

THE HIGHLAND FLING

Northern Highlands Regional High School | 298 Hillside Avenue, Allendale NJ 07401 | Volume 58, Issue 03 | November 2022



Competitors, including Assistant Principal Tony LaRocca, facing off in the corn-hole tournament following the Trunk-or-Treat.

Photo Courtesy of @nh_deca on Instagram

THE TEACHER SHORTAGE

More teachers
leave the
profession
nationwide

Michael Reifman '23

Over the past few years, there has been a decline in the number of teachers and substitutes coming into their respective fields. According to the Federal Bureau of Labor Statistics, “the number of people employed in public schools dropped from almost 8.1 million in March 2020 to 7.3 million in May.”

This vast disparity has decreased somewhat since, but there are still 360,000 job openings in public schools around the nation.

This data has led to large speculation about the causes of the teacher shortage.

The National Education Association clearly states on its website that “educators have been grossly under-compensated as a profession compared to other professions with comparable education and training requirement(s).”

Julie Goldberg, who has been a teacher at Northern Highlands since 2005, said, “I do not believe that teachers are underpaid at this school, or have ever been. However, I have three master’s degrees. In industry, someone with very high qualifications like that would be making a lot more money.”

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CORN HOLE AND CANDY

DECA chapter project hosts Trunk-or-Treat and Corn hole tournament

Elena McCrossin '26

Northern Highlands is known for having some of the many fun, influential clubs, and DECA is most certainly included on this list.

Raising over \$1,100 for the Emmanuel Cancer Foundation (ECF), seniors Meghan Gido, Braden Slayne, and Chloe Ameri completed their chapter project in a fun, family-friendly way; by hosting a trunk-or-treat and corn-hole tournament.

At this event, members of DECA, along with other participants from the community, decorated their cars and handed out candy to kids.

According to Gido, who was one of the coordinators of this event, “with the help of our DECA chapter and over 300 people from the surrounding community, our event was extremely successful and we raised over \$1,100.”

Leading an event with this magnitude of volunteers comes with a large amount of stress and pressure, but these seniors were able to thrive and create a lively event for a meaningful cause.

When responding to what the planning process was like, Gido notes, “the entire planning process was about a month and a half of running around: asking Mr Occhino about

dates (that seemed to be ever-changing) and trying to get our DECA chapter and the community together for a charitable and fulfilling day. Planning a chapter project is stressful in itself, but when the stakes are so high because we are fundraising for a charity who truly deserves all the help we can give them, it was even more intense.”

All money raised from this event was donated to ECF. This charity is a non-profit organization dedicated to helping families of children with pediatric cancer to alleviate some burdens.

Some ways ECF helps these families are through in-home counseling, mate-

rial assistance, and emergency financial assistance. “Emmanuel Cancer Foundation is a small local charity that has big plans but too little funding. This charity has less than one million dollars a year to fulfill their promise of helping families statewide affected by pediatric cancer,” says Gido. “We are incredibly passionate about helping the community around us, so we wanted to give back by helping an organization who is making such a huge difference for New Jersey.”

During this day of charity, two major events were organized: the Trunk-or-Trunk and the Cornhole Tournament. Both were centered around raising

awareness for ECF and were able to bring the community together.

The Cornhole Tournament was an exhilarating event in which Principal Joseph Occhino and Assistant Principal Tony LaRocca took first prize. “It was a rapid style and there were a bunch of different teams,” says LaRocca. “There were teacher teams, there were student teams, and there were parent teams.”

He also comments on how heart-warming it was that so many people with a wide variety of ages were able to participate in this event.

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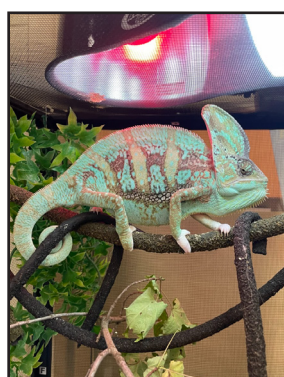


Sebastian Tabakov '26

Day of Mourning

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Jessica Gao '23

Meet Cosmo

Learn about how Highlands students are caring for Cosmo the Chameleon.

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Photo Courtesy of Jackie Paglieri '23

Commitment Corner

See where Highlands athletes are headed to play in college in the Commitment Corner.

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VOICING YOUR VOTE

Your voice matters, hear about how you can use it for the next election



Photo courtesy of Devon Fuchs '23

Devon Fuchs '23

November 8, 2022 is this year’s midterm election day, and the stakes are high.

On the national scale, all of the seats in the House of Representatives are up for grabs, and according to CNN, “the Senate is a 50-50 split” between the Republican and the Democratic parties.

On a more local scale, the Upper Saddle River school board had an election, too. Although it’s non-partisan, there is still

a split: between those who wish to adopt the new New Jersey Student Learning Standards for Comprehensive Health & Physical Education and those who don’t.

One concept of these Learning Standards touches upon social and sexual health. According to

gion, gender identity, gender expression, ethnicity, disability, socioeconomic background, and perspectives of health-related decisions.”

In this clause lies the core of the disagreement between the candidates: respecting people who are different from the majority.

Although this particular ballot only focuses on the lower-level schools, about 40 percent of students are from Upper Saddle River.

This means that the information learned – or not learned – in Bogert and Cavallini is being assimilated en masse into the culture of Northern Highlands.

If someone who is against the Learning Standards is voted in, arguably simple ideas, like the idea that minorities shouldn’t be called slurs, will not be

implemented.

Candidate Mark

help redirect the entire culture

Your ballot can help so many people feel safer in this school, this state, this country, and this world.

Mehegan’s views on the Learning Standards were not made available, but Dr. Verducci, via his website, claims support for the standards and believes that they are suitable for children of all ages.

In the end, both Mr. Mehegan and Dr. Verducci won, with Mr. Mehegan coming first with a very slim margin of .6%.

This is why voting is so important. I know a lot of people who say, “I don’t need to vote. What’s one opinion among so many?” But all points of view can

of a community.

Your ballot can help so many people feel safer in this school, this state, this country, and this world. Northern Highlands can do a lot to make this happen.

As students turn seventeen, the school can help us with the process of registering to vote, which, like all governmental processes, is overwhelming.

Right now, under the “Our School” tab on the Highlands website, there is a link to assist students in voting, it’s titled “Student

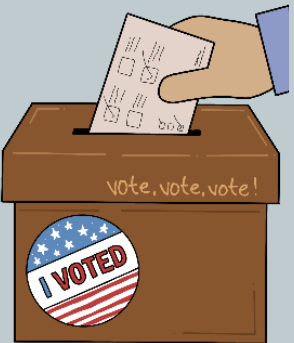
Voter Registration”.

Some other ways they can assist votes include discussing the voting process more in social studies classes.

Teachers can give an unbiased introduction to any of the politicians on the ballot in a given year, and give out resources about these people for anyone who may want extra information.

Teachers, similarly, can explain the importance of voting in all elections – not just presidential ones – as well as how important it is to understand what every candidate is fighting for. They can help make sense of all the information bombarding our brains every day, especially as Election Day inches closer.

Those who voted: know that you made a difference. ■



Art by Emily Gan '23

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From the Desk of the Editors-in-Chief

Be grateful. Be grateful. Be grateful.

How often do we hear these words? From our parents? Teachers?

Coincidentally, it’s just around this time of year when we hear it most often. So Highlanders, let us be the last person this month to ask you... what are you grateful for?

Even when times are tough and everything can seem overwhelming, we try to remember that we should be thankful for so much in our lives.

Thankful for the education we are privileged to be receiving, in a school that affords us so many opportunities. Thankful for teachers who care about us, not just what subjects we’re learning. Thankful for our support networks, who can be what gets us through our days on occasion. Thankful for our families who love us through it all.

Wow. How many more times can we use the word thankful? Well, a lot, but that’s the point.

Never forget that even when things seem bleak, there are things you can still have to be grateful for.

Hey wait – we forgot to say how grateful we are for the Highland Fling, and all of you.

Sincerely,

The Staff of the *Highland Fling*

If you are interested in joining *The Highland Fling* or have any questions, comments, or concerns, please contact fling.eic@gmail.com. If you are interested in placing an ad or subscribing, please contact the email listed above.

National Alliance on Mental Illness:
1-800-950-6264

National Suicide Prevention Hotline:
1-800-273-TALK (8255) [24/7 hotline]
(Spanish) 1-888-628-9454

IT'S GIVING...GENEROSITY

The season of giving is here, how will you give back to your community?



Emily Kam '25

With all the winter holiday decorations up already, let's not forget Thanksgiving and all that

it stands for. It's a holiday that brings people together to feast and enjoy each other's company, but it's also a time to reflect on what we have and what we can give back. As Thanksgiving sneaks up on us, I think about all the good things in my life and how appreciative I am for them. I also think about how I try to give back to make some positive impact in someone else's life through my community

service work. It's been personally rewarding to be able to help others and connect with different people through my volunteer work. For example, I ran a writing workshop over the summer for middle schoolers in New York City that focused on identity. I felt that kids don't get many opportunities to express themselves or really think about who they are or who they want to be — especially for these students who were stuck

No act is too big or too small. Simply helping someone or volunteering for local events goes a long way.

in summer school for five days a week. So every Monday and Tuesday for four weeks, I did writing activities with these students to explore their identities and the different ways we identify ourselves. At the end, students wrote an essay based on the prompt "I am proud to be..." It was difficult to get most of the students to participate at first, but as I shared my thoughts about my own identity with them, they started to share too. I think they appreciated hearing from another kid who's just a couple of years older than them. It was heartwarming to read the final essays they wrote. Many of the students wrote about being proud of their race, gender, or even hobbies that they identified with.

Some students broke through their tough or quiet shell and gained the confidence to write more about themselves. Some stood up for themselves, expressing their thoughts and feelings to the whole class. Some shared their fears and concerns about how people treat them based on their identities. One student's story, in particular, touched my heart and made this whole experience so much more rewarding. This student was one of the shorter ones in the class and he was getting picked on for his height. While the teachers and I stopped the bullying in class, we also took the opportunity to help him deal with it. When the final essays were done, this student volunteered to read his

essay aloud. He walked to the front and spoke to the class, including his tormenter, about how "I am proud to be me." He came up to me afterward to say thank you for the workshop and for showing him how to stand up to his bullies. It's an indescribable feeling knowing that I brought positive change to someone's life. Watching this student gain the confidence to share his feelings was so wonderful to see. You can do that too in whatever type of community service you participate in. No act is too big or too small. Simply helping someone or volunteering for local events goes a long way.

Knowing you gave back to the community, helped out someone in need, or were part of creating fond memories for someone is a great feeling, so don't be afraid to try it! Contact Mrs. Hayes and ask for some more information on any other services you can do, and go give back. ■



Art by Emily Gan '23

THANK YOU VERY MUCH

There's so much to be thankful for, what are you most grateful for?



Sienna Shrier '25

We often think about the things that are going wrong, like the test you have this week, or all the homework you have, but November encourages us to think about what we are thankful for. One thing I am thankful for is my teachers. This year, I am so lucky to have supportive teachers who have all helped me adjust to the new school year. Not only has every teacher helped me succeed in my classes, but they have incorporated so many engaging activities into their lesson plans. Whether it's doing a lab in chemistry with

candy pumpkins or reading stories in English class, I always have a good time. I am so grateful for the teachers we have in our school. Each one has made my year great so far, and we are truly so lucky to have them. Additionally, I'm thankful for the new friends I've made at Highlands. When you're walking down the halls at a new school, it is important to know who you can count on.

I'm grateful that I've been able to connect with so many new people as well as maintain my old friendships from middle school. The thing about friends is the true ones will always be there for you. They will save you a seat in the cafeteria, make you laugh so hard until you cry, and they will never leave your side no matter what. I am also thankful for the sports and clubs because there is an activity

November encourages us to think about what we are thankful for.

for everyone. There are so many clubs to choose from, and there are more than 30 sports that our school has to offer. Clubs and sports have helped me

connect with others that I share common interests with. Last year, I joined the field hockey team and was able to learn the true meaning of teamwork through the connections and memories I've made with my teammates. I have always joined a lot of fun clubs that fit my interests. I am in NHTV, The Fling, and the yearbook. NHTV has a new broadcasting program which is so exciting. I am so thankful to be given the chance to interview players and be a part of the sports experience. The Fling has given me an opportunity to express myself, and the

yearbook has acted as a creative outlet where I can express my ideas digitally. Getting involved in school clubs has been a great experience. Lastly, I am thankful for the spirit here at Highlands. Between the cheering, pounding on the stands, friends, families, and touchdowns, the football games have been a blast. Each game is full of a lot of spirit and energy and so many students come to support our school. The spirit days at Northern Highlands are so fun as well. We have gotten to wear pajamas, jerseys, and class colors representing our pride for our school. Overall, at Highlands, there is a lot to be thankful for. We are so fortunate to have the amazing teachers, friends, clubs, sports, and spirit that this school has to offer. What are you most thankful for at Highlands? ■



Art by Emily Gan '23

NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

The truth behind Thanksgiving and recognizing Indigenous heritage



Photo courtesy of Sebastian Tabakov '26

Sebastian Tabakov '26

Happy Thanksgiving Highlands, or shall I say happy National Day of Mourning? Yes, happy Day of Mourning. Usually, when the topic of Thanksgiving is brought up, most of us imagine a perfectly baked turkey, the aroma of potatoes in whatever fashion you see fit, and the sweetness of a fresh pumpkin pie.

Thanksgiving is commemorated as a joyous time to feast and gorge; however, the Indigenous Peoples Community has a different narrative. Native Americans were brutalized on what we as “Americans” deem Thanksgiving.

How many of us really know the basis of Thanksgiving? In elemen-

tary school, I was taught the importance of Thanksgiving is to celebrate the pilgrims liberating themselves from tyrannical European rulers by finding new, free land. How free was this land?

This land was already inhabited by the Native Americans. Schools did not educate the new generation of Americans about how the new-coming Americans stole from and killed the Indigenous Peoples of America.

Schools did not educate the new generation of Americans about the people the Europeans hurt, but only taught a false European-based prerogative. Schools did not educate

In effect, I started to do my own research. Something seemed off to me.

In my research, sourced from the United American Indians Of New England foundation, I found, the popularized ideology of Thanksgiving is fictitious. Our present-day version was coined by Abraham Lincoln, who was not around when the Mayflower sailed the ocean blue in 1492.

The actuality of what happened on the first-ever fourth Thursday of November was a treaty.

A treaty was created by the English settlers in an effort to manipulate the Indigenous Peoples into

native tribe who occupied the land the settlers surfaced on, the Wampanoag

form to the demands of the settlers, they would be killed in cold blood.

While mourning their losses, this community is also celebrating their resilience in hopes to educate the public on Native American culture and the real narrative of what their community has undergone.

tribe.

The settlers promised to protect the Wampanoag from surrounding aggressive tribes. Despite what they promised, the settlers betrayed the Wampanoag.

The English settlers evicted the tribe from their

The natives were not only prohibited to live on their rightful land, nonetheless also from their beliefs. The settlers continued this pattern with the surrounding tribes. As time grew, so did the number of Native Americans being forced to migrate to other parts of the slowly forming United States.

Fast forward a few centuries, the Native Americans were trapped in camps with horrible conditions. These camps were created by descendants of the original English settlers. Centuries passed and the Indigenous Peoples were still being tormented.

Currently, the Native American Community has seen brighter days. More

advocation for the Native Americans has been seen.

Although they are not fully recognized to the capacity of which they should be, actions towards a necessary direction are being taken.

A prime example of this is the Indigenous Peoples Community reclaiming Thanksgiving.

This community has rebranded this holiday as a National Day of Mourning. Indigenous people are mourning the loss of their people to the atrocities of the settlers, the loss of their land to the settlers, and the loss of their culture to the settlers.

While mourning their losses, this community is also celebrating their resilience in hopes to educate the public on Native American culture and the real narrative of what their community has undergone.

With that Highlands, I urge you all to seek out more education and see history from all facets. In addition, when you sit down to have a “Thanksgiving” meal, remember the pain of the Indigenous Peoples. ■

Indigenous people are mourning the loss of their people to the atrocities of the settlers, the loss of their land to the settlers, and the loss of their culture to the settlers.

the new generation about the Europeans’ ignoble ways.

a false sense of security. Security was what the settlers promised to the

land and forced them to convert to Catholicism. If the natives did not con-

THE 8TH: NATIONAL STEM DAY

Opportunities presented through a great class offered here at Highlands

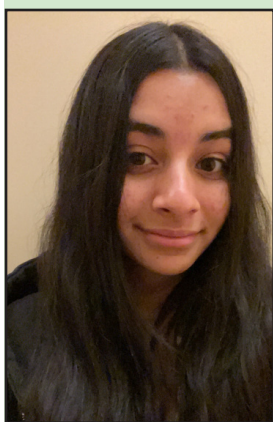


Photo courtesy of Jiya Singh '24'

Jiya Singh '24'

Ever since I was young, I have always gravitated towards STEM. Even as I got older and math got harder, I enjoyed the logic behind math. It took a bit to understand it, but once I did, the feeling was like no other.

Although I never cared much for science as a kid, when I got to life science in 7th grade, I was blown away by how we had such a good idea of what was going on within the tiny little cells of our body. And how those tiny little cells were part of tissues, which made up

organs.

Mostly, I was so amazed at the fact that each of those organs worked its hardest to keep us alive.

Due to my interest in STEM, medicine seemed like the best choice for me. Most people expect me to end up as their doctor or dentist. As a South Asian female, these expectations have never weighed on me as hard as others because I feel like it is my choice to become a doctor.

But these expectations also remind me of when I was younger, and I wanted to be a bestselling author. They remind me of my cousin, who wanted to go to art school, but is now pursuing a career as an insurance lawyer.

Why do I have to be your computer scientist, your doctor, your surgeon, but never your artist, author, or favorite actor?

When I decided I most likely wanted to become a doctor in Sophomore year, I also decided to take more science classes and do better in math. This led to

me taking Honors Biology over the summer at Highland’s Summer Academy.

I think that Highlands fosters a more positive atmosphere towards all different types of career paths. But there’s only so much the school can do.

I enjoyed the class and was genuinely excited to show up everyday, even though I had to wake up early and come to school four days a week.

I remember thinking then, only people who are really dedicated to science would take this class. Originally, I felt comforted by the fact that I was surrounded by a group of people like me who cared about biology enough to spend a whole month of their summer on it.

About a week in, I realized that the class was predominantly Asian, including East, Southeast, and South Asians.

But there were no Black or Latinx students. For a primarily white school, I

also found it interesting that there were barely any white people.

I tried to come up with an explanation, like maybe some of these students were victims of pressure from their parents to go above and beyond. But deep down, I know the more reasonable explanation is that Asian American students are often pressured to get ahead.

I know many people that resonate with this idea, the belief that Asian Americans should be a shining example of the Model immigrant group. Although this seems to promote positive attitudes

towards Asian Americans, it actually harms us by lumping us into a box.

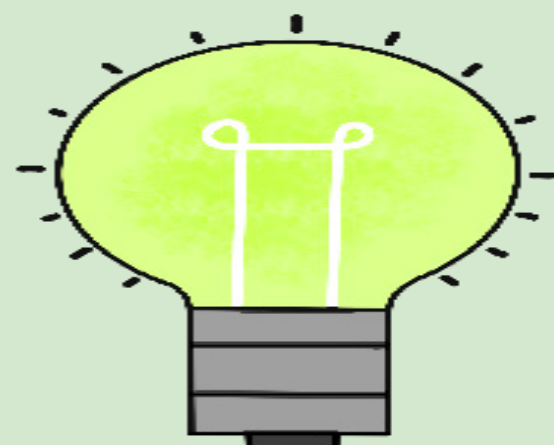
But it also portrays other groups as the ones who cannot be doctors, lawyers, or CEOs. It pits different racial groups against each other by reminding us of our differences rather than our similarities.

Even in schools, students can receive the same opportunities but feel discouraged to pursue them because of the stereotypes they are confined to. I think that Highlands fosters a more positive atmosphere towards all different types of career paths.

But there’s only so much the school can do.

Personally, I think that pushing ourselves and our peers to become active in the Highlands community is key. This means spreading the word about all the various opportunities we are presented with and encouraging everyone to step out of their comfort zones.

This November, during National STEM Day, I hope all of you can explore new things by simply finding out more about all the amazing things the Highlands community has to offer. ■



Art by Jana Dabagh '24

ELIMINATION OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

One student discusses the importance of ending violence towards women



Photo courtesy of Emma Pereira '24

Emma Pereira '24

When I turned 17 this past month, I felt this immense amount of freedom. I am one step closer to adulthood meaning going to college, moving out, and living alone. The majority of us cannot wait.

Every step closer to graduation excites me, but it also terrifies me. The reality that I will be a woman living alone in a new, unfamiliar place is scarier than it should be.

I've heard the stories of women being raped at college parties, or on dates, or out on a run, or in essentially every situation one could imagine. Sometimes I forget the risk that is posed to my safety just by existing.

Women constantly face violence, in fact according to UN Women "globally, an estimated 736 million women—almost one in three—have been subjected to physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence, non-partner sexual violence, or both at least once in their life." I have two sisters, so between the three of us, statistically one of us will be subject to physical or sexual violence at least once in our lives.

UN Women also noted that women who have experienced violence face higher "rates of depression, anxiety disorders, unplanned pregnancies, sexually transmitted in-

fections and HIV." The effects of sexual harassment and abuse are permanent.

They don't go away. Women can't escape the horrific experiences they've had and many women live in constant fear of being next.

As a woman, this fear creeps up on me. There are often times when I go out where I have moments of relief. A moment where I forget the danger I could be in, but that moment is always interrupted with a cat call, overhearing a rape joke, or my own self defense mechanisms.

Peace simply isn't an option. I've been forced into this hyper awareness of my safety, because in reality it can be taken from me in a second.

Sometimes I forget the risk that is posed to my safety just by existing.

At Highlands, I've found that many people don't believe sexual harassment and abuse

violence against women. Highlands has had assemblies regarding sexual violence and harassment, however I don't think its enough. Yes, it is a good start, but fighting violence against women has to be continual.

I remember that during one assembly last year about sexual harassment and abuse, a large crowd of students were laughing throughout the assembly. Sexual abuse and violence is no laughing matter.

My safety, and the safety of all the women in this school is not a joke, however it was taken as one.

I am unsure if these students were told how

ple make about women's bodies. I've heard women's experiences being invalidated and shot down. I've heard just about everything that perpetuates

their behavior was harmful. I remember them being quieted by teachers in the crowd, but at least to my knowledge, that was the extent of their punishment.

Educating students is vital to ending a toxic culture in which objectification, violence, and harassment is normalized.

Educating students is vital to ending a toxic culture in which objectification, violence, and harassment is normalized.

I also hope that there will be more dialogue between the student body and administrators. I know that I have a lot to say about what should be taught and done to help students feel safe and I want to share those ideas.

As the co-president of the Women Empowerment Club, sexual violence and how to stop it is something our club talks about a lot. We want to help facilitate a dialogue throughout the student body and with administration to put an end to violence against women.

I also encourage the students to work to end sexual violence. Don't sit by let your friends make rape jokes, objectify girls, or do anything that perpetuates rape culture.

Stand up. If we all make it clear that we don't tolerate this behavior, it will end. I wish more than anything for it to end, so help me fight it. ■



TEACHER'S CORNER



Learn about Mr. Schemly's favorite holiday pastimes



Photo courtesy of Douglas Schemly

Douglas Schemly

My favorite way to spend the holidays is spending time with my family.

One activity that is a favorite among my wife

and sons is decorating for each holiday, it becomes a big event in my household. We spend days and hours putting up decorations around the inside and outside of the house.

We also enjoy the process of looking for new decorations (especially the ones on sale). My sons always want large and expensive decorations, which I have to always find a way to compromise with them.

Lastly, I also love family gatherings whether it be a holiday dinner or brunch. With everybody having really busy schedules, you really appreciate the moment to take a step back and enjoy that time with family. ■

I also love family gatherings whether it be a holiday dinner or brunch.

You really appreciate the moment to take a step back and enjoy that time with family.



Art by Jana Dabbagh '24



THE FINAL STRETCH FOR SENIORS

As November 1 application deadline passed, many seniors applied ED or EA to colleges

Kaitlynn Karoleski '23

November 1, the day that seniors have been anxiously anticipating, has finally passed. For students who aren't applying to colleges, this date might be insignificant, however, for the class of 2023, it is the first checkpoint; November 1 is the most popular deadline for Early Action and Early Decision college applications.

While Regular Decision applications aren't due until January, many colleges have begun accepting Early Action applications that allow students to receive admissions decisions early, usually by mid-December. In fact, some colleges have already started to release

their decisions depending on when students submitted their applications.

In an interview with Principal Joseph Occhino, he said, "73 percent of seniors applied early to colleges, 27 percent of whom applied Early Decision, and 1,300 applications have been sent in already."

This is an overwhelming number, and it goes without saying that the guidance department has been working hard for the past few months to keep track of and send in application information to colleges.

Occhino explains that "the guidance department's main focus is post-secondary education. The creation of the wellness department has taken more of the responsibility of the

emotional well-being of students off of guidance counselors and onto the wellness department staff."

These resources are critical for students, especially given the level of competition, not only within Highlands, but also between surrounding schools.

According to Occhino,

"In the end, whatever school you end up attending will provide you with a great education and you will be successful no matter what."

Principal Joseph Occhino

only are seniors competing with fellow peers at Highlands, but also students across the county, which only makes the

admissions process more stressful. After spending years joining clubs and training to make varsity sports teams, all while balancing a high GPA, many students worry that their hard work will not pay off.

Although many seniors have finished essays and submitted applications, that only means that it's time to sit back and wait for colleges to release decisions. For most, this is the most stressful part of the process.

Senior Emily Reilly expresses that despite submitting all her applications, she is still overwhelmed by college admissions. "It's a huge weight lifted off my shoulders now that the first deadline has passed, but I'm also still stressed about whether or not I'll get into

my top choice schools. Even though it's exciting to have finally submitted my applications, the fact that colleges are deciding whether or not to accept me is still very stressful."

Senior Ryan Monagle adds that "although a large deadline has passed, there's still more work to be done to finish up more applications."

To reassure students, Occhino offers some words of wisdom: "I say this all the time to seniors: there is a school for everyone. Yes, you might have your favorite school or your reach or your targets, but in the end, whatever school you end up attending will provide you with a great education and you will be successful no matter what." ■

ART HISTORY STUDENTS 'GOGH' TO THE MET

AP Art History students had a chance to see some works they're studying in class

Brook Xu '25

The trip to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City is one of the several enlightening educational trips offered at Northern Highlands.

AP Art History students will be embarking on this trip on November 29th. The trip was first denied, but was then approved after the insistence of its great educational value.

AP Art History teachers Krista Carpino and Mary Lardiere each teach one section of AP Art History. They will take a group of around 45 students and will be accompanied by five chaperones.

At the MET, students will be looking at a variety of works that are included in the AP Art History Curriculum, distributed by the College Board.

The exam consists of 250 global art pieces. It is very fortunate that some of those pieces are displayed in a nearby museum and students have the opportunity to examine them.

For example, they will be looking at a variety of Egyptian sculptures, Ancient Near East pieces like the Lamassu, pieces from 17th-18th century America, and much more.

AP Art History student Sachi Kaisare says, "I'm excited to see these pieces of art at the MET that we saw on the internet or in the textbook."

As of now, the teachers

are planning a scavenger hunt for students to locate pieces in the museum that they learned about in class.

"The most important thing when you are studying Art History is when you are looking at a piece in person, it broadens your scope of understanding."

Mary Lardiere

Teachers also plan on including a writing component that encourages students to reflect on their observations and takeaways.

It may be an entirely different experience to look at an art piece in person than on a flat screen or textbook.

ing at it from a book."

AP Art History teacher Mary Lardiere also says, "the most important thing when you are studying Art History is when you are looking at a piece in person, it broadens your scope of understanding." Lardiere continues, "if you were looking at a piece in a book, it can be very small, but in person it may be seven feet tall. It has a different presence."

In addition to the 250 art pieces on the exam, some other pieces that were not included are also important to understand the journey of art.

To understand this, the AP Art History class will also travel to Roman and Greek Galleries that replicate ancient sculptures.

Lardiere notes that people often perceive Roman and Greek sculptures to be in white marble, however, many are painted in bright, bold colors. She goes on to explain how it may serve as an "Aha! moment" because many people do not know this.

There are many great museums out there in the world. However, The Metropolitan Museum of Art is one that will provide students with a valuable experience during their trip.

The goal of this field trip to the city is to spark useful insight that could help students become more prepared for their upcoming exam in May. ■

THE HIGHLANDS PLAGUE IS BACK

With the hiatus of Covid, common illnesses such as the flu and cold have returned

Katie McWilliams '24

For many Northern Highlands students, the COVID-19 pandemic and all the disruptions that came along with it may seem like a distant memory. However, Highlands is not in the clear just yet. The "Highlands Plague" is starting to make its rounds through the school once more.

Highlands Plague is a term coined by students for any non-COVID illnesses that spreads quickly and infect many students at once on campus.

Around the fall and winter seasons are when these illnesses spread the fastest, due to close contact between students and cooling weather. Also,

events such as Football games, Halloween, Thanksgiving, and winter holidays encourage further rates of infection.

When students get sick they have more to worry about than simply recovering. Being sick and out of school can hinder academic and athletic performances.

Junior Alexis Crillo spoke about her recent experience with the flu and how it affected her academics after being out of school for three days. "I definitely feel very behind. My teachers sent me work to do, but there is a lot of work I missed and the only way for me to retain it would be in class."

While Crillo stayed home, some students con-

tinue to attend school while sick in fear of falling behind; a decision many Highlands students may have to face this year.

... washing hands frequently, avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth, and steering clear of those who are sick are the best ways to avoid catching an illness according to the CDC.

Principal Joseph Occhino weighed in on the issue, stressing the importance of staying home if you have a fever or are very ill.

Occhino also pointed out a protocol for sick students. If a student feels ill they may go down to

the nurse and receive an at-home COVID-19 test to ensure that whatever illness they have is not COVID-19, protecting oth-

er students from the virus. All students should be taking personal safety precautions during this plague season, washing hands frequently, avoiding touching your eyes, nose and mouth, and steering clear of those who are sick are the best

ways to avoid catching an illness according to the CDC. The best method to prevent the spreading of cold and flu is to stay home and isolated while ill.

On a more positive note, Occhino did mention that so far, this is one of the



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CASH FOR COSMO THE CHAMELEON

Students create a GoFundMe in support of giving Cosmo a better habitat

Rebecca Hoffer '23

Many students are aware of teacher Joel DeStaso's class pet, Cosmo the Chameleon. This pet has been in his classroom since the end of the 2021 school year. The pet was bought by a student and soon after, Cosmo became beloved by DeStaso's students. In fact, students have begun taking their own initiative in buying Cosmo a new cage.

Students created an Instagram account for Cosmo that has a GoFundMe link to raise money for Cosmo's cage. This was a student initiative and has the purpose of keeping Cosmo in a hospitable environment now that he is at his full size. The GoFundMe has a \$150 goal, and there is a link in the Instagram account page @cosmothechameleon_ for anyone that is interested in donating. Additionally, students

started the Instagram and GoFundMe had a super good idea and could see that Cosmo is clearly outgrowing his cage. They took matters into their own hands to do a good deed," in support of the student's initiative in creating a more comfortable environment for Cosmo. When it comes to class pets at Northern Highlands, there are policies in place that allow teachers to have animals in the classroom. However, the pets must be approved by Principal Joseph Occhino since there are guidelines about the animals. The class pets have to add to the educational experience in the classroom, and provide students with the opportunity to learn in a more unconventional way. Class pets are also prohibited if Northern Highlands is providing a habitat for an animal, which Cosmo currently does have. The student-run GoFundMe focuses on expanding the habitat so Cosmo can have more comfortable living conditions at Highlands. Administrators also have some opinions on the chameleon in the classroom including Occhino himself. "As long as [Mr. DeStaso]

can take good care of [Cosmo], and nothing happens, we're good, no problem." When asked about students taking initiative for the fundraising of the cage for Cosmo, Occhino also mentioned, "if Cosmo, I hear, is growing, I think he's at full size now, he needs a bigger crate, if that's what students want to do is raise money it has nothing to do with Northern Highlands." seemingly endorsing the activity as long as it is independent of the school. Even though pets are not usually allowed on the Highlands campus, Vice Principal Doctor LaRocca remarked, "we have the therapy dogs come in during finals week." This would be for helping the stress of the students. Even though there aren't other class pets, the therapy dogs do give students the release after a stressful time, and are an exception to the pets rule due to their academically assistive nature. Cosmo the Chameleon also helps improve DeStaso's classroom environment. According to Destaso, "it's definitely like a conversation piece and there are kids that look forward to and check in on the chameleon and they look forward to seeing him

and watching him grow." Overall, there is more student interest from the chameleon in DeStaso's classroom. Kaur also mentioned her own enjoyment during class from Cosmo, explaining "I see Cosmo during two classes: Sports Med and Anatomy. Once in the morning and once in the afternoon. When I'm groggy or tired during class it brightens my mood to see such a colorful and exotic animal."

If anyone is interested in learning more about Cosmo, DeStaso is in the room 306 in the science wing and will answer questions regarding the chameleon. Whether you have seen Cosmo or have only heard stories about this color changing reptile, he's always available on Instagram or in person to take a quick peek. ■

"I see Cosmo during two classes: Sports Med and Anatomy. Once in the morning and once in the afternoon. When I'm groggy or tired during class it brightens my mood to see such a colorful and exotic animal."

Keeret Kaur

According to DeStaso, "there are students that have taken a liking to [Cosmo] and they wanted to get him a bigger cage and stuff. So I think it's kind of nice that they want him to have a comfortable habitat."

post updates about how Cosmo is adapting to the environment at Northern Highlands. Cosmo also brings a lot for students in the classroom. Senior Keeret Kaur says, "I think whoever



Cosmo, perched on a branch in his current cage.

Jessica Gao '23

REELIN' IN THE CATCH OF THE DAY

The Northern Highlands fishing club ventures to Point Pleasant in hopes of stripers

Jessica Gao '23

The Northern Highlands Fishing Club took trips on November 6 and 13 to the Gambler Deep Sea Fishing Boat in Point Pleasant. The club is led by advisor and teacher Matthew Krzysik. The Fishing Club has been around since 2016. First pitched as an idea by a student of Krzysik, it has been thriving ever since. Krzysik mentions the continuous relationship they have with this trip in particular, explaining that

"[they] had a guest speaker before, the captain of the trip, come down and be a guest speaker about fishing on the Hudson for stripers." 26 people, including club members, family members, faculty, and even former Highlands French teacher Frank Gilli came on the trip on November 6. According to Krzysik, in the past, there have been typically 40 people or more. Krzysik points out that, "the pandemic affected the club a bit in terms of [participation on these trips. He's] sure that's true to some

extent for all clubs, but [they] are still seeing a lot of interest, which is great." Krzysik goes on to highlight how a more diverse crowd is getting involved, saying "although COVID has affected us, we've been bouncing back and have even seen a number of girls sign up or show interest in the club. That's something we really encourage." He acknowledges that fishing is a male-dominated sport, but is excited about the prospect of more female participation. The club has done

many other trips and activities as well, with the Point Pleasant trip being only one, recurring trip. There is a planned trip in the spring on the Hudson to fish for striped bass. They have also attended fishing shows hosted by both the Rockland Community College and the New Jersey Convention and Exposition Center in Edison. Something new that's been going on is the Northern Highlands Fishing Tournament, which was hosted for the first time last year. The club plans to do it again this year on Echo Lake. They have also participated in surf fishing tournaments, off the New Jersey shore. There has also been collaboration between departments. By working with Richard Heissler, the woodshop teacher, club members were able to make rod holders. Principal Joseph Occhino notes that to have trips like this approved, they have to be proposed and go through the Board of Education. He also explains that, "all trips

"Although COVID has affected us, we've been bouncing back and have even seen a number of girls sign up or show interest in the club. That's something we really encourage."

Matthew Krzysik

should add something to the learning experiences of the students. For the fishing club, going and doing things first hand on a boat is a great opportunity." Ultimately, this trip and the club itself is a great way to build communities. Krzysik highlights how, "a lot of parents get involved. It's great. When we go on trips like these, people bring their siblings or their parents. It is a way for us to all get together and do something we love." If anyone is interested in future trips or joining the club, Krzysik's email and classroom are always open. Current members are confident that these trips are a fun, engaging part of the Highlands community. ■



Photo courtesy of Matthew Krzysik

Past members of the Fishing Club holding a fish they caught.



catchy.

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FALL FESTIVITIES FOR A CAUSE

DECA event raises over \$1,100 for the Emmanuel Cancer Fund

Continued from cover

Although cornhole was a popular event, the trunk-or-treating was arguably even more uniting for those who attended. At this part of the event, those who volunteered—including many DECA club members—dressed up in costumes, decorated their car trunks, and handed out candy to younger kids.

This activity wasn't just merely enjoyable for the younger kids though. It also gave them a look into their potential experiences in high school and what being an exemplary role model looks like.

"I love any of the events that bring the middle schools up to the high-

school so that they could see that this is the goal. The goal is to become a High-



Photo Courtesy of Taia Charney '23

Students dressed-up with a decorated car at the Trunk-or Treat.

lander and it shows them this is what we do as High-

landers," LaRocca articulates. "The trunk-or-treat really speaks to it, because

it's geared towards the little ones," he continues,

"to come up and see the Highlands fields, and the Highlands facilities and see the students there be ambassadors to the young students — it's exactly what we want and what we want them to aspire to be."

Not only do events like these strengthen the upcoming generations attending Highlands, but they can inspire the community as a whole. "In just two hours, we were able to have around 300 people at our event and many of those people learned about ECF for the first time at this event," states Gido.

Adding on to this, they state, "this inspired them to donate and get involved in helping a local organization, which was ultimately

our goal. We hope that the community is inspired to continue supporting ECF and charitable events that NH students put together in

the future."

The Trunk-or-Treat and Cornhole Tournament were incredibly successful in raising money for ECF. ■



Photo Courtesy of Taia Charney '23

Tournament winners Tony LaRocca (left) and Joseph Occhino (right) pose with their prizes.

A TEACHER SHORTAGE AT HIGHLANDS?

The nation-wide shortage is impacting many for the 22-23 school year

Continued from cover

The majority of teachers at Highlands have one or more master's degrees, the exact percentage is about 84.4% (NJDOE 2020-2021). Teachers are at a set pay scale with their degrees, and can only move to a higher pay scale with more advanced degrees. Their pay also increases with years of experience.

The district actually helps fund credits that teachers are attempting to get. However, the appropriations for the program are limited and the more teachers who apply to get reimbursed for their credits, the less money each individual teacher receives.

Sara Magretto is in her fourteenth year at Highlands but her third year as

remains a "place where people want to work", according to Principal Joesph Occhino.

Jennifer Winkler stated, "I think the shortage is unfortunate but understandable. Kids need qualified wonderful teachers, but I do understand this profession is extremely demanding and teachers aren't always compensated fairly. It depends on the district you're in and I can say I'm lucky to be in this district."

Occhino said that the teacher shortage is "not impacting us greatly, but mostly because we don't have a huge turnover in teachers. Last year we only had to hire seven new teachers." According to him, this is "typical" turnover in the school, and in a

Goldberg said, "When I first came here, any time we advertised a job there would be stacks of resumes, because it was, and remains, a very desirable place to work. Once upon a time, you would have to make a cut to figure out the number of people you could reasonably interview but it's not like that anymore."

"The headlines I see are more focused towards nationwide teacher shortages, but it tends to all get lumped together," Magretto says. "The most significant place where we see the shortage is still for a leave of absence."

Occhino concurred saying that "certain subject areas lend themselves to more applicants but there are other subject areas where you would be lucky to get three."

US News reported recently that three-fourths of school administrators say they are trying to hire more substitutes.

Highlands faces that same sub shortage, al-

though it has lessened slightly since the 2022-2023 school year began but remains ever-present.

More subs are now applying for the position because Highlands has recently increased their daily rate. Winkler is new to her official role but has been a substitute teacher for the last few years. She says, "there is a demand for subs, and this district isn't an exception to that."

The reasons for this shortage stretch beyond salary issues, there are several barriers that steer people away from the education field including political issues and the requirements for entry.

One of the largest requirements to teach is the edTPA. Winkler describes her daily routine as a student, "I get home, I prep my lessons, and then I grade. After that, I do my schoolwork... I'm creating an extensive teaching portfolio which eventually I will submit to the government."

"It is a deterrent be-

"The barriers are not the only problems. Legislators who don't know anything about education will immediately jump to saying the barriers are too high ...it's short-sighted."

Julie Goldberg

cause I could be using that time for grading or lesson planning. Governor Murphy wants to eliminate the EDTPA and there is outstanding legislation for that," she says.

Assistant Principal Tony LaRocca shared that a family member went through the process of becoming a teacher through the "alternate route". He claims that "I think that one of the hurdles is the certification process, it ensures very highly qualified

candidates but it is cumbersome and expensive."

Many states, such as Florida, are dismissing the requirements to become teachers for certain groups such as veterans.

"Every profession has barriers to entry; the barriers are not the only problems. Legislators who don't know anything about education will immediately jump to saying the barriers are too high," Goldberg explains. "It's short-sighted."

The long-term solution seems to lie with the increase in salaries and benefits for teachers. Benefits like subsidized credits and a pleasant work environment are what draw so many to Highlands. In terms of the entire profession, Goldberg says to, "recruit the people who have the content knowledge but are working in industry, bring back people who maybe stayed home after having children or those who retired."

She adds that schools need to "find the people who are qualified already, and help them get here." ■

"This profession is extremely demanding and teachers aren't always compensated fairly. It depends on the district you're in and I can say I'm lucky to be in this district."

Jennifer Winkler

Northern Highlands Education Association President. She commented that "to be able to get a more advanced degree while teaching is a major benefit and they support that here."

Northern Highlands

given year they may have to hire five to seven new teachers.

The issue remains not with the turnover rate but with the number of applications received in a given cycle.

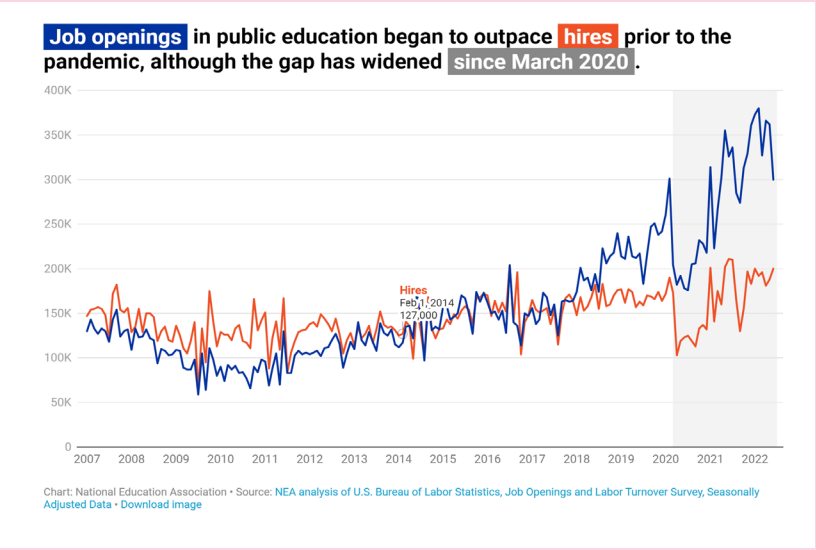


Photo Courtesy of the U.S. Bureau Labor Statistics

COLLEGE APP CRAZE

Caleigh Amano '23

It is November, meaning Seniors are in full swing for college applications. The very important November 1st and 15th deadlines have just passed and now we anxiously await for our decisions to come back. Many students have been very prepared and started working on their college applications over the summer. This allowed them to get a head start and not be so stressed during the school year. Students applying to multiple schools had to really manage their time well in order to meet the hard deadlines. A lot of school decisions have come out already, but most especially early decisions will come out starting early December.

Between schoolwork and college applications many seniors are feeling stressed out. It's important to devote time to both highschool and college applications, but it can be tough if they feel like there's no time to get everything done. Adding in extracurriculars as well adds a lot more on top of seniors already busy schedules. This can be a tough time, but it's important to keep your head up and continue on.

Senior Allie Paganessi, has already heard back from her early decision since it was rolling admissions and is officially done with the college application process. She felt that it was very important to start early which is why she turned in her application at the beginning of September. This paid off for her as she was accepted into her early decision school. Paganessi states, "I am so glad I am done with the college process, now I have more time to focus on senior year".

Many Seniors wish they could be done with the grueling college process. For now though, we can only wait and see where the next four years take us.

ALZHEIMERS AWARENESS

Matthew Reichert '24

The Northern Highlands Alzheimer's Awareness Organization and Highlands Cares would like to thank the listed businesses for their support of the Alzheimer's Association. Alzheimer's is a devastating condition that requires a united effort to combat. These businesses did their part in helping those with Alzheimer's and for that they deserve recognition. If you would like to contribute to the Alzheimer's Association find information at www.alz.org.



Boutique Farfalla proudly supports Highlands Care and the Alzheimer's Association!

Shop in store or online at
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DEFINE proudly supports Highlands Care and the Alzheimer's Association! 

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49 W Allendale Ave, Allendale, NJ 07401

Watch Out Macys, Here Comes Highlands

Take a Look at How Students Will Celebrate Thanksgiving This Year

Thanksgiving is the time of year to reflect and appreciate everything you have, as people across America typically spend this long weekend with family and friends. This holiday began in the Autumn of 1621 when Pilgrims and Native Americans sat down to a feast in gratitude for the season's bounty. To this day, Thanksgiving is spent by most Americans by gathering with family and having a feast of traditional mashed potatoes, gravy, turkey, stuffing, cranberry sauce, and pumpkin pie for dinner. Thanksgiving is smudged right between Halloween and all the winter holidays, so it is often forgotten about and overlooked. As soon as Halloween is over, people are already raving about winter break. Stores already have all their winter holiday decorations out and holiday shopping begins.

Thanksgiving needs more appreciation, so I interviewed sophomore Salma Tari to share what she and her family do on Thanksgiving.

When asked what meals her family prepares on Thanksgiving, Salma shared, "We always make mashed potatoes and chicken because my family and I don't love turkey and sweet potato with marshmallows." Sounds delicious to me!

I also asked Salma what traditions her family participates in on Thanksgiving. She explained that before dinner, "My family goes around the table each saying things we're thankful for, and also things we can improve on." It is important to express gratitude for the meal we eat on Thanksgiving and reflect on our year.

I also asked Salma what her favorite part of Thanksgiving was. Salma shared, "My favorite part about Thanksgiving is reflecting on things we usually take for granted, especially since the world is caught up in focusing on the negatives instead of the positives."

Families celebrate many other foods and fun traditions every year on Thanksgiving. It is never too late to start celebrating this day, a new beginning in America to spend time with the ones you love and show the world some gratitude!

By Ashlyn Kersting '25



THE SCHOOL FOR GOOD AND EVIL IS HERE

Read some honest reviews of Feig’s movie recreation of the book

Isha Korgaonkar '24

The School for Good and Evil, directed by Paul Feig, was released on October 18, 2022. This movie is based on the book written by Soman Chainani. The School for Good and Evil is a place where students are trained to be the heroes or villains of future fairytales.

The novel follows the storyline of two friends, Sophie and Agatha, who live in Gavalton. Sophie is considered to be beautiful, while Agatha is perceived to be ugly and witchlike. Sophie dreams of going to the School for Good and becoming a princess; however, Agatha wants to stay in Gavalton. She values her friendship with Sophie and does not want Sophie to leave for the school.

Eventually, Sophie and Agatha both get selected for the School for Good and Evil. In a surprising turn of events, Agatha is put in the School for Good and Sophie is put into the School for Evil. Sophie wants to switch to the School for Good, but all Agatha wants is to go home.

Later, the two friends

meet the School Master, who tells them that if Sophie can find true love’s kiss, then she has been placed into the School for Evil by mistake.

Agatha tries to help Sophie kiss Tedros, King Arthur’s son and a student at the School for Good, but Sophie’s evil self starts to emerge when Tedros falls in love with Agatha instead. The book/movie depict Agatha and Sophie’s character transformations, and both end with Agatha and Sophie valuing their friendship once again.

According to the Rotten Tomatoes site, there were mixed reviews on this movie. Symphony Barnes stated, “At its best, *The School For Good and Evil* is a decently fun young adult fantasy flick, thanks to its intriguing script and the performances that really give it life.” Jim Schembri added, “A clear case of style over substance, something you’re never supposed to encourage or admire. But...likely to be the most beautiful thing to hit the stream all year, [a] visually sumptuous comedy-fantasy.”

However, there were

definitely some negative reviews as well. Josephine L. suggested, “This movie’s problems with the muddled storyline and the choppy pacing could have been resolved had this been an episodic series rather than a 2.5-hour movie.”

Similarly, Frank Swietek emphasized, “Simultaneously sluggish and rushed, crammed with characters that make barely an impression..., extraneous episodes that just weigh the narrative down and a welter of special-effects action more tedious than awesome.”

Junior Emma Pereira also thought that “the movie was disappointing.” She stated that she had “high hopes for it, as it seemed like a great concept, but it was cringy.” She added that “the music made it even worse. There were off covers of songs, and it just made the movie even more of a joke than it already was.”

Freshman Bhavya Sivasubramaniam agreed, saying that “it wasn’t amazing but it wasn’t the worst movie” that she had ever seen.

Pereira claimed that the only actor she really

did not like was Sophia Anne Caruso, who played Sophie. She stated that in some scenes, she “genuinely wanted to look away

of character development (ex. buildup to Agatha and Tedros’ relationship). This resulted in a choppy and rushed movie that did not

added, “I would have made the script a little better. The way they spoke was really lame and it took away from the plot of the story.”

The movie ended with a cliffhanger: an arrow from Tedros landed in Gavalton and a knife followed close behind. Although a sequel may be possible, Netflix has neither confirmed nor denied whether or not there will be a *The School for Good and Evil 2*.

Pereira stated, “The ending was lacking. I’m not looking for a sequel.”

On the other hand, after Sivasubramaniam found out how the book ended, she started to “want a sequel.”

Although fans of *The School for Good and Evil* books may be disappointed, *The School for Good and Evil* is an exciting fantasy movie that many may enjoy. Despite many flaws, this movie may be worth watching for a riveting fairytale story or just to laugh at with friends. If the movie does not interest you, the New York Times bestselling *The School for Good and Evil* books may be a better option. ■



The School for Good and Evil movie poster.

because of how cringey it was.”

Another problem with the movie was how much it deviated from the books. The movie cut out important scenes (ex. most of the Trial by Tale, the entire Circus of Talents, etc.) and missed out on important components

leave viewers with a sense of satisfaction.

Pereira highlighted, “While I didn’t read the books, I heard about the books’ plot and I think the movie would’ve been much better had it just stuck more with the book.”

Sivasubramaniam

LIZZO SHINES WITH HER SPECIAL TOUR

Students speak out about Lizzo as both an artist and activist

Emma Pereira '24

This past July, Lizzo released her new album, titled *Special*. The album is filled with many hits including “The Sign and 2 Be Loved (Am I Ready)”. The love for this album has only grown as she tours all over the world to perform her new songs live for the first time.

Lizzo’s *Special* Tour has been taking the world by storm, as each show brings something new. Lizzo’s concert clips have been spreading all over social media.

In the beginning of her tour, she surprised one of her dancers on stage by bringing her mom to the show for her birthday. This surprise brought the dancer to tears, and Lizzo even got the entire audience to sing happy birthday. This was truly an amazing way to start a tour, and goes to show the care Lizzo has for her dancers.

As the tour continued, Lizzo took the stage at the Capital One Arena in Washington, DC. Lizzo plays the flute at every one of her concerts, but at this show, she played James Madison’s crystal

flute. The Library of Congress lent her the flutet o play at the concert, and Lizzo, a classically trained flutist, took up the opportunity. She made history that night being the first and only person to ever play that flute.

While many fans and

stepped up to defend Lizzo, but some people remained unconvinced that she deserved this opportunity.

Shortly after this show, Lizzo performed a bit closer to home at Madison Square Garden. During her two shows



Pereira and Bellapianta pose for a picture at the Lizzo concert.

observers were excited and impressed by seeing Lizzo play the 200 year old flute, she faced a lot of backlash from others. Many people took to the internet to criticize Lizzo and the Library of Congress. Fans, historians, and music professionals

there, Lizzo took a fan’s BeReal, made a TikTok, and even facetimes a fan’s ex-boyfriend.

Considering how close Madison Square Garden is, some Highlands students attended Lizzo’s concert. Junior Antonia Bellapianta, stat-

ed that Lizzo’s “stage presence was really engaging.” Bellapianta also noted the beauty in “the messages she gave during the concert” mentioning the emphasis on “self-love and encouraging the audience.”

The messages in Lizzo’s concert really distinguish her from other artists. While themes of self-love are already included in many of her songs, she makes sure to also share many words of wisdom between songs. She has told her audience that “love is what the world needs to be a better place.” She makes her concert a safe and empowering experience for all.

Also, at every performance, Lizzo ends one of her songs with the projection of the words “my body, my choice,” showing her support for the pro-choice movement.

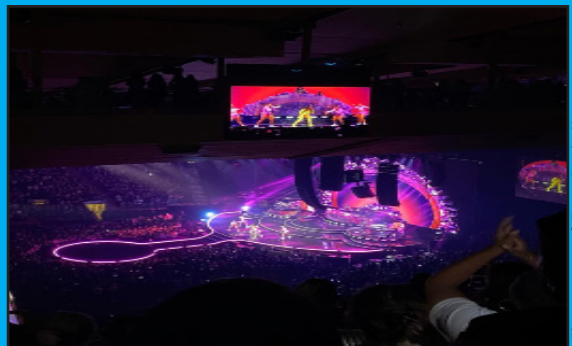
Additionally, in light of the recent midterm election, at some of her concerts, Lizzo shared with her audience the importance of voting. She told her fans “the laws in this country need to reflect the protection of all people in this country” and that

“human rights should not be politicized, it should be a given a necessity.” She tells her fans to “please go out and vote.”

To further promote the importance of voting, Lizzo arranged tables for voter registration at her concert venues to give

a breathtaking part of her concerts. Lizzo’s songs often include a more talkative and rhythmic style, as she both raps and sings, but during her concerts, she really showcases her vocal talent.

Lizzo also has a very talented crew, including



Lizzo performs on the dazzling stage in Madison Square Garden

her fans the opportunity to register right as they were walking in.

Another notable moment on this tour was her Halloween concert. While Lizzo had many Halloween costumes, including Chrisean Rock, Marge Simpson, and Woo Wop, for her concert in Denver, Colorado she dressed as Miss Piggy, the iconic character from the Muppets. Her backup dancers fit right in with their Kermit the Frog costumes.

Lizzo’s vocals, which are often overlooked, are

Photo courtesy of Emma Pereira '24

PURSUE YOUR LITERARY PASSIONS

The Freshman Literary Magazine is the place for passionate students to be

Gabriella Ragazzo '26

Northern Highlands has given all students the opportunity to express themselves through different types of activities. Additionally, the clubs here give students a space to find others who share the same passions and interests as them.

One of the clubs is Freshman Literary Club. Ninth graders who participate in the Freshman Literary and Art Magazine club read through student writing and artwork, pick the best pieces, and publish them in a full-color print magazine that the club members create in the spring.

The club's members can also submit their writing to the magazine. Any

freshman with a passion for writing, reading, art, or design are encouraged to participate. In the end, club members collaborate to produce a magazine.

Toward the end of the academic year, club members who exhibit leadership abilities consistently throughout the year may be given leadership roles. Students looking to express themselves and share their work with peers and the Highlands community should submit their work to the Freshman Literary and Art Magazine.

The freshman magazine frequently earns accolades and honors from the National Council for Teachers of English (NCTE) and the Columbia Scholastic Press Association (CSPA). All student

authors, artists, and club members will be allowed to mention their affiliation with an award-winning magazine on their college or employment applications if this year's issue receives any prizes.

All incoming freshmen are welcome and encouraged to submit their work. Students may turn in work that they put together on their own time or work that they turned in for class assignments.

The magazine frequently includes short stories, poems, and creative-writing essays in their writing, and they also use mixed media, photography, digital art, drawing, and paintings in their art. Artists that create huge or three-dimensional works (such as ceramics,

jewelry, or clothes) are highly encouraged to send excellent photos of their creations.

The club members participate and attend the Biannual Dodge Poetry Festival and the CSPA Conference. The Freshman Literary and Art Magazine accepts submissions through email from anyone. "It's a well-rounded experience that gives individuals the opportunity to express themselves with a group of supporters," a freshman in the club said.

Sebastian Tabavok is a member of the club who believes students should join the lit-mag "because the magazine is a great way to see and hear art within the Highlands community." He recommends this club to indi-

viduals who enjoy the arts (prose, poetry, painting, sculpting, etc).

"My favorite part of the lit-mag is being immersed in so much art. I love poetry and analyzing it! In addition, it's very interesting to look at such beautiful art created by my peers," he stated.

Sebastian is not only a committed member to this incredible magazine club but also a member of the newspaper club. "The lit-mag and The Fling are two very different publications, and as a member of both clubs, the difference is obvious. The newspaper reports on news, trends, opinions, and people; however, the lit-mag is an artistic outlet for those interested in literary art and physical art."

The Lit-Mag gives freshman the opportunity to let their talents in the world of art shine. Additionally, it can also give students the opportunity to see if they enjoy producing publications such as newspapers and magazines early on in their high school careers and allow them to focus more on it throughout their remaining high school years. The name of the author or artist is obscured when club members critique your work. While not every contribution will be included in the final magazine, there's a chance that yours might. Early April is typically the cut off date for students. ■

FROM THE STAGE TO THE CLASSROOM

Discover Stephanie Contreras' plans to futher her music education

Drishti Chauhan '24

The great music program at Highlands has nurtured many amazing musicians that are alumnus of the school. Current senior Stephanie Contreras plans to further her music career next year as a music education major.

Contreras stated that "[she] got into Voices sophomore year and [she] was also involved in

Choir," and her involvement in music at Highlands solidified her love for the arts and helped her realize how much she wanted to pursue it in the future.

Contreras has always been a big fan of music. She stated how "it's always been something that I loved as a kid, like I would just go around my house singing and dancing and it

gave me this really exciting feeling, whenever I listened to music or sang it kind of like took over me body in way, and I could not stop singing as a child."

"Ever since I got into school, I got involved in plays, in theater, any kind of choir, as much music as I could get into. I even started picking up guitar. In highschool I really wanted to get involved in acapella, and now I taking piano and guitar lessons and also taking music theory."

With music being such a big part of her life, Contreras spoke about how she hopes to further that education in the future. She stated how "it's always been something that I've been so interested in. As my goal for the future, I wants to learn as much about music as possible. Like, I wants to learn production, business, and a lot about music theory and different music genres."

"It's my goal to learn about jazz and about classical music. I'm really excited to go into music and fulfill my dreams of being able to sing and learn as much as I can about music while also helping and empowering other students who are just as excited about music as I am."

One of the schools Contreras has already been accepted into is Berkeley. "I went to a Berkeley program over the summer, a five week aspire program it's called, and at the time it was my top choice, I loved it."



Stephanie performing with her a capella group: Highlands Voices.

Photo courtesy of Stephanie Contreras '23

"Whenever I listened to music or sang it kind of like took over me body in way, and I could not stop singing as a child."

Stephanie Contreras

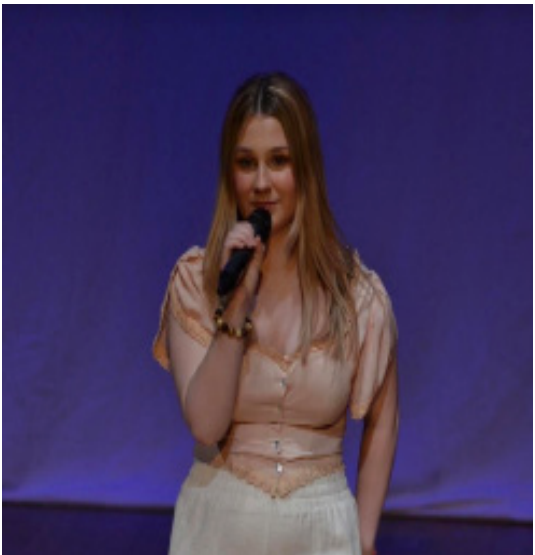


Photo courtesy of Stephanie Contreras '23

Senior Stephanie Contreras singing her solo during an a capella performance.

"I'm really excited to go into music... while also helping and empowering other students who are just as excited about music as I am."

Stephanie Contreras

"The main thing for me was that it is a contemporary jazz school because a lot of music schools only offer classical, and as much as I'm interested in classical, it's not my main

thing so I loved how much flexibility there was, how I could choose her major sophomore year and I could get involved in production and other aspects of music and learn ev-

everything and then choose a major, which I really liked."

She continued on to say, "I loved that I could learn so many different music genres while also working with the best of the best faculty, with great alumni, and great networking. A lot of their faculty are still involved in the music industry today."

Contreras is also looking into other schools such as Syracuse, University of Miami, and Case Western Reserve. Which ever she chooses, Contreras is bound to go far and the Highlands music community wishes her luck in all her future endeavors. ■

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REPRESENTATION IN THE 50'S?

New movie *My Policeman* and its powerful LGBTQ representation

Ryan Gottlieb '23

The last leg of 2022 has given us blockbust-er after blockbuster, and “My Policeman” is no exception.

Based on the 2012 romance novel written by Bethan Roberts of the same title, “My Police- man” is set in East Sus- sex, England during the late 1950s. The audience is introduced to Tom Bur- gess, a gay policeman, and Patrick Hazelwood, a museum creator.

They fall in love, but feeling the societal pres- sure of the period, Tom conforms to heteronor- mativity and pursues a relationship with Marion, a schoolteacher. These

3 navigate a tumultuous love triangle that’s filled with twists and turns, and the dynamic is a pointed commentary on the in- humane attitude towards the LGBTQ community in the past.

The film was direct- ed by Michael Grandage, and stars David Dawson as Patrick Hazelwood, Harry Styles as Tom Bur- gess, and Emma Corrin as Marion.

This film was heavily anticipated, and received fairly positive reviews in the media. What make this movie important though, is its accurate and relevant gay repre- sentation.

The media people

Though this plot has been done many times before, “My Policeman” has breathed new life into it and made it refreshing

Annie Pettinato

consumed directly cor- relates with the society that they live in, so in the past, when the LGBTQ community received ex- plicit systematic discrim- ination, they were experi- encing radio silence in the media.

With no coverage and no representation, their cause remained at a standstill for a while, and they remained ostracized. Little by little, we’ve worked towards tolerance and then equal- ity. In recent years, this progress has carried over to the media.

We’ve seen a huge influx of LGBTQ charac- ters and coverage, but it’s important to look critical- ly at this representation. Early on in this change, there have been many to- ken 2D LGBTQ charac- ters that essentially come off as caricatures. These characters prove that not all representation is good representation.

We’ve started to uphold a standard for LGBTQ representation, and when substantial

pieces of representation come around, like “My Policeman”, it’s very im- portant to look closely at it. Fortunately, it shines an LGBTQ in an accu- rate, but painfully sad light.

Senior Annie Petti- nato has some positive feedback to give on the movie. When asked her thoughts on the movie, she said she loved it, spe- cifically that it “was real- ly good and entertaining, and [she] really enjoyed Harry Styles in it”.

This seemed to be a recurring review for the movie, as Harry Style’s performance in “Don’t Worry Darling” came off as lifeless and unin- spired.

Pettinato also men- tioned that set design made the movie unique to her. But what was re- ally important to her was the LGBTQ representa- tion. She said, “though this plot has been done many times before, ‘My Policeman’ breathed new life into it and made it re- freshing”.

Pettinato recom- mends this movie to any- one, and considers it a top movie of 2022.

“My Policeman” is just another step in the long battle that is ad- equate representation. There are still years and years of injustice and hate to undo, but “My Policeman” is a step in a good direction.”

In a society more ac- cepting of the LGBTQ community, it’s import- ant that positive repre- sentation exists so chil- dren and young people can see themselves in what they watch, and know that their feelings and experiences are val- id.■



Photo courtesy of Prime Video



Photo courtesy of Prime Video

MORALITY AND ETHICS IN MEDIA

Is there a personal obligtation when dealing with a hateful celebrity?

Aarna Arora '23

Celebrities have a significant influence on our lives, and with that influence comes a lot of responsibility, especially regarding the information they spread on Social Me- dia.

Recently, Kanye West has come under fire for his antisemitic comments and white lives matter support. His words have sparked many controver- sies and given some of Kanye’s fans the idea that being antisemitic and dis- regarding the systematic oppression black people face is okay.

Kanye West has mil- lions following him on Instagram and Twitter, yet he still made the decision to post horrendous re- marks against Jewish peo- ple and the Black Lives Matter movement. These comments led him to lose his partnership with Adi- das and Balenciaga.

While we may not have the platform that Kanye West does, it is still important for us to maintain a proper digital footprint. Whatever we say or do on social me- dia is there forever. Our schools, colleges, and employers will be able to see anything we post on social media and use that information either against us or in favor of us.

If you have used so- cial media in any form, from posting a TikTok to liking a tweet, it remains with you forever, so re- member to please make good decisions on the in- ternet.

The question aris- es with Kanye’s recent controversy: Is it ethical to still consume Kanye West’s media despite what he has said? The answer is no, it is not ethical, but that won’t stop people from listening to his mu- sic or buying his clothes.

People will continue to listen to music made or watch movies and tv shows that feature peo- ple who have made bad decisions. Chris Rock is one such example. When Rhianna said Chris Rock abused her, people said to stop listening to his music. Today, however, Chris Rock continues to make music hundreds of millions of people listen to.

If you are going to consume any media made

by people, at least take the time and donate to affect- ed organizations. If you love Kanye West’s music, listen to it, but for every song you listen to, give \$10 to BLM charities and charities that help Jewish people.

Kanye West’s com- ments themselves are harmful to the Black and Jewish communities but what is worse is that he is spreading false informa- tion about each commu- nity.

Kanye West said that because he is black he cannot be antisemitic as all black people are Jew- ish. Jewish people origi- nated in the Middle East so while they were not white, they were still not black.

And while black peo-

ple can be Jewish, not all black people practice Ju- daism. Kanye West him- self is a Christian. By putting this statement out in the media, black people who are not Jewish and may not be as well edu- cated may think it is okay to be antisemitic because according to Kanye West, all black people are Jew- ish.

Kanye West’s state- ments spread misinforma- tion to millions online and it can get a lot of his fans in trouble.

Lynn Heo, a senior here at Highlands, said that “Kanye West’s posts are hurtful to so many people out there and he shouldn’t be given a plat- form where he has the ability to spread hateful comments.”

Despite the criticisms and consequences he has faced because of his com- mented, Kanye has been invited on podcasts where he has said even more antisemitic remarks; he still has a platform. Lynn also said that she be- lieves, “that he should be banned from social me- dia.” Kanye West’s social media accounts are still active and he still has mil- lions of followers on his accounts. Kanye West still has the ability to spread hateful remarks and it can have a negative impact on so many people.■

THE LOWDOWN IS UP AND RUNNING

The morning show is looking for members to join the fun

Nolan Rota '26

The Morning show, otherwise known as the Lowdown, is an iconic piece of entertainment for Highlands in the morning. This show informs High-

landers about important information worldwide. An important part of the Lowdown is the chemistry between members. Without team bonding, the morning show would feel more artificial and could disinterest viewers.

Everybody gets a chance to use different equipment whether they've taken classes at Highlands or not.

Senior Lauren Flatt says, "I think it's important for us to work together as a group this year, and I feel like I've gotten along with everyone. Having the pleasure of learning



Photo courtesy of Nolan Rota '26.

A member of the morning show editing the footage. while also incorporating various themes and ways to keep the show exciting. The combination of the transitions, segments, and themes makes this show

and also working with all of them for the lowdown helps [with bonding]." Justin Nadal, the showrunner for the Lowdown, gave activities to his students to encourage team bonding. Flatt states, "We couldn't do anything regarding the show until we did team bonding, so we had two weeks of just activities for us to get along with each other because we definitely struggled with that last year." A crucial aspect of the Lowdown are the various holiday themes. Nadal explains the process for future themes: "Every time we have some sort of holiday thing that's notable that everyone's doing, we do it. Spirit week, we're gonna do something for spirit week, and hoopla days and things like that. So that's a regular thing." During the interview, a musical episode was mentioned similar to the Halloween special where the cast did a theme of a music show. The concept for this musical episode was to do songs and sing, which is a very interesting future idea. Any student at Highlands who is interested in broadcasting is strongly

ly encouraged to join the production. As of now, the main core of the morning show is composed of students from the Advanced Broadcast Television class, but the group is expected to expand in January and throughout the spring. Students from past classes or students from the broadcasting team, a club on campus, are needed for assistance. The production for the morning show starts before homeroom and is planned to go live later this year. Students are also

The club has trained people how to use the various audio, lenses, and camera equipment, which means Highlands don't need to have any experience. like to see that expand because there are a lot of different opportunities to do a lot of different shows."

Highlands or not. Nadal states, "We have a good core of people, but we'd



Photo courtesy of Nolan Rota '26.

Senior Lauren Flatt and junior Cassie Lee opening the show.



Photo courtesy of Nolan Rota '26.

Sloan Strudler rehearsing lines for the Highlands Sports Network.

encouraged to join the Sports Broadcasting club, which meets every Wednesday in room 225.

Everybody gets a chance to use different equipment whether they've taken classes at

TRAINOR IS TAKIN' IT BACK

Meghan Trainor has released a new album after many years

Emma Pereira '24

October 21, 2022 was a big day for the music industry. Taylor Swift came out with her new album *Midnights*, Carly Rae Jepsen resurfaced with her album *The Loneliest Time*, and last but definitely not least, Meghan Trainor released her album *Takin' It Back*. While Meghan Trainor has been releasing music in the past years a lot of it has gone under the radar. This album has truly been a comeback for her. *Takin' It Back* has put her back on the map, especially on TikTok. Her songs "Made You Look," "Bad For Me," and "Don't I Make It Look Easy" took TikTok by storm, with multiple trends emerging from these tracks. Not only have her songs gone viral, but Trainor's account has populated many people's feeds. Her friendship with the famous TikToker Chris Olsen has gotten her a lot of attention, really creating a build up for this

new album. While her TikTok fame has definitely built up the anticipation for this album, her music speaks for itself. In an interview with Rolling Stone, Trainor talks all about how this album was intended to be an elevated return to her original doo wop sound. *Takin' It Back* is extremely versatile, with



Photo courtesy of Wikipedia.

something for everyone. Whether you are looking for an empowering song,

an emotional song, or a relaxing song, you will find it on this album. The tracks on *Takin' It Back* are also more nuanced than previous albums. Trainor reaches a lot deeper in her lyrics, and even the more up beat songs have a lot more depth. In an interview with Entertainment Weekly, Trainor says this album is "more real and raw." Trainor perfected her sound while still bring-

ing something new to her fans, and they are loving it. Her song "Made You Look" has remained on the Billboard 100 for the past two weeks and is on Spotify's USA Top 50 Songs list. Additionally, right after its release, the album as a whole made it on Spotify's Global Top Albums ranking. Senior Karen Bae is loving Meghan Trainor's new album. Bae listens to Meghan Trainor because "she has a unique form to her music that it stand out." Bae also mentioned that "even after being in the industry for so long, she has remained unproblematic. She has always been an advocate for body positivity, and she always knows how to write catchy pop songs." Bae notes that Trainor's "new songs still maintain an overall upbeat, happy tone but there are some songs with a sentimental feeling to them." Her favorite song on the album is "While You're Young" because it

"emulates a heartfelt message to her younger self to treasure her youth. She wants people to know that when you're young it's okay to make mistakes." Meghan Trainor is taking her career to new heights and has definitely caught the attention of many with this new hit album. Not only do her songs resonate with many of her fans, but many people appreciate

the encouraging messages that she sends to all her listeners. ■



Photo courtesy of Wikipedia.

Meghan Trainor released her new album 'Takin' It Back'.

NHFH TO STATE SECTIONALS

The bugs are rolling... who's going to stop them?

Samantha O'Connell '26

The Northern Highlands varsity field hockey team won their league and county titles this season. Unfortunately, they lost 7-1 to North Hunterdon on November 10. The Varsity team has had a great season with their captains Belle Bennett, Sarah Batenhorst, and Kate Pedicano. All of the captains are seniors who lead this team throughout the season and created a bonding experience with the girls. Carly Simmel, a senior on team, expressed, "Our team does so much team bonding, which has turned our team into a family. I have never been around such an amazing group of girls, and I think this is what has led us to be so successful this season." The girls practiced and conditioned to play this game and "We all work at 110% and motivate each

other," said Coach Paton. The girls worked hard and bonded for their season which caused them to be an amazing team. Going into State Sectionals there was "an equal amount of pressure on both the players and the coaches. The coaches definitely have a lot on their plate in terms of making sure that they have the best game plan. But "the players obviously also have a lot of pressure as we have to perform our best in order to get the best results possible," explained Simmel. The Varsity Field Hockey team was also excited about their win against Chatham and Lawerance who they beat 5-0. Lawerance was also the team that knocked the team out of last year's state tournament. Simmel and Coach Paton both expressed, "Throughout the season, we have grown so much both on and off of

the field. On the field, our skills have improved so much. Coach Jordan and Coach Quinn have been huge aspects of improving our game. Off of the field, we have grown so much. This chemistry that we have definitely shows on the field." Throughout the season, the players have become a family. In the first 3 quarters in the field hockey game North Hunterdon had scored 5 goals putting them ahead 5-0. The Highlands Field Hockey team did not stop fighting. In the last quarter Shannon Arber, a Sophomore, made an assist to Alexa Birch, another Sophomore, to score a goal for highlands. While the NHFH team did lose, they put all their energy into the game. They pushed through and persisted all they could. The team definitely did not lose their hype as the

season progressed. Simmel explained, " Our captains Sarah, Belle, and Kate have done such a great job this season planning out team bonding activities and bringing us together as a team. They always make sure that everyone is focused during practice and do everything that they can to get us ready." Not only did the players have a great attitude, but the coaches did too.

"The team had put in a lot of time preparing for each state game. Our players have done a great job of challenging each other during practice and keeping a high level of energy. We do all types of team activities to get the team excited for each game. Before each game we talk about the meaning behind the game and the goals we want to accomplish," said Coach Paton.

Coach Paton and Coach Quinn were so proud of how much the girls have accomplished and how much effort they put into not only the state sectional finals game, but all the others leading up to it as well. If they did win this match they would have gone to the State Championship. They finished their season with an impressive 19-3 record, their only losses being against Motclair, Phillipsburg, and North Hunterdon. Simmel said, "Throughout the season, one of our main goals was staying very focused during practice, and I think that this has been a huge factor in helping us win. We have also watched a lot of film on the teams that we are playing against, to view how to defend their style of play." Congratulations to the varsity field hockey team on an amazing season. ■



Senior captain Belle Bennett dribbles down the field.

Photo Courtesy of Tia Charney '23

VOLLEYBALL COMES TO AN END

Northern Highlands girls' volleyball loses to Paramus in state quarterfinals

Hayoung Sohn '24

The Northern Highlands Girls Volleyball team's season has come to an end with yet another successful year. Led by senior captains, Gianna Cabrera, Grace Khowaylo, Izzy Malley, Kait Karoleski, and Bella O'Callaghan, the girls were able to come together as a team and play at both the county and state tournament. Cabrera states, "We had a pretty good season despite having some difficulties along the way. I think we had a great team, but we could have done better. During some of the

hindered our abilities to play to our fullest potential." Junior Anna Bryan-Jones explains, "Overall the season went pretty well. There were a lot of ups and downs, and we were not as consistent as past years, but that made it even more fun when we did come together and pull out a win against a difficult team." Although the girls faced many obstacles along the season, they were able to come out with wins as well. A large contributor for the girls' strong teamwork were the bonding activities.

girls, building teamwork and leading to better performance." For example, "We had a pasta party, which was great to just hang out and eat some good food, and we also had a brunch with the whole program while we decorated our pep rally shirts. In addition, we coordinated our halloween costumes and had a sleepover the night before halloween, allowing all of the grade levels to bond together," Bryan-jones explains. In addition, the girls have a pre-game cheer to lighten up the tense atmosphere before playing



Varsity volleyball selfie after a win at the Leonia Tournament.

Photo Courtesy of Tia Charney '23

Despite having more losses than desired, Cabrera adds, "This season was an unforgettable experience that allowed me to grow a lot, and I'm sure the other players learned a lot as well. "Even though we didn't do as good as other years, our teamwork was great and I had lots of fun playing with the girls." Regardless of any outcome, it is clear that the girls have worked extremely hard this season. Coaches and underclassmen are already preparing for next year's season, which will be a big adjustment as there are ten graduating seniors this year. This leaves a lot of spots open on varsity to be filled by players of any grade level. Congratulations to the girls' varsity volleyball team on a great season. ■

fight through a challenging season. Although the girls had many accomplishments throughout the season, one that cannot be missed was winning a Saturday tournament. Bryan-jones states, "The most exciting part of the season was when we won the Leonia tournament. Highlands has won for the past few years, however our team this year was not as strong as prior years. Despite this, we played our best and managed to pull out a victory after a long and tiring day of 12+ games." Another notable victory was the game against Pascack Valley. Anna Bryan-Jones states, "The most challenging match was one of our last games against

Pascack Valley. They were a very strong team, however, we managed to minimize our mistakes and play to our potential, and we won." The game ended with a 2-0 victory. Junior Sophia Chieffi had 6 assists, sophomore Delia van der Heide had 1 block, and junior Anna Bryan-Jones had 3 kills. On the other hand, a challenging game for the girls was the state tournament against Paramus. Cabrera explains, "I think we were having an off-day as a whole team on the day of the second round of the state tournament. We were all nervous because it had the potential to be our last game and it held us back from playing to the best of our abilities."

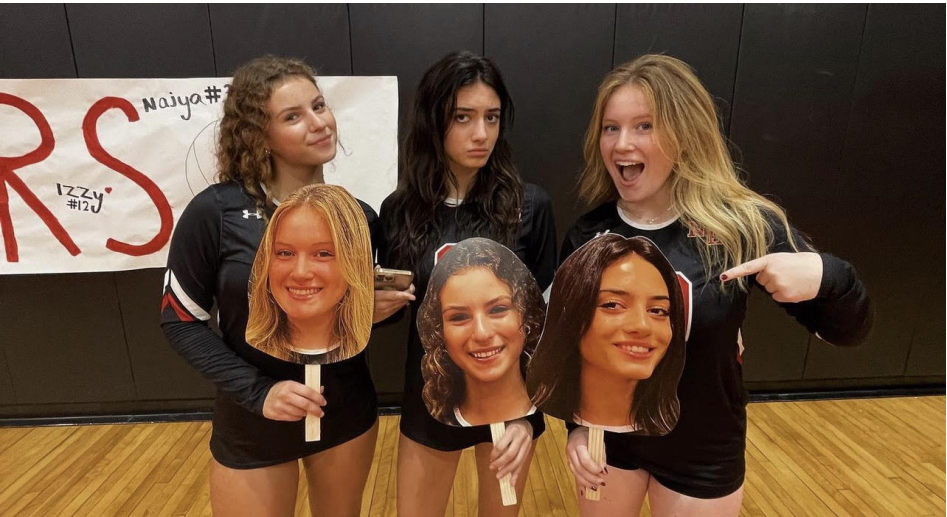


Photo Courtesy of Tia Charney '23

Seniors Grace Khowaylo, Mia Ansemli, and Bella O'Callaghan at senior night. games, a lot of us were nervous and the atmosphere was tense which Cabrera states, "Many team bonding activities were organized by the and hype each other up. Overall, the great team chemistry helped the girls

O CAPTAIN, MY CAPTAIN

Northern Highlands girls' field hockey captains lead their team to success

Gabe Tejeda '26

No team can succeed without outstanding captains leading the way. The Northern Highlands varsity field hockey team, a division two team with a 19-3 record, would not have made it far without the great leadership of their three captains.

Senior captains Sarah Batenhorst (forward/mid-field) Kate Pedicano (mid-field) and Belle Bennett (forward) lead their team with power, never failing to go the extra mile to make the team one of the best in the league.

Led by head coach Jordan Paton, these

three captains inspire the younger girls on the team. Kelsey Bennett, one of two freshmen on the varsity team, said, "They're [the captains] super kind, supportive, and they care about us."

The rest of the freshman field hockey team agrees. Clearly, the love of these captains extends beyond just their varsity team, and they put a strong effort into making the players on all three teams feel supported. This is what keeps this amazing team on top.

There are a lot of responsibilities that come with being a team captain. One of these responsibilities

is leading the team on and off the field, which is very important for communication and the equality of the team. They also hold the responsibility of preparing the team for the season.

"We prepared for the season by holding captains practices over the summer," said Pedicano.

Finally, they help create lasting friendships between all the girls on the team. They have nights full of team bonding-- a team favorite being dip night.

Dip night is when each person creates their own kind of dip and they all eat together and try all the food. No salads or mains, just dips.

"We have many nights of team bonding throughout the season which is so fun and really helps us grow as a team," said Pedicano.

Dip nights are only one example of this, but almost every time they could this team was hanging out. Beyond making fun dips, this team truly communicates with one another.

"We communicate as a

whole unit, as everyone is known to be equals on the team," added Pedicano.

Even though there are three captains, the rest of the team is still as highly regarded and important as the captains. They are also very open with each other and their coaching staff, saying that the communication between team members is just as important as it is with their coaches.

The team had a very successful season. As Pedicano said, "Being ranked 8th in the state at one point, our season was great."

This year was the first year in nine years that the team made it to the sectional finals. In addition to this, they won counties and leagues for the second year in a row. This season was a very exciting for the entire field hockey program here at Highlands.

According to Pedicano, being a part of the Northern Highlands field hockey family for four years has completed her high school experience.

Field hockey has become her second home,

and she feels that leading bonded teams at High-



Photo courtesy of Tia Chaney '23

Field hockey smiles for a picture. the team this year was such a privilege.

Whether due to dip nights or exhausting practices, one of the best and most important part of the season is that everyone made new friends and the team as a whole became closer.

"I feel that I got to show the underclassmen what the heart of Northern Highlands field hockey means to me and that was so important and special," Pedicano remarks.

This team is not just a team, they have a heart. The varsity field hockey team is known to be one of the closest and most well

lands. Every NHFH player interviewed agrees that they felt more bonded to their captains and coaches than any other team they had ever been on.

Pedicano finished: "We're a team, and everything we accomplish, we accomplish together."

This mentality was clearly a huge part of the field hockey team's successful season. ■



Photo courtesy of Tia Chaney '23

Varsity field hockey celebrates a big win.

FOOTBALL MAKES HISTORY

Highlands football defeats North Hunterdon 21-20 in OT to go to Rutgers

Olivia Burchell '23

November 10th may have been an ordinary first day of Teacher's Convention for some, but for Northern Highlands, it was the third defeat in a row of our biggest rival--Ramapo.

In undoubtedly the longest high school football game of the season (about 4 hours), there were 2 blackouts, overtime, and both triumph and heartbreak.

Highlands' second defeat of Ramapo came in a regular season game on September 30th with a score of 29-26 away at Gibbs' Memorial Field.

Last season, they also defeated Ramapo at home for the North 1, Group 4 sectional championship.

The sweep of a team as highly regarded at Ramapo put Highlands on the map as a team to watch.

Though they historically haven't held the same

reputation as a North Jersey football powerhouse as a Ramapo or Ridgewood, things are changing.

In fact, Ramapo has gone 0-3 against Highlands from the end of last November until now.

With that major upset last Thursday, Highlands was challenged yet again on November 19th against North Hunterdon.

Despite many people doubting them, the Highlanders showed up and



Photo courtesy of northjersey.com

Junior Danny Smiechowski scores a touchdown.

edged out North Hunterdon in overtime by sticking to a "next play" mentality.

Although North Hunterdon dominated in the second half, they missed a potential 30-yard game-winning field goal with 12 seconds left to send the game into overtime.

In overtime, sophomore quarterback Nate Johnson threw a touchdown to junior Freddie Kanning. Kicker Dan Moor scored the extra point.

The North Hunterdon Lions got the ball back and scored, bringing the score to 20-21.

They lined up for the extra point to tie the game, but the Lions kicker missed and the Highlanders rushed the field.

This win makes history. Northern Highlands is now the first Bergen County school to clinch a spot in a public school state championship game.

This will be played December 3rd at Rutgers

Stadium.

As senior running back Charlie Sparago said, "No Highlands team has ever won this game before. We're the first time in history. We made history tonight."

There is no doubt that this 2022 Northern Highlands football team has what it takes to put up at fight at Rutgers and continue making history. ■



Photo courtesy of northjersey.com

Senior Charlie Sparago runs the ball after making an interception.

COMMITMENT CORNER

PAGLIERI TO BABSON

Jackie Paglieri to continue her softball career at Babson College

Ava Waller '23

Babson College hit a home run by recruiting superstar Jackie Paglieri, who's currently a Northern Highlands senior.

Quick and aggressive on the field, Paglieri is a key player that's able to sprint to the ball like no other and give it her all.

Her passion for the game is clear by her energy on and off the field, as well as by her dedication to the game.

"I am quick to get to the ball and always give my best effort to make the play, even if that means diving or running into someone," mentions Paglieri.

Luckily for Babson, Jackie's a utility player, meaning that she can play a multitude of positions.

Right now, Paglieri currently plays second base and center field where she can use her speed and energy to her advantage.

Paglieri also has some strengths when up at bat. She has a powerful hit and is infamous for stealing bases.

She's confident and isn't afraid to risk an out to get to where she wants to be.

Paglieri has been active in softball since she was five, although, she didn't realize she wanted to play softball in college until she was around fourteen.

Already, Jackie has received an immense amount of support from her future teammates and coaches at Babson, minimizing her fears of playing college softball.



Jackie Paglieri officially signing to play for Babson College.

"They have reached out to me to help me get a feel for what to expect and get ready to play at the college level, so I feel prepared for it and am looking forward to getting started."

Throughout her career, Paglieri has received a lot of support from her friends, family, and coaches.

While she loves the game, Paglieri has enjoyed the friendships made and places explored the most.

Because of her rigorous club team schedule, Paglieri has flown all over the country with her teammates to play top softball teams in the nation.

Out of all the memories, Paglieri has one favorite: "The summer when we went to Tennessee, a couple of my friends and I ran a little over a

mile and to Walmart for no real reason, and we had to run back to the hotel in a Thunderstorm."

The bonds that Paglieri has made with her teammates will last a lifetime, and only increases her love for the sport.

Paglieri's coach has played a huge role in her desire to play softball in college and pushes her to always work her hardest, being her biggest inspiration.

"[Not only does he put] a ton of work into making me a better player and person, [he] continuously reaches out to my team and me to check-in or share articles or videos about ways to improve our game," Paglieri notes.

Her coach made sure to involve Paglieri in as many opportunities to be

seen as a player. "I believe a huge part of how I got recruited [at Babson College] was because of how hard he pushed me, and how much time he put into helping me achieve my goals."

Jackie's friends and family were ecstatic to hear her commitment to Babson since they had known her heavy interest in the school.

Babson has been at the top of Paglieri's list of favorite colleges since she first toured the school.

"I instantly fell in love with the campus, and everyone I've met there has been nothing but nice."

Paglieri adores the close-knit community that

Paglieri looks forward to the new people she's destined to meet and the new classes she's destined to take.

She's already gotten a good look at this by sitting in on a couple of classes pertaining to her major at the college, which she heavily enjoyed.

While Paglieri will be leaving the Northern Highlands softball team next year, she will never forget the bonds she was able to build with her teammates or the skills she learned in class like balancing extra-curricular activities and time management.

"My friends, teachers, and coaches here have greatly impacted the



Jackie Paglieri up at bat at a softball game.

the softball team at Babson has established and looks forward to playing with them in college.

Outside of softball,

person I have grown to be, and I can't express how much gratitude I have for everything they've done," Paglieri admits.



Jackie Paglieri playing in the infield.

FLATT DRIBBLES TO RAMAPO

Lauren Flatt decides to continue her basketball career at Ramapo College

Alexa Denburg '23

It takes a lot of hard work and dedication to play any sport at the collegiate level.

Senior Lauren Flatt is ready to take on the challenge as she committed to Ramapo College for basketball this year.

Lucky for Flatt, she has had a lot of experience playing basketball as she started from a very young age.

Flatt states, "I've played basketball basically my whole life, really starting in first grade. I started practicing with my dad in kindergarten."

Flatt highlights her biggest inspirations when playing the game. She explains, "My biggest inspirations have been between Paige Bueckers and Sue Bird."

She explains "I try to look at their games to improve my game and they inspire me to not only be a great player, but an even better teammate. They don't always look to shoot every shot, they get a lot of assists throughout a game looking for their teammates for a better scoring opportunity."

Flatt is able to use their dedication and skills and applies them to her

own game.

Flatt has had a very successful basketball career during her time at Highlands.

The Northern Highlands girls basketball team won twelve games last season with major victories over Old Tappan and Ridgewood.

Flatt contributed heavily to these wins as she finished the season with a total of 197 points.

Flatt reflects on her wonderful time in the Northern Highlands girls basketball program over the past three years.

When asked about her favorite memory, Flatt



Lauren Flatt about to shoot a basketball at a Highlands game.

says, "My favorite memory was when my team came back in the championship game against our rival team. We were losing by 20 points and ending up winning the game by 4. It was the most exciting game and it showed me the important lesson that you are never out of a game until the very end."

Flatt attributes much of her success to the support of the Highlands coaching staff.

She also attributes success to having a solid support system, giving her family and friends on the basketball team much of the credit for her success.

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FLATT DRIBBLES TO RAMAPO

Lauren Flatt commits to play basketball at Ramapo College next year

Continued from page 18

Flatt ultimately chose Ramapo college because of the great athletic and academic program the school has to offer.



Lauren Flatt's Ramapo College commitment announcement post.

Jersey.

Competing and playing a sport at a college level can be difficult, but Flatt thinks that Highlands has prepared her well not just for basketball, but also academically.

"Highlands has definitely prepared me for college since a bunch of my classes taught me certain subjects that I need to know in my college classes. Highlands has also taught me important life lessons and tips that I can use in college."

Besides just playing basketball, Flatt is excited to make connections with her new teammates.

She explains, "I'm looking forward to getting close to my teammates. I love meeting new people and it's always exciting when I get the opportunity to play with new talented players that can help me

better my own game! Off the court, I'm looking forward to making new friends."

Ramapo College has gained a hardworking and determined student and athlete.

Flatt is excited for the challenges that lie ahead, saying, "I'm extremely excited to go to college and continue to play basketball there."

She continues, "even though some factors are really nerve-racking, I know that once I'm settled into everything, I'll be even more excited for this new chapter!"

Flatt has played an important role in the Northern Highlands girls basketball program. Good luck to Flatt as she finishes her last season playing with Northern Highlands!

There is no doubt that she will continue to



Flatt shooting a basketball during a Highlands home game.

showcase her talents as she brings her athletic skills, dedication, and work ethic to Ramapo College for the next four years. ■

Photo courtesy of Lauren Flatt '23

LIA MILLER CATCHING DREAMS

Lia Miller officially commits to play D1 softball at Elon University

Gabriella Ragazzo '26

For what once was a dream, senior Lia Miller's wish has come true as she has committed to Elon University for softball.

Since the age of eight, with strength and determination, Miller has been playing and improving her softball game.

Softball is known as a sport that holds the basics of throwing, hitting, running, catching and so much more. Some players see it as a small outlet to learn great qualities that will build character toward young girls.

In Lia's case, knew this was going to be the sport of her life. A big commitment at a small age led to a career she will never forget.

To lead her to this

stage her older sister has been her biggest supporter. Miller hopes to follow in the footsteps of her older sister as she is playing softball in college as well.

Miller committed to Elon University to spend most of her collegiate career doing what she does best: softball.

The varsity athletic team at Elon University competes in the NCAA Division 1 Colonial Athletic Association, and students, staff, and community members frequently attend sporting events.

Elon University is a fantastic place to attend college. To begin with, the campus is phenomena. Both the professors and students are kind and interested in the future of other or their own students.

Lia was aware of this

while choosing to commit, explaining "I chose Elon University because they have great academics and a great softball program."

With the support of her family and friends she is overly flustered with happiness knowing that she can continue playing the softball game throughout her college career.

In the field, Miller's positions are mainly on the pitching mound which always helps her team stay on top. Miller's pitch speed is 64.0 mph with a spin rate of 60 yard dash.

She also is seen at first base, which is usually the main source of outs within the game.

In order to have more playing time to develop her skills, Miller is also on a club team in addition to playing for the Highlands



Lia Miller's official Elon University commitment photo.

team. Her club team is Atlanta Premier Fastpitch.

On the field and off the field, she is known as #44 to her softball friends.

Dreams are known to be easy to plan and hard to chase. It takes hard work to get what you want and within all the work Lia put in, her supporters knew she reached her dream.

Miller acknowledges how "softball has taught me to never give up and to work hard for your dreams."

Miller's years at Northern Highlands definitely prepared her for this milestone in her life as there is an abundant sports life as well as rigorous academic schedules, similar to what she will experience at Elon University.

The competitive nature of the girls Miller was faced against during practices, games, losses and wins, also prepared her for the cut throat environment

D1 athletes will experience.

Her four years at Northern Highlands has helped her grow not only as a player, but also as a person.

Not only is she excelling in classrooms and focusing on her education, but softball was also consistently a part of her life as well year round.

Playing any sport at a collegiate level, athletes must be able to put their all into the game, but also be able to maintain their emotions.

Softball allowed Miller to not only learn how to play the game with heart, but also taught her how to keep her emotions under check.

Miller explains that softball also helped her learn from a very young age "to listen to her coach's instructions and pick up on the indications during games in addition to

learning the right ways to play the game."

It has been proven that group practice can improve relationships, boost self-esteem, and reduce stress. Miller agrees that she feels a "boost in self-esteem when playing softball."

She also continues to explain that softball has helped her "learn to handle peer pressure and develop peer trust."

Miller has gained an abundant amount of friendships that she hopes will last a lifetime through the sport, and will only continue to make more at Elon University.

In the spring this year she is happy to conclude her stay at Northern Highlands and enjoy one last season of unforgettable memories, lessons, and friendships. Good luck, Lia. ■



Lia Miller's Elon University commitment announcement post via Instagram.

Photo courtesy of Lia Miller '23

THE FRESHMAN SOCIAL 2022

It is essential for freshmen to get comfortable with their classmates, teachers, and get to know the overall environment at Highlands. Every year, the Boomerang Project organizes the Freshman Social as a way for students to get to know their classmates and have a night of fun. The freshman social is just one of many creative ways to get the freshman familiar with the school. This event, hosted on November 8th, helped to make their transition to highlands smooth and enjoyable.

This year's freshman really made the most out of the event. Ambassadors were in charge of promoting the event to their freshmen and selling tickets to them, and a homework pass was offered for students who attended. This event took place at school in the junior and senior cafeterias with the goal of making Highlands feel more like home.

There were several activities to entertain the students all night. This year, the activities consisted of a photo booth, a DJ, great food, and multiple raffles.

The whole night students were on the dance floor and taking pictures at the photo booth. Some students even won raffle baskets put together by groups of ambassadors. Students won items such from airpods and Highlands merch to gift cards to Dunkin Donuts, Starbucks, Vanilla Sky, Gamestop, and more.



Photo courtesy of Mary Lardiere

Freshmen, ambassadors, and teachers joined in on a dance circle that commenced throughout the night



Photo courtesy of Mary Lardiere

Freshmen pose with the gift baskets they won as part of a raffle.

The Freshman Social is a success every year, and this year was no different. Freshman Alija Schulmann says, "It helped me connect more with friends and it was a really fun experience." She also goes on to say that, "I hope this event continues to take place in the future." This event is a great way to show freshmen that high school is more than just a place for academics.

After a lot of planning, this was definitely a night to remember for all those who attended.