg was born as Joan Ruth Bader and raised in Brooklyn, where she attended James Madison High School. When she was 17, her mother died from cancer the night before her high school graduation. This event impacted how she led her life in later years.

After high school, Ginsburg attended the male-dominated Cornell University. During her time there, Ruth met the love of her life, Marty Ginsburg. Marty and Ruth were often described as opposites: Marty was very outgoing, while Ruth was very quiet and kept to herself. Despite their differences, their relationship worked. At the end of college, Marty and Ruth were married, and they would remain married for over 50 years.

After Cornell, Ruth went to Harvard Law School to get her law degree. Ginsburg was one out of nine women in a class of over 500 men. In her second year at Harvard, Ginsburg made the *Harvard Law Review* which spotlights the top 25 law students of the class. It was this accomplishment that made some people realize that Ruth Bader Ginsburg was truly special.

Marty soon got a job in New York, so Ruth transferred to Columbia University. After she finished her studies, not a single law firm in New York would employ her. Ginsburg later got a job as a professor at Rutgers University. In the 70s, the women's rights movement was starting to gain attention, and Ginsburg started to work on gender-discrimination cases. One particular case that was very important to her career was *Moritz v. Commissioner*, which was the very first gender-discrimination case she ever worked on. The first case she worked on that ever made it to the Supreme Court was *Frontiero v. Richardson*.

The next major case that Ginsburg worked on was *Weinberger v. Wiesenfeld*. RBG often took on cases in which men were being discriminated against to show that gender-based discrimination can hurt everyone. Ginsburg won both *Frontiero v. Richardson* and *Weinberger v. Wiesenfeld* and she worked on many different cases that went forward to the Supreme Court such as *Califano v. Goldfarb* and *Edwards v. Healy*. Ruth Bader Ginsburg won five out of the six cases that went before the Supreme Court. Because of all her great work, Ginsburg was promoted to the D.C. U.S. Court of Appeals after President Jimmy Carter noticed that it had little diversity. RBG soon came to be a force to be reckoned with.



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On June 14, 1993, President Bill Clinton nominated Ruth Bader Ginsburg to fill an open seat on the Supreme Court. During her hearing, she spoke at length about her ideals including abortion rights. Although not all people agreed with her views, Ruth Bader Ginsburg was confirmed to the Supreme Court, 96 - 3.

At the beginning of her time on the Supreme Court, RBG was not as notorious for being a dissenting opinion as she is currently, joining the majority on cases like the *United States v. Virginia*. The start of Justice Ginsburg's infamous dissents was in 2000 with *Bush v. Gore*.

In 2010, Marty passed away from cancer only a few days after his and Ruth's fifty-sixth anniversary. Soon after Marty's death, Ruth started to rise more in the media following her infamous dissenting opinion on the case of *Shelby County v. Holder*. People all over America started to see Ruth Bader Ginsburg as an icon, with the nickname "Notorious RBG" becoming popular.

After surviving two previous battles with cancer, on September 18, 2020, Ruth Bader Ginsburg died of pancreatic cancer. This news took a huge toll on all of America. People were stunned by the news that this great American hero and pioneer of women's rights was gone.

***"Dominican Academy's motto is 'Where smart girls become intelligent women' and Ruth Bader Ginsburg is a perfect model of the 'intelligent woman' that we all aspire to be."
-Damaris Lindsay, '23***

Many young women who looked up to her were saddened with the news of her departure. It certainly took a toll on students here at D.A. I sent out a poll asking all of the Freshmen and Sophomores, "If you could describe what Ruth Bader Ginsburg's life means to you in one or two words, what would it be?" The most popular word used when associated with Ruth Bader Ginsburg was "inspirational." As a woman from New York, Ruth Bader Ginsburg is an inspiration to many young girls, especially D.A. students, for what we as women can do to help improve our society. Dominican Academy's motto is "Where smart girls become intelligent women" and Ruth Bader Ginsburg is a perfect model of the "intelligent woman" that we all aspire to be. It's important to note that no matter what your political beliefs are, we can all come together and acknowledge the fact that Ruth Bader Ginsburg was revolutionary and she did plenty for the greater good of American citizens.

Presidential Election Poll | By Alessia Coluccio, '22

The 2020 Presidential Election has been the centerpiece of American news throughout the past couple of months. Accordingly, many D.A. students have kept up to date with the progress of the election and the major issues that surround it. By tuning into debates and press conferences, the D.A. student body has developed their own political opinions of



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which candidate is more qualified to lead America towards a better future over the next four years. A poll was conducted to see who the student body would vote into office if they were eligible to vote in this election. Based on a poll that 100 D.A. students participated in, 95% voted for Joe Biden and 5% voted for Donald Trump. Additionally, these students were asked which highly debated issues surrounding the election- and politics in general-they found most important when making this decision. The top issue was the handling of COVID-19, with 71% of the participants basing their decision on the candidate's plan to control the spread of this fatal virus. Furthermore, racial and ethnic inequality ranked 2nd in importance with 69% voting for it, and women's rights ranked 3rd in importance with 67% of participants voting for it. Finally, when asked if they had any concerns about there being a peaceful transition of power due to the fact that President Trump has yet to concede, 18% said no and 82% said yes. This gives a general idea of the political views of current D.A. students.

Pre-AP Art History | By Kate Izzo, '22

As a junior, I have wonderful opportunities for electives this year. My favorite is Pre-AP Art History with Mrs. Salfeld. It is challenging, but so rewarding.

I started thinking about taking Art History when I was in eighth grade and I came into D.A. for my scholarship exam. My interviewer was none other than Mrs. Salfeld herself. She was so welcoming and she noticed and appreciated the fact that I matched my star earrings to my star blouse (a detail I was very proud of myself for putting together). Before I left, she told me that she taught Art History and recommended that I take the class when I was a junior. Since that day at the scholarship test, I could not wait to take Art History as soon as possible. When I found out I was eligible for Pre-AP Art History last year, I jumped at the chance to take it and have not looked back.

"I love learning about history, especially through art. It's such a great tool for understanding the perspective of people who lived in those times and how they viewed themselves and the world they lived in."

-Kate Izzo, '22

Pre-AP Art History is one of the best classes I have ever taken. Mrs. Salfeld is a fantastic teacher and she makes sure that the course is engaging and interesting. She is truly passionate about art history and inspires me to learn as much as I can about each piece we study. My favorite era we have studied so far is Hellenistic Greece. The friezes of intricate and animated scenes are stunning and the complicated positions of the figures show off the truly masterful sculpting of the Greeks. Hellenistic art shows emotion and feeling rarely expressed in art before then. I love learning about history, especially through art. It's such a great tool for understanding the perspective of people who lived in those times and how they viewed themselves and the world they lived in.



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I love AP Art History not only for the wonderful teacher and the riveting curriculum, but also the way the course challenges me. My classmates and I come prepared to each class with notes on the art pieces we will discuss that day. It is a lot of work to do and it can get overwhelming, but I love doing it. The Khan Academy videos on our pieces can be long, but they have so much valuable information and they're extremely fascinating. As much as I love studying the art itself and the traditional interpretations of it, I'm also interested in finding new interpretations for art. This class is incredibly rewarding in every way, and even though it can be a lot of work, I have yet to regret taking it.

Pre-AP Art History is an incredibly valuable class for the in-depth understanding of art and the history it is a part of. There could not be a better teacher for this class than Ms. Salfeld. She knows almost everything there is to know about art history and she makes her class such a welcoming space for new ideas and interpretations of works that are centuries old. Before taking this class, I never felt particularly connected to art, despite my love for it. However, through the past few months, I have developed a strong connection and a much deeper appreciation for art and the way humans have used it to express emotion and history for hundreds of thousands of years.

Day in the Life with a Remote and Hybrid Student | By Alessia Coluccio, '22

With COVID-19 spiking across the U.S., schools are continuing to take precautions. Many schools nationwide have utilized a hybrid learning model, where students attend in-person classes for a certain amount of days per week, and the remaining days they partake in remote learning. As you all know, Dominican Academy is currently using this model, while maintaining the option of remaining fully remote. D.A.'s administration has put an extensive amount of time and thought into the creation of this hybrid model in an effort to keep our school community safe.

Tess Chernauskas, a junior at D.A., is currently taking part in the hybrid learning model. Like most hybrid juniors, she attends school in-person 2 days a week and attends Zoom classes remotely 3 days a week. In school, desks are spread 6 feet apart, and typically the Auditorium, Cafeteria, and Multi-Purpose rooms are used to host classes since they are the most spacious. Tess's favorite day of the week, class-wise, is Thursday because she is able to attend her favorite class, Christian Ethics, in-person that day.



Tess believes there are both pros and cons to the hybrid learning model. She says that the experience of alternating online and in-person classes has made her a more well-rounded student, and has taught her to adapt quickly to a changing learning environment. As a result, she has become better at time management and organization: skills, she states, are required if one hopes to be successful while attending school under hybrid scheduling. Tess feels that the time management skills she has acquired over the past couple of months will allow her to be even better at staying on top of her work if we resume a fully in-person



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schedule. Additionally, Tess emphasizes how grateful she is that the hybrid model allows her to attend some class in person because it is easier for her to focus on her classes and work in a school environment rather than her bedroom. On the other hand, Tess says that due dates and submitting homework is more confusing when on a hybrid schedule because of the duality of the in-person and online classes. One thing she misses the most about regular learning is having direct and constant interaction with friends and teachers, and being able to utilize the opportunity of being in Manhattan for school every day.

Lauren Mlicko, another junior at D.A., chose to continue with the fully remote learning model. Lauren loves her routine. She wakes up around 7:30 in the morning, eats breakfast, and readies herself before starting her first classes at 8:30 A.M. every morning. After school, she tries to maintain normalcy and interact with others by partaking in clubs and other extracurricular activities, such as virtual ballet and piano lessons. When she has extra time, she watches British and Scottish murder mysteries and soap operas: her favorite types of TV shows.

Lauren explained how talking to others in break-out rooms or on FaceTime for group projects gives her a sense of normalcy and the ability to have personal interactions with people. Like Tess, her favorite day of the week, class-wise, is Thursday, but for her, it is because classes end at noon, leaving the whole day ahead of her to catch up on work or relax. Additionally, she loves Fridays because of the feeling of accomplishment she receives after finishing the week's worth of classes and work.

One practical pro to remote learning—according to Lauren—is not having to commute, which at times can be draining. Additionally, Lauren explains how remote learning and Zoom, in general, has given her more time to focus on social relationships with her friends. In contrast, she misses the school environment and not having her classmates physically around to help each other in class, especially during harder lessons. She also misses seeing her teachers in person, although she does compliment the effort teachers put in at the beginning of the school year to get to know the students better. Lauren states that technical issues have been a continuous issue for remote students on days when their classmates are in-person. She describes how audio cuts in and out of being clear and being too low to understand. Lauren says the problem is worse when it comes to hearing other students, which can be frustrating since she wants to hear what her classmates have to contribute to discussions. Despite this, she says the teachers have been accommodating and continuously checking-in to make sure remote students don't miss anything. Lauren concludes that if she had the option to choose again, she would still choose remote learning over hybrid learning, especially as COVID-19 case numbers are increasing across the city.

Lauren is curious about how Zoom and other remote learning features will be incorporated into schooling after the threat of COVID-19 has subsided. Only time will tell. For now, the remote and hybrid learning models have both been working efficiently to give D.A. students great educational experiences while still maintaining everyone's safety.