



a letter from the editors...

Welcome to the last edition of the Sisterhood Stream for the 2020 to 2021 school year! We can't believe how fast time has gone. It feels like just yesterday we were trying up the first edition and now we're officially on summer break! Now, of course, we love the Stream, but secretly, we've been restlessly counting down the days until summer break, as you surely have been too. It's finally time to get excited for sunny weather, trips to the beach, and a nice, relaxing, long break! This year has been a whirlwind that took us all by surprise so enjoy every second of your time off. With that being said, we have the perfect issue below to send you on your way to a summer jam packed with fun.

But we can't forget, May and June are both extremely important months in our world: Asian Pacific Islander Month, Mental Health Awareness Month, and Pride Month. So while you're day-dreaming about cool pools and tanned skin, we hope you'll take the time to read what we have in store and even additional articles online. From the very bottom of our hearts, thank you for supporting us this year as we got on our feet and we can't wait to see you again soon. Well... not too soon; September can wait for just a little bit.

much love,
Lily Lemauro
and *Amani Malickel* **1**

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**Enjoy your summer
break!**

The opinions included in this publication are original and our own.
They do not reflect the opinions and/or position of
Our Lady of Mercy Academy.



Dear
Vanessa
Villager,

Click here to
ask Vanessa
a question!

Dear Vanessa,

I have a friend who is in a really bad place right now. I have done my best to be a good friend to her and provide her with advice, and any form of support she could possibly need, but she doesn't want the help. I know she needs it, but I feel the more I try to help the more mad she gets at me. But then if I don't have any advice for her she gets even more upset. There's no middle ground! If I help, she's mad and if I don't, she's sad. What should I do?? Love, Out of Ideas

Dear Out of Ideas,

I totally understand the struggle with wanting to be there for your friend, but they do not want the help. Even if you know she needs you there for her and gets mad when you try to help her continue to be there for her. The best things you can do/say is say how appreciative you are of her presence, and how you are always there for her no matter what. Instead of addressing the problem/bad place that she is in right now, talk about what you're doing the next day or just normal things you would talk about prior to when she was in a better place. This will make her feel like if she is ready to about how she is doing she will. Despite how much you want to help her through this, sometimes it is better to just be there!

Dear Vanessa,

This weekend, my friend, let's call her "Tammy" shared some pretty big news with me, and I'm not sure what to do.

We were both invited to a graduation party. And per usual, while getting dressed and on our way, we were laughing, singing at the top of our lungs to every song that came on the radio, and just really enjoying each other's company. I felt great... and looked even better. And she too was her cheerful, funny self. But that quickly changed when "Angelica" entered the party. Tammy's face became flush, her palms sweaty, she could not find her words, and was quite frankly, a mess. It was so weird and embarrassing. So much so, that we left the party early and headed for home. When I initially asked her what was wrong, she of course said nothing, but later on in the evening admitted that she was attracted to "Angelica"... as more than a friend. She said she did not want to pursue anything with her but was starting to find girls increasingly more attracted and is struggling to put a title on things, her sexuality. Is she a lesbian? Is she not? Heck, I do not know, and honestly, I do not know that I care. Either way, this is unfamiliar territory for me, and I want to support my friend? What should I do? From, Ally

Dear Ally,

Good for you! Wanting to be supportive of your friend, despite not understanding what she is going through, feeling, etc. takes a lot of courage and maturity. The reality is that she needs you right now, as she sorts things out, for herself...more than ever. And as her friend and ally, LOVE HER! Love her through all her insecurities, doubt, and pain, remembering that she is who she has always been, your friend. With all her quirks, kind heart, and bubbly personality. But too, be honest. It is important to work through your feelings and come to terms with them in an honest way, acknowledging you are not an expert, asking her what is important to her, seeking resources to better understand the realities of being an LGBTQ+ individual so that you can be truly informed and supportive. Also, reassure her that you still care for and respect her as much as you ever have or more. Lastly, confront discrimination when you see it happening. Say something. Every time you make it clear that you will not tolerate homophobia and transphobia in your life, you point out that hate is abnormal and unacceptable. You may change minds, or you may just make someone in the room who is not out feel a little bit safer. Either way, it is appreciated.

Health & Wellness

Mental Health Awareness Month

The purpose of Mental Health Awareness Month is to raise awareness and educate the public about mental illnesses. Since 1949, it has been recognized in May in the United States. It is a very important month because there are several people who suffer from mental illnesses. As a society, we need to start normalizing mental illness and provide support to those who suffer. Many people are scared to speak up and find help due to the fear that they will be judged. It is important to make these people aware that it is okay to seek help and that is what they should do. Overall, we need to educate people and take this topic very seriously.

Here are some options to help with your mental health!

A Simple Yoga Routine...

[Sun Salutation Flow for Beginners](#)

[Yoga Meditation](#)

[10 min Flexibility Full Body Yoga Flow](#)



Affirmations

Visualize yourself as you want to be. When you start to see who you want to be throughout your life, your mind becomes a powerful focus tool. It uses the visualization as a command and gives you drive to make it happen!

Affirm yourself. Many think that affirmations can be pointless but, they “can help you to challenge and overcome self-sabotaging and negative thoughts. When you repeat them often and believe in them, you can start to make positive changes.” Your mind is the strongest part of your body, if you consistently feed it with negative thoughts, your reality will become gloomy. To help prevent this, say some of the following affirmations as much as possible to watch your self-esteem and happiness soar.

1. Today, I am brimming with energy and overflowing with joy.
2. My body is healthy; my mind is brilliant; my soul is tranquil.
3. I am superior to negative thoughts and low actions.
4. I have been given endless talents which I begin to utilize today.
5. I forgive those who have harmed me in my past and peacefully detach from them.
6. A river of compassion washes away my anger and replaces it with love.

SPORTS

Golf: Golf may have not competed in any matches, but they ended the season with 15 participants. They were able to play on a course and golf 9 holes for the first time the whole season, and have a high chance of finally becoming a varsity sport here at OLMMA next year.

Lacrosse: Lacrosse has had a very competitive schedule, but they don't let that stop their evergrowing spirit on the field. They recently won at St. Elizabeth for a 1st round state playoff game, and are heading to the second round. We wish them the best of luck!

Softball: Softball has had a very good season with 15 wins! Hopefully, they will continue their winning streak when they host Wildwood Catholic this week in the first round of the State Tournament. Good luck girls and great season!

Track: Track has had a great season, and has only continued to improve as the season went on. They have been led by Nina Ceccanecchio and will run in the State meet on 6/11-12. You got this!

Crew: Crew has completed their season with unforgettable victories. Not only this, but the duo Lexi Kazan and Hailea Anderson won a bronze medal in their final race! Great season girls!



ASIAN HATE

by: Bree Volpe

During this past year, a lot has changed. Not just about COVID, but about racial differences; more specifically, Black Lives Matter and the Asian Hate Movement. However, not a lot of people knew about the Asian Hate Movement. This past year, people have started to notice more and more about the hateful crimes being committed against Asian Americans, or more specifically about the 8 Asian-American people shot and killed in Atlanta, Georgia which sparked the increase of knowledge about the movement.

It's odd how nobody ever hears about Asian hate on the News, but it's simply because the News declares these actions not a hate crime since the perpetrators of these crimes made no such declaration against the race. This last year, however, there has been a surge in these crimes, more specifically, because of COVID which originated from China. The people who commit these crimes have been reportedly stated to react by the racist reaction due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. These anti-Asian crimes increased by 149% in 2020 in some of America's largest cities, and some people say it is because they are blamed for the spread of the virus.

At the start of the Pandemic, the FBI even warned the government and the people to expect a surge in Asian-related hate crimes. During Biden's first week of Office, he signed COVID-19 Hate Crimes Act into law in an effort to address the rising rate of these attacks. This bill allows an Official at the US Justice Department to examine reviews of violence and hate crimes connected to COVID-19. This bill also provides grants for states and local governments to improve their reporting systems in hopes to prevent Anti-Asian Attacks. Not only this but other programs like AAPI are increasing their range in hopes of people noticing the hate crimes toward people of Asian descent, and to help people report these crimes to help prevent them from ever happening again. These actions against any race are cruel and wrong, but the United States is coming together to hopefully finalize an end to all the hate once and for all.



SENIORS

What's the best thing earning Valedictorian has taught you?

"Earning the honor of valedictorian required hard work throughout my high school years, but the experience was definitely worth it because I have learned that the effort placed into one's education influences the outcome of it. A student has to have the motivation to succeed even if it means adding more to the workload. At the moment, being committed to hard work seems tedious. However, that commitment pays off when students discover that they have learned more about the world around them. To those who are reading this, you are awesome, and you are much more capable than you think you are."

-Chloe Abo



Do you have any advice for OLMA students?

"The best advice I can give to OLMA students is to take advantage of every opportunity! Sometimes it may seem a little scary, but it'll all be worth it in the end. The best way to grow and progress is to put yourself in an uncomfortable situation in order for you to learn and grow from it. I remember one of the first times I was asked to speak at an event, I looked like a deer in headlights, pale in the face, sweaty palms, but I looked Mrs. Coyle in the eyes and said 'Yes!' Even though I was a nervous wreck, I still went up there and gave one of my best speeches. I cannot stress how important these opportunities are! As you are conquering these opportunities, remember to stay true to yourself. Being yourself will allow you to do so much more. Cherish your time at OLMA because trust me when I say, it will go by quickly! Stay focused! Study hard! And don't be afraid to fail because that's where you will find success."

-Maria Pia DiFranco



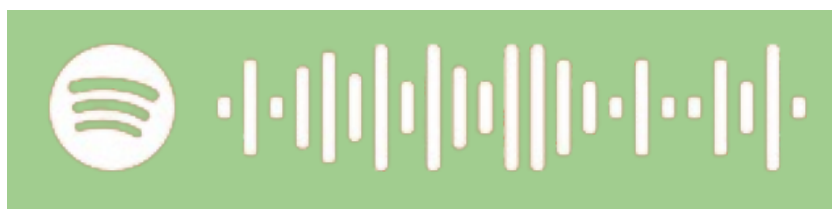
On Friday, May 14th, the class of 2021 stepped through the school doors as students for the final time. While it was bittersweet to hear Liv, MP, and Ani sign off for the last time on the morning announcements, we can not help but be excited for the future of ALL of these girls! The girls spent the day giving farewell hugs to the impactful OLMA staff, and getting their shirts signed by their peers. To top it all off, they were surprised with a walk through the school, where all of the students were able to cheer them on. It ended out front, where Mr. Softee was waiting to reward them! On Monday the 17th, we saw their bright faces again as they set up their cars with college banners, pictures, and their personalized caps for graduation! Around 6pm, over 100 cars passed through the line, honking their horns, playing music, and overall celebrating the hard work these girls have put in for the last four years. They ended the evening enjoying their senior sunset and spending a few hours together. While it is difficult to say farewell to these girls, we are all so proud of them! As they gear up for Graduation, we can not wait to officially congratulate them and all they have done in their time here. Congratulations 2021! You made it and we are so proud!

summertime oldies



Of course, for our final playlist of the year, we had to fit the summer vibe! Now, we know you all probably have your own Spotify playlist created with all your favorite summer songs so we decided to put a little twist on the idea. If you click the link or scan the code, you'll get a brand new summertime playlist consisting of songs all from the 50s to the 80s. Take a listen and it may surprise you how fun the oldies music can be!

**click or scan
here to listen!**



MUSIC MINUTE

Everyone is talking about Olivia Rodrigo's new album "SOUR". The album features 11 songs including her hit singles "drivers license", "deja vu", and "good 4 u." The most popular song on the album, "drivers license", was spotted #1 on the Billboard Hot 100 chart in its first week of availability. She continues breaking records with her songs holding 8 spots on the Billboard Top 10 list officially beating Taylor Swift as the only female artist to have taken hold of that many slots! Rodrigo, being only 18, is impressing everyone with her amazing pipes and beautiful lyrics.
By: Samantha Bottino





Summer Bucket List

- go to the beach
- have a sleepover
- start a new hobby
- have a sleepover on a trampoline
- watch a movie outside
- make a new friend
- watch the sunrise
- watch the sunset
- have a dance party in the rain
- go hiking
- stargaze
- go to an amusement park
- have a water balloon fight
- go fruit picking
- go on the boardwalk at night
- start a journal
- have a pizza party
- go to an amusement park
- go thrifting
- enter a contest
- go to a festival
- have a picnic
- go-karting
- go paddleboarding
- paint twister
- draw with sidewalk chalk
- read a book
- go to a barbeque
- make smores
- go thrifting
- play mini-golf

REVIEWS AND RECOMMENDATIONS



Goodreads

Recommended by: Amani Malickel

Need a good way to organize your reads? Check out Goodreads! (knee-slapper) It's like the Pinterest for books. You can organize your TBR, what you've already read, rate books, connect with friends, set goals, and more!



You In Five Acts by: Una LaMarche

Recommended by: Lily Lemauro

A love letter to the arts, a good cry, a heartbreaking romance. That is exactly what I got out of reading *You In Five Acts*. Now this book may be a tad bit too sad for summer but, if you're ever in the mood for a tear-jerker, this is definitely an amazing pick! *You in Five Acts* alternates between the point of views of five best friends in a school of the arts in New York and each one has their own "you" that their act revolves around. But, the story isn't exactly what you may think as each new act fits like a puzzle piece into the tragic finale.



Soul Surfer by: Bethany Hamilton

Recommended by: Delaney Shur

Need a good summer read? *Soul Surfer* is a must-read tale of strength, bravery, and pursuing what you love to do, despite challenges. This biography tells the story of Bethany Hamilton and how she overcame the loss of her arm to a shark in order to get back to doing what she loves: surfing. If you enjoy the book, be sure to check out the movie adaptation of the novel, *Soul Surfer* (2011).



Stainless Steel Water Bottle

Recommended by: Ayla Gibson

In the summer, I love going to the beach but I don't love warm water. Ever since I discovered stainless steel water bottles, I've always had a cold sip of water on hand! Plus they are reusable! My favorite brand is Hydro Flask but there are so many more great brands like Takeya, Yeti, Thermos, and more.



New Girl

Recommended by: Lily Lemauro

This Netflix series is the perfect summer binge watch! With a total of seven seasons, *New Girl* is witty, sarcastic, quick paced, and was always able to make me laugh. It's a fun, easy to watch show, great for anyone who has loved *Friends* or *The Office*.



La Colombe Draft Lattes

Recommended: Bianca Valecce

La Colombe Draft Lattes are the perfect summer drink. They are so good and perfect for when you are in a rush. If you are a coffee drinker, I definitely recommend them. You can find them at stores like Shoprite and target. They are a little on the expensive side, but they are worth it! My favorites are caramel and vanilla.



be the
light!
a year in recap



contact us!



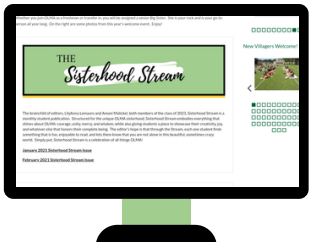
sisterhoodstream@olmanj.org

Send us anything you'd like, such as a piece you've written, the artwork you've created, you playing a sport, or anything else that comes to mind; we want to see it all!



the Stream Form:

Help wanted! Please, fill out this form and contribute your voice to the Stream. From playlist ideas, questions for Vanessa, Be the Light quotes, feedback, and more, this form helps us to make the Stream even more student oriented. Click the Forms icon to fill it out.



Website:

Check out all of our previous editions on the OLMA website!

<https://www.olmanj.org/student-life/sisterhood>



Staff Members:

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You have reached the end of our fifth edition of the *Sisterhood Stream*! Thank you for reading!