

# F THE HIGHLAND FLING

Northern Highlands Regional High School | 298 Hillside Avenue, Allendale NJ 07401 | Volume 58, Issue 02 | October 2022



Members of the Academic and Career Pathways team, Kimberly Hayes and Thomas Walsh.

## FENDER BENDER ALERT

The class of '23 seems to have car troubles

Kait Karoleski '23

With the senior class being granted parking privileges, the inevitable has begun: accidents in the parking lots. While it's bound to happen to some students, the possibility of getting into a car accident still worries seniors.

If a student gets into an accident on school property, Principal Joseph Occhino says, "We can involve the police to file a report, if the parents or students want to do that. Sometimes parents want to just take care of it directly with the other family, and we let them do whatever they want to do in situations like that. First and foremost, we make sure that everyone is safe and no one is hurt. If the parents want to proceed with calling the police, the school will do that because it happened on school grounds."

Senior Alanna Breen's car was hit while she was driving up West Maple Avenue and about to turn into the parking lot. She explained that she was "driving under the speed limit up the street and out of nowhere, a parent crashed into my car while I was trying to come into the student lane."

Continued on Page 8

## THE PATHWAY TO SUCCESS

Thomas Walsh joins the academic and career pathways team

Griffin Evans '24

Longtime Northern Highlands faculty member Thomas Walsh is the newest edition to the Career & Academic Pathways team as a Work-Based Learning Mentor. This program is a multifaceted way to enrich student learning at Northern Highlands, including opportunities like senior internships, community service, dual enrollment, college partnerships, apprenticeships, and many other programs.

Originally founded in 2017 by now-supervisor Kimberly Hayes, this program is intended for every student, whether they

are interested in trades, a pre-professional track, or simply wanted a unique experience. The New Jersey Department of Educa-

**"You can get educational credit and a great activity to list on your resume."**

*Supervisor  
Kimberly Hayes*

tion requires public high

schools to integrate all subject fields with career-ready standards in their units. According to Hayes, "we wanted to provide something more ... [an opportunity for] students to learn the soft skills they need for a career beyond high school".

Walsh has long been a pillar of the Highlands community, teaching a wide array of subjects ranging from Algebra or Geometry all the way to Chemistry and Physics. With a special education certification and a mathematics and education administration degrees, he has both the knowledge and experience that the Academic Path-

ways team was looking for.

When asked what prompted this addition, both Hayes and Assistant Principal Tony LaRocca agreed on the same thing. Logistically, Hayes explains that, "The program has grown so much since I first started it. We want to provide these opportunities to as many students as possible, and as we grow, we also must expand our manpower." To add on, LaRocca highlights how "Mr. Walsh has always had amazing relationships with students. To really get the word out there and really invigorate the program, we think he is a great addition to the team."

This has been a predictable opportunity for Walsh though, as he explains that, "I had expressed years ago that I may be interested in working on a project like this. I've been working here for so long, and going that extra step to provide these extra opportunities and get involved is always great."

There are many different ways students can take advantage of this program. Senior internships are woven into a student's schedule, where, "you can get educational credit and a great activity to list on your resume or college application", Hayes says.

Continued on Page 8

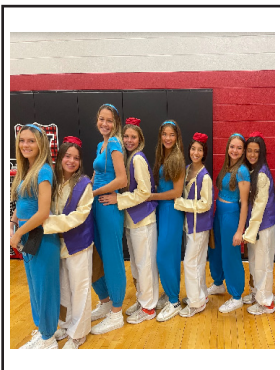
## INSIDE



### Trip around the world

Take a trip around the world within Highlands' very own World Language Department from four different teachers.

Page 5



### Fall at Highlands

Learn about some of our Highlanders favorite fall festivities to partake in.

Page 10-11



### A Ca-believe its back

All three A Capella groups are back and rehearsing for the 2022-2023 competition year.

Page 15



# THE ULTIMATE FALL ICON?

The debate between apples and pumpkins: which side will you choose?



Photo courtesy of Isabela Canavan '24

Isabela Canavan '24

Whenever autumn rolls around, many people visit take day trips to farms for apple and pumpkin picking to get into the fall spirit. Because of the high demand for these foods, both are associated with the fall season.

Despite the popularity of apples, pumpkins are clearly the epitome of fall since they're nearly exclusive to fall, while apples are "in season" all year round.

Apples are a favored fruit, especially here in the tri-state area where there are plenty of orchards nearby. Even though they reach the height of their popularity during the fall and winter, apple-related food and drinks such as apple juice, apple cobbler, apple cider, and apple pie remain popular throughout the year and are served on several holidays including Halloween, Thanksgiving, and Christmas.

However, pumpkins aren't nearly as popular throughout most of the year, which makes them a staple icon for the fall. In fact, many food chains like Starbucks and Dunkin' are very successful in selling iconic drinks such as the Pumpkin Spice Latte, the Pumpkin Cream Cold Brew, and pumpkin donuts. Pumpkins are brought to mind and consumed more during fall, therefore giving pumpkins an edge over apples.

It's important to note that pumpkins are nearly synonymous with Halloween, as they're considered by some to be Halloween's symbol and are a huge part of Halloween decorations.

More specifically, Jack-o'-Lantern carving contests are very popular in this area. Although I have personally never participated in one, I, along with some friends, have carved designs into pumpkins for fun. A very popular activity for Allendale families with young children is to visit Rosler's and go on a hayride to a pumpkin patch. I did this in elementary school with my girl scout troop, and we would run around looking for the perfect pumpkin to take

home.

In addition, my mom and I annually head into a Trader Joe's and clear out their pumpkin pancake stock, as they are seasonal

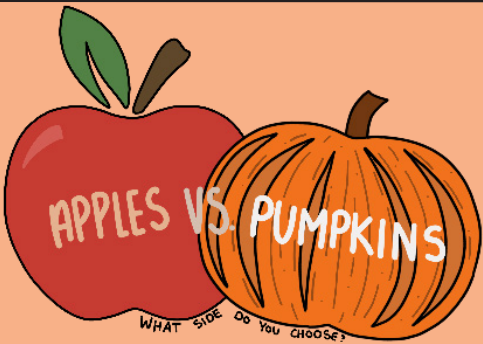
Because of their popularity during the fall months, pumpkin-flavored items would be extremely profitable for the Highlands cafeteria menu. So

In addition to pumpkin flavored drinks, other foods that I think the cafeteria should sell during the fall are apple and pumpkin pies would be relatively simple to make (as most baked goods are easily produced in large quantities).

As I've mentioned previously, baked goods flavored with pumpkins are very popular, and the school could sell items such as pumpkin pancakes and pumpkin muffins before school for breakfast. For lunch, they could add items such as pumpkin cookies, pumpkin bread, and pumpkin-filled ravioli.

Incorporating this symbolic fall must-have into Highlands will surely get students in the spirit for the fall season and encourage them to branch out and try something new.■

Despite the popularity of apples, pumpkins are clearly the epitome of fall.



Art by Emily Gan '23

items and always disappear quickly (most likely due to others with the same mentality as us).

far this year, the cafeteria has sold apple cider milkshakes, which I've been told tasted pretty good.

## The Highland Fling

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The views of the staff do not necessarily reflect the views of the administration. The administration has the right to review and alter an issue of the newspaper for five school days after it has been given to them by the staff. In the process of prior review, the original content of the paper may be changed or deleted. Regardless, the staff of *The Highland Fling* prides itself on delivering the most relevant and accurate reporting it can.

## From the Desk of the Editors-in-Chief

At Highlands, for many of us, the importance of grades has been drilled into our brains. We see numbers before everything, and as we navigate through the college admissions process, this bad habit only becomes more natural.

We let our grades define us. When 2:40 hits, we anxiously refresh Genesis to see what we got on our calc test before we even physically have it in our hands. Because the two (or three) digit number matters more in that moment than where we messed up, what concept we didn't understand, the lesson we need to practice. That part can come later.

We wonder what it would've felt like to not miss the fourth multiple choice question on our psych test. Sure, a 93 is impressive, but what if we had gotten a 95?

As high school seniors in the midst of applying to college, grades feel more important than ever. Because what if that 93 in April of last year is the difference between an acceptance or a deferral? We don't know, and numbers are the most simple way we can obsess over inevitably much bigger factors in our college decisions process.

For those reading that aren't seniors or don't relate to the stress of worrying about how colleges might perceive your grades, comparison to others could be another issue.

We need to remember that it's important to remember that grades are subjective. Your 95 may be someone else's 85, or vice versa. Even though the scale is the same, we all perceive our grades differently.

We often find ourselves subconsciously (or purposefully) using our grades to compare ourselves to other people. But what grades don't tell us is what type of friend, daughter, son, or teammate you are. And isn't that so much more important in the grade scheme of things than your calculus grade?

We are all whole people. 8 letters in Genesis do not indicate whatsoever how you treat others, how you care for your community, and how loved you are.

Although it almost feels like we're hardwired to see numbers before everything, it's imperative that we understand that our worth is not a raw score out of 100. And with that, we wish that before you check Genesis today at 2:40, you remember that you are so much more than a percentage.

**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](mailto:fling.eic@gmail.com). If you are interested in placing an ad or subscribing, please contact the email listed above.

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1-800-950-6264

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

# OH, THE HORROR!

How do you get your heart racing during the scariest time of the year?



Photo courtesy of Emma Pereira '24

Emma Pereira '24

Having my birthday be less than a week before October 31st has always meant my celebrations were centered around Halloween. I had Halloween-themed birthday parties which always felt like a great way to extend my birthday festivities.

Whenever my birthday passed, I always followed up with going trick-or-treating and dressing up in fun costumes, but as I got older, and the dressing up and trick-or-treating died down, Halloween felt insignificant. During my freshman year, I didn't

dress up and had a small celebration. Really, I just participated in the obligatory watching of a horror movie and put some ghost socks on. I thought the Halloween phase in my life had passed. However, I've recently been able to reignite the fun of Halloween. Instead

become the epitome of the Halloween season. Yes, horror movies are great and I always look forward to watching them, but I've found that there is no rush like being in a haunted house. In all honesty, I used to absolutely despise haunted houses. I vividly remember being in

After that clown told us the only way out was through, we searched for any way possible to leave. We frantically went through the emergency exit in tears.

like being in a horror movie, but experiencing that terror is so much better than just watching it on a screen. I'm someone who loves adrenaline-inducing things. I wouldn't

best parts. The set, makeup, costumes, and acting all contribute to the magic. I love seeing what new things people come up with to really boost the scare. Horror is so broad and there are so many genres within horror, which allows for haunted houses to be so diverse in design. Halloween is such a great outlet for creativity and haunted houses really showcase that.

Now that I'm a junior, I've reignited my love for Halloween in new different ways from my childhood.

Although it might be a lot of effort to organize and Halloween isn't the same as it was when we were little, I challenge every Highlander to explore Halloween in a new way. This year, you can definitely find me at a haunted house on Halloween night, and I hope some Highlanders join me for a good scare. ■



Art by Emily Gan '23

## Horror is so broad and there are so many genres within horror, which allows for haunted houses to be so diverse in design.

My second try at haunted houses went much better. When I was in eighth grade, my cousin and I went to a local haunted house. I was excited to give it another go, and being older I was able to manage my fear better (at least, I like to think I did). That thrill was unmatched by anything else. Haunted houses are

call myself an adrenaline junkie, but I will definitely partake in a roller coaster or a zipline when I have the opportunity. When October comes around, I'm always due for a visit to a haunted house. A highlight of haunted houses is indeed the rush it brings, but no one ever appreciates the design that goes into them, which I consider to be one of the

# WHAT WILL YOU BECOME?

Many options, little time, what are you going as this Halloween?



Photo courtesy of Sebastian Tabakov '25

Sebastian Tabakov '25

Halloween. The word sparks countless emotions; fear, joy, and excitement are just a few of them. This holiday with its unique I'm-going-to-make-you-shiver-and-weep ability has been worshiped for thousands of years. Throughout the years, society has added a dress code to Halloween. A black tie may seem appropriate, but a bathrobe is too. In essence, the question I am tasked with answering is: are we too old to dress up on Halloween? I find Halloween to be the short-lived peak of the year. Not only do I, but a few others do believe that this holiday is a glorious time for mischief, parties, and general witchery, yet also a time to become someone else for a night.

And of course, free candy seems to fan the flame of Halloween, specially for children that are young enough to trick or treat. Nevertheless, dressing up is a time-honored tradition that one can never be too old for. Frankly, not enough people do it. Though I do not at all advise everyone to wear a considerably over-the-top costume, I do believe something is better than nothing. As a whole, the majority of Highlands does not dress up, with the exception of some sports teams. So, why is it that not enough people get dressed up for Halloween?

Some say that dressing up is for children. On the contrary, I believe that we have adapted rather mature costumes into our version of Halloween. For example, in the past week I've asked ten of my peers, who go to Highlands what they are going to be this year. Four said they are going to be a Playboy Bunny—somewhat mature I would say. Scary movies are a vital factor in Halloween costumes. Movies like "Scream" bring inspiration to viewers, creating unnerving costumes. Although little Mr.

Ghostfaces running around is an amusing thought, this holiday has been revolutionized by scary movies. The most popular costumes on this eerie day are Chuckie, Freddy Kruger, Micheal Meyers, and killer clowns. Not everyone has watched these movies, some reasons being a lack of interest in the horror movie genre or simply because these movies are not of our generation. Despite the circumstances, the majority of us know exactly who these fictitious characters are during this season and their perfidious

with my Ninjago costume. Not only have I been black shirt with low-rise, baggy black jeans with

## Nevertheless, dressing up is a time-honored tradition that one can never be too old for; frankly, not enough people do it.

a stubby green ninja, but my costumes have also consisted of one of the seven deadly sins, a black angel, a faceless ghoul, and a vampire.

shiny black angel wings and a halo to add on the finishing touches for the costume. Sickly-looking SFX makeup was brushed

to-par mix were black platform boots that might as well have been considered stilts. As well as being the most extreme costume I've ever done, being an angel has by far been my favorite. I adored dressing up as something other than I am. I really enjoyed the role I got to play. Moving along, this year I am torn between two costumes. The two finalists in my mental debate have come down to either a rockstar or a cowboy. Both contenders show strong promise and a cheap budget of mainly already owned clothing, just the same I am enraptured by the October holiday season. In retrospect, Halloween rules the fall season. Candy, mayhem, and costumes fuel the perfect atmosphere of Halloween, most importantly costumes. Ultimately, I urge you to wear a costume to school, to a Halloween party, or even if you decide to pay homage to youth and trick-or-treat. I can guarantee that it will get you excited for October 31st. Have a happy and safe Halloween, Highlanders! ■



Art by Emily Gan '23

ways. Personally, I have done a multitude of costumes, circa second grade

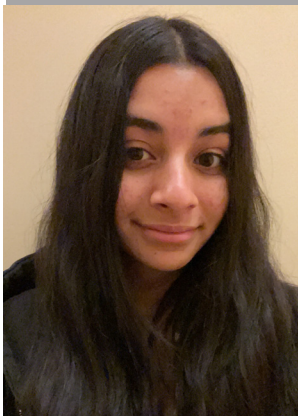
My most extreme get-up for Halloween currently stands as the black angel. I wore a tattered, tight

across my face and arms for a genuine ghostly appearance. Included in this up-



# IMPACT OF MICROAGGRESSIONS

One student shares their thoughts on microaggressions.



Jiya Singh '24

Over the last several decades, monumental social change has been achieved through movements, law reform, and

many American institutions and perspectives. The microaggression is a brief remark that implies derogatory or negative beliefs about people of color. No matter the perpetrator's intention, the comment is nestled within one's perception of a certain group, revealing a plethora of implicit biases that denote the power the perpetrator has over the victim.

Due to microaggressions, the benefits of diversity are diminished for everyone, not solely the minority. When people of color feel unsure about sharing their experiences, white people miss out on

out of this community. Some of these students, who will remain unnamed, have bravely decided to voice their experiences in the hopes of improving our community for everyone.

Microaggressions are known to be detrimental to the emotional, mental, and social well-being of people of color. This leads to a feeling of inferiority that stems from childhood.

Minorities have adjusted to longstanding power structures, unlike the microaggression. There is a distinct sense of betrayal by the perpetrator who, up until that point, has displayed positive attitudes towards a

from sharing their voices. Here at Highlands, teachers

racism, but all it did was reveal how my classmates

eye to race in hopes they can escape it, but in actual-

Avoiding microaggressions takes time and care but is an unquestionable means of spreading social change by amplifying conversations of race.

When the flower of equality blooms, it should blossom into a symbol of American hope for everyone, not just the majority.

often encourage students to think critically about the world around them.

Despite their positive intentions, these discussions actually may sometimes have the reverse effect by making students of color feel unsafe and uncomfortable.

"I had to watch my white classmates discuss whether or not I deserve rights or not right in front of me," a Black Highlands student said, "I get how it could be helpful to help teach other people about

actually felt about me."

To have productive racial discussions that are beneficial to everyone, it is necessary that everyone works to unlearn their biases. Through amplifying minority voices, the students of Highlands will be able to work through their unconscious biases and improve their own understanding of the world.

From there, students of color will not feel uncomfortable because their white peers will have the empathy and understanding to

ity, it makes them increasingly ignorant of important societal issues. A remedy to this feeling is diversity, as it encourages people to make racial progress instead of feeling guilty.

Admittedly, the process takes time, similar to the social change achieved over the last century. Nevertheless, unlearning implicit biases makes progressive action personal and achievable.

Avoiding microaggressions takes time and care but is an unquestionable

There is a distinct sense of betrayal by the perpetrator who, up until that point, has displayed positive attitudes towards a racial group.

hard work. America welcomed a Black president, a Black and South Asian female vice president, while countless other political positions continue to be filled by people who were unable to vote a century ago.

The majority of Americans have pledged to progress past history but make one crucial mistake: they forget that racism is still systematically and delicately intertwined into

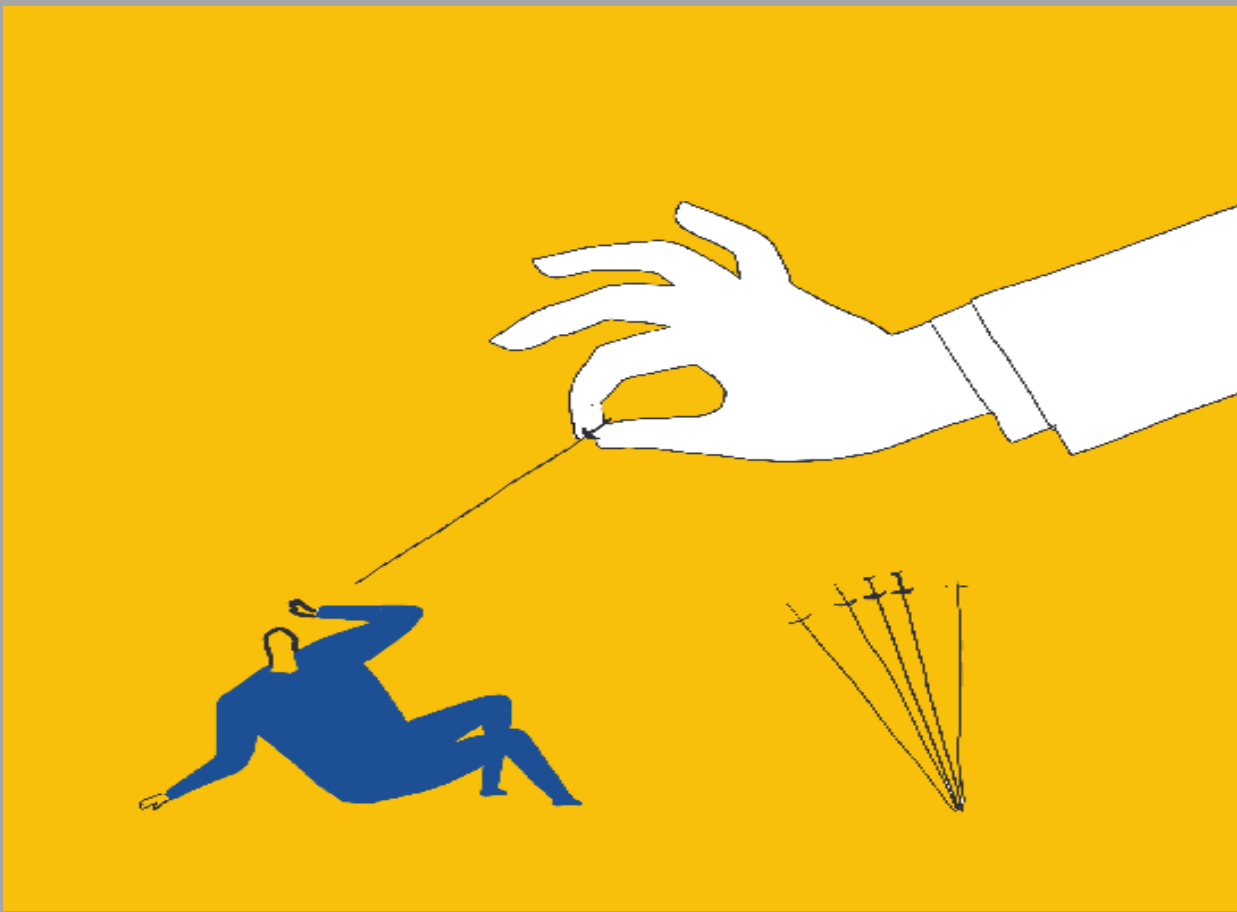
the opportunity to educate themselves about how they may unknowingly contribute to social systems that continue to marginalize people of color.

Within the blooming flower of social justice, a poison infiltrates each individual cell, corrupting the entire bloom. Even if it may be hard to believe, many Highlands students of color have actually experienced microaggressions, in and

racial group.

"I was hanging out with a guy my friend told me about... he asked me which of the handful of other Asian girls from Highlands I was friends with. When I told him that upset me, he told me it wasn't a big deal," a female Asian Highlands student said.

Microaggressions plague conversations surrounding race and discourage disadvantaged groups



Art by Izzy Levine '23

carefully discuss race.

The current economic and political climate calls for students to be educated on various cultural and social issues, even to the point where those who were not educated with cross-cultural experiences could potentially be shamed.

Therefore, a student who achieves high grades and is considered intelligent could be considered unprepared for the world ahead due to their own misconceptions and illusions about other cultures.

When faced with the benefits of being the majority, it may seem complicated and ineffective to work on one's misconceptions. It is then that they must remember that everyone has something to gain from being anti-racist.

In spite of that, many white people turn a blind

means of spreading social change by amplifying conversations of race. Unlearning biases equips one for various types of race-related situations and aids them in offering each group their deserved nuance and acknowledgement.

When the flower of equality blooms, it should blossom into a symbol of American hope for everyone, not just the majority. ■

Microaggressions often consist of small comments (like small needles), but when someone's constantly being "pricked", it hurts.



# TEACHER’S CORNERS (OF THE WORLD)

## Learn from teachers in our language department at Highlands.

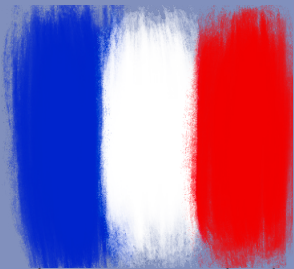


Photo courtesy of Sidonie King

Sidonie King

En plus d’être une langue de renommée internationale qui est parlée par plus de 200 millions

de personnes, le français peut vous permettre de travailler ou de voyager en France ou dans un pays francophone (on compte 29 pays où la langue y est officielle). Le français joue un rôle important lorsque vous parlez de cuisine, de mode, de théâtre, d’arts visuels, de danse et d’architecture; tant de domaines dans lesquels le français enrichit votre culture. Le français peut servir dans votre travail mais est également utilisée officiellement à l’ONU, dans l’Union européenne, à l’UNESCO, à l’OTAN, au Comité International Olympique, à la



Art by Jana Dabagh '24

Croix Rouge Internationale et dans bien d’autres multinationales. Mais avant tout et surtout, c’est la langue romantique de l’amour et de l’esprit, riche et harmonieuse, que certains de nos élèves de Northern Highlands ont le plaisir et la chance d’apprendre et de parler. ■



Photo courtesy of Celina Digilio

Celina Digilio

Imparare una lingua significa apprezzare meglio la cultura della gente che la parla. Quando pensiamo all’Italia, forse ci viene in

mente il cibo, la moda, o le macchine di lusso. Ma abbiamo mai approfondito questi aspetti culturali o le loro implicazioni globali? Esaminiamo lo stereotipo che agli italiani gli piace mangiare. Non sono mica golosi! Il cibo unisce le persone quando si riuniscono a tavola. Le ricette si tramandano da generazione in generazione. La cucina fa parte della cultura nazionale, regionale, e familiare: direi che è un patrimonio globale. Inoltre, i prodotti “a chilometro zero” sostengono i produttori e l’economia locale. La loro coltivazione



Art by Jana Dabagh '24

porta a meno impatto ambientale. Poi, sono cento volte più freschi e saporiti. Anche l’arte di fare la spesa o di creare il menù perfetto fanno parte della vita sociale degli italiani! Vorrei che voi capiste l’importanza della cultura: non è solo un semplice prodotto, ma un’insieme di usanze che sono legate alla storia di una gent. ■

### ... Que certains de nos élèves de Northern Highlands ont le plaisir et la chance d’apprendre et de parler.

### Imparare una lingua significa apprezzare meglio la cultura della gente che la parla.

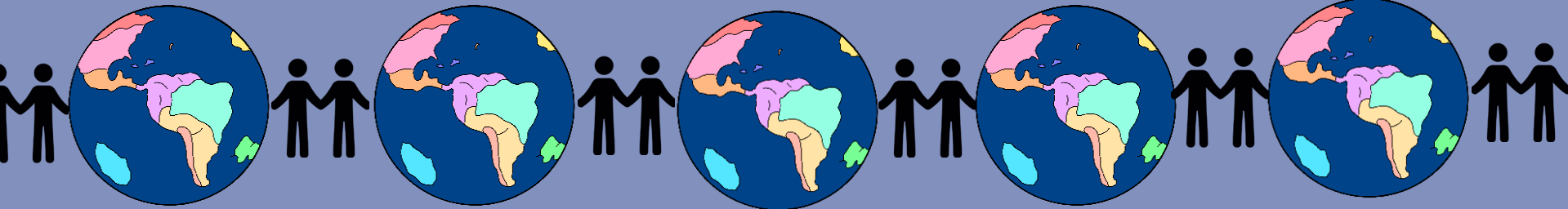


Photo courtesy of Laura Azevedo

Laura Azevedo

La inclusividad se presenta como un derecho de todas las personas y es obvio que Northern Highlands está haciendo todo lo posible para llevar esta idea a cabo con varias oportunidades culturales (clubes de idiomas, programas culturales, etc.). La cultura hispana va creciendo más y más y se nota en nuestras

clases de español. Antes no se veían muchos estudiantes de herencia hispana, pero ahora sí. Para mí, personalmente, me hace feliz poder compartir los mismos gustos en música, gastronomía y tradiciones con mis alumnos y tener esa conexión especial con ellos. Tenemos alumnos de Colombia, República Dominicana, España, Venezuela, Ecuador, Costa Rica, El Salvador, México, Perú, Argentina, Cuba, Puerto Rico, entre otros más que son un aporte muy grande para todos. El profesorado y la administración de NH hacen todo lo posible para crear oportunidades en las que los alumnos y la comunidad escolar puedan sentirse parte de una familia. El Comité Ejecutivo del Club de Español trabaja fuertemente para or-



Art by Jana Dabagh '24

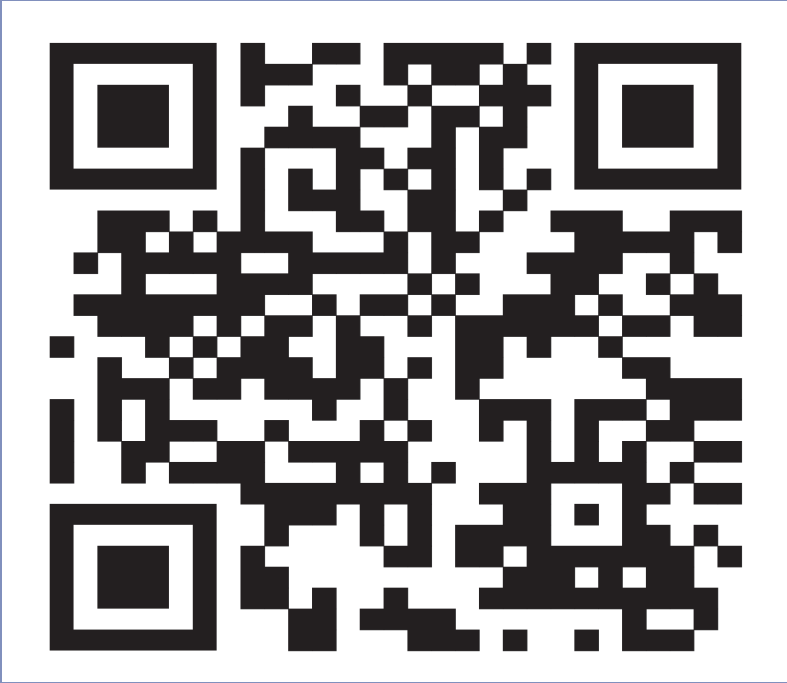
ganizar salidas y eventos que se centran en la belleza de la cultura hispana. Este mes se celebra El Día de Muertos en México, una celebración única y bella en la que se honran las almas de los difuntos preparando comida, altares, ofrendas y reuniones familiares. Aunque este día no se festeja en los EEUU, El Club de Español quiere sensibilizar a la comunidad de Highlands respecto a estos días festivos. Se van a decorar algunas puertas en el pasillo de idiomas para darle vida y conciencia sobre esta celebración mexicana. Hay tanto que se puede resaltar de la cultura hispana y El Club sirve para proveerle a la comunidad escolar estas oportunidades inigualables. ¡Espero que todos se animen a participar este año! ■



Photo courtesy of Shannon Rodenberg

Shannon Rodenberg

### Scan this QR code to learn from Ms. Rodenberg!



Para mí, personalmente, me hace feliz poder compartir los mismos gustos en música, gastronomía y tradiciones con mis alumnos y tener esa conexión especial con ellos.



# OCTOBER FESTIVITIES

## Student sells homemade arts and crafts at Bear Mountain Oktoberfest

Rebecca Hoffer '23

The changing seasons always come with different traditions for the fall. Whether those are small things like pumpkin spice lattes or going apple picking with friends, anyone can find an autumn activity that they enjoy the most.

Another one of these activities may include Oktoberfest. This is a German tradition and is known as the world's largest Volksfest. Activities during Oktoberfest include a traveling carnival, music for everyone to enjoy, delicious food, and festive games. This tradition has become even more popular throughout the years and has spread to other countries, including the United States.

The tradition is even celebrated in the Bear Mountain Anthony Wayne Recreation Area, not too far from Northern Highlands. This festival brings the traditions of the original Oktoberfest in Germany closer to residents in the tri-state area.

Even some of the staff at Highlands have enjoyed these festivities in the past. According to Principal Joseph Occhino, "at any Oktoberfest they have all type of games and things of that nature; cornhole is always a big one."

Assistant Principal Dr. LaRocca also mentions, "it's hard to turn down

those giant pretzels," when reminiscing about many of the enjoyable aspects of the festival.

Besides all of the fun activities within Oktoberfest, there are also oppor-

herself, but as her friends and other people asked for her to make them jewelry, she decided to start selling to a wider audience.

Rhea also has some advice for fellow students

who may be interested in starting their own businesses, saying "I would tell students interested in starting their own business to just go for it! You shouldn't let your worries about failure



Senior Rhea Bachani posing with her jewelry at Oktoberfest.



A close-up of one of Bachani's necklaces.

Photo Courtesy of Rhea Bachani '23

stop you, because if you don't try you'll never know. It's also important to stay positive and not get discouraged. Even though it may start slow or if there are times where sales are low, keep going! Slow cycles are a part of starting a small business."

The seasonal fun and games are always great, but being able to apply some of the knowledge from classes can help strengthen the Highlands community. Not only are students enriched in DECA or their marketing classes, but they can now use what they've learned and apply it to the real world.

Selling arts and crafts at Oktoberfest is one example of this, but there are so many other ways students can continue their passions outside of an environment designed for learning.

If the business activities aren't for everyone, there are always the giant pretzels or the other fun games to look forward to for the fall season. Oktoberfest is hosted every weekend during October and the festivities aren't something to be missed.

Learning about traditions from other cultures can be captivating, and maybe more Highlanders will decide to participate in their own entrepreneurial activities with Oktoberfest in years to come. Not only is it a great experience for all those who attend, but it also a way to learn about another culture that you may not have known much about otherwise.■



One of Bachani's necklaces sporting a large charm.

Photo Courtesy of Rhea Bachani '23

# FIND WHAT FLOATS YOUR BOAT

## Highlands hosts annual activity fair for freshmen and transfer students

Elena McCrossin '26

Recently, one of the biggest freshman class traditions at Highlands took place: the activity fair. The activity fair is a chance for all freshman and transfer students to learn about all the clubs the school has to

lands. The activity fair has long been a tradition at Highlands. According to Principal Joseph Occhino, "The activity fair has been around for as long as I've been here, so around twenty something years. We started back in 2001 or

students at Northern Highlands, the idea of having an activity fair was also sparked by students' interests.

"It probably came from students, asking 'is there anything we can do other than reading the activity guide? Is there something that can bring it to life?'" explains Occhino.

Like every other year, many new students were able to find clubs that were of interest to them. "I found the activity fair to be very helpful for me. I was able to get an idea of all of the different clubs and saw how many options there were," says freshman, Karina Rosenberg.

Although all clubs and activities are always available for students on the Northern Highlands website, it brings them to life in a different way when students learn about them in person.

As stated by freshman

Addie Harrington, "Because each club was there, it was easier to find what I would want to join rather than a list online." Occhino agrees, saying, "That's what it does; you can read about it, but actually meeting with people and seeing who else is a part of the clubs, does add a little bit more incentive for kids to participate."

The activity fair provides students with an opportunity to access all clubs at once, which is perfect for students who are just getting acclimated to high

school. As Assistant Principal Tony LaRocca says, "You don't have an opportunity after school when all of the clubs are meeting to go to all of the clubs, so it's a

time where you can see what you may be interested in and put yourself out on a limb for and to see if your friends are interested in it too." ■

**"It's a time where you can see what you may be interested in and put yourself out on a limb for and to see if your friends are interested in it too."**

*Assistant Principal Tony LaRocca*

offer. Students have the opportunity to find topics that spark their interest and creativity right here at High-

2002 just to give kids an opportunity to see what we had to offer." Just like how new clubs are proposed by



The Weather Club's poster board for the Activity Fair

Photo Courtesy of Leah Rimland

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# CALLING ALL ANIMATORS

## Animation Club gets introduced to Northern Highlands

**Matthew Steinfink '25**

This year, Northern Highlands welcomes an exciting opportunity for students, the Animation Club, which is run by students Derek Chen and Can-on Chiu.

The two founders were inspired to start this club when they found out that they had a shared passion for animation. They want to use the club as a way to share what they have learned about the topic and meet other people with similar interests.

The club plans to meet every other Monday in Room 203, but that is subject to change depending on the the number of membors. Its advisors are Assistant Principal Tony LaRocca.

During the meetings, the club's leaders will teach the members the principles of animation through assigning various projects that will be completed throughout the year. One of Chen's main goals is, "to teach the members how to make animations look realistic while maintaining a

cartoon style."

In order to create fluid animation, the software that they will be using is Adobe Animate. This is a graphics engine that has multiple tools in order to make the movement as realistic as possible. It is installed on every student's laptop, so that's the only material they would have to bring to the meetings.

The first project will be a ball bouncing, which seems straightforward but in fact has a lot more to it than one would expect, "there's a gravitational

force down, there's a compression, there's a spring," LaRocca pointed out.

The club is open to anyone regardless of their skill level, so if a student is already experienced with the techniques they may be asked to incorporate more advanced skill into their projects. This is meant to give everybody a challenge and a chance to learn new techniques at their own pace while also being given the opportunity to work alongside their peers.

On top of projects, the club also plans on showing

clips from popular animations to see how animation can go from a passion to someone's job, and how the techniques they learned are applied on a larger scale.

The club will also teach members skills that go beyond just animating. "There is a computer science lens to it," LaRocca noted. Students have to be able to take full advantage of their computer and the available software in order to make an animation look as smooth as possible. In the modern world, computer skills are indispensable,

and as a result, this club can teach students invaluable skills.

There is more to animation than just making objects on a screen move. In order to create something that is visually appealing, people have to take many outside factors into consideration. Chen hopes that the club will teach people how to do just that, while providing them with a slot of time where they can pursue their hobby with others in a positive and supportive environment. ■

# HIGHLANDERS LIFT HEAVY

## Highlands Lifts weightlifting club makes a comeback

**Karina Rosenburg '25**

With this new school year, Northern Highlands has given students a club opportunity by introducing the Highlands Lifts club. Senior Anthony DiGiacomo initially sparked an interest in creating this club and approached physical education teacher Troy Bianchi. The idea for the club was approved, naming Bianchi as the advisor.

"The goal of this club is for students to use the fitness center and to start a program for themselves to get more in shape," says Assistant Principal Tony LaRocca. During the several times a month that this club will meet, members will learn the benefits of working out, how to lift weights properly, and learn how to maximize their results through proper nutrition.

The Highlands Lifts club involves individual and group based training. Club advisor Bianchi states, "Lifting can have in-

dividual and group benefits. Individual lifting weights will improve your ability with everyday activities and sport activities. Group based will help strengthen relationships as you help others succeed with their strength challenges, push-

dents who expressed interest in joining Highlands Lifts, the majority of which being freshmen from the recent activity fair.

When asked what interested him in joining this club, member Luke DiGiacomo states, "My brother

my brother acts as my personal trainer, and in the past 6 months, I have increased all of my lifts by 30+ lbs" continues DiGiacomo.

Progress like this demonstrates the potential improvement of the members when joining Highlands Lifts.

It is evident that Highlands Lifts is an interesting new club that can benefit the many students involved.

Whether this means socially when getting to know others, or physically when improving their physical health and strength, Highlands Lifts is a great way for people to branch out and meet new people while also working on themselves. ■

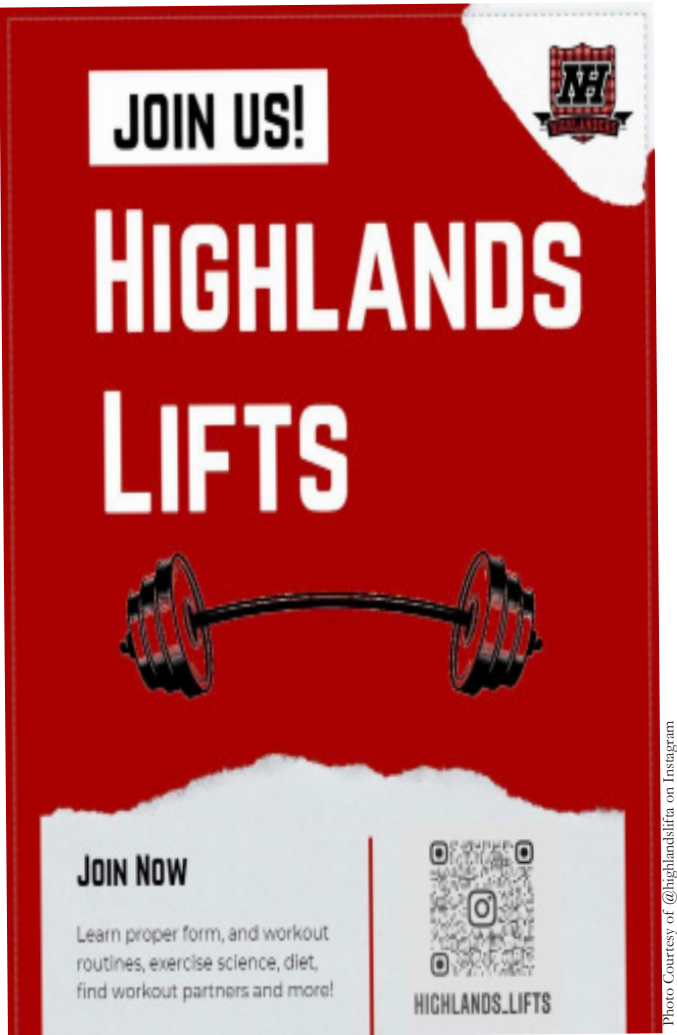
**Members will learn the benefits of working out, how to lift weights properly, and learn how to maximize their results through proper nutrition.**

ing others to challenge themselves and achieve their goals."

This addition to Highlands' vast selection of clubs boasts over 100 stu-

created the club, and I enjoy lifting in my free time."

Additionally, Anthony DiGiacomo has been personally training Luke. "I have progressed, because



Highlands Lifts' advertisement poster.

# WE WANT YOU TO JOIN JROTC

## Highlands adds Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps to list of clubs

**Cat Corrado '23**

The Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (JROTC) is a new addition to Highlands this year. The fundamental purpose of JROTC is to teach students how to become better citizens and leaders, without any military obligation.

The club is offered to all grade levels and is run by club advisor and Career & Academic Pathways supervisor, Kimberly Hayes. Hayes is a Waldwick Chamber of Commerce Board member and knows

a generous amount of information about the army. She also comes from a military family and background, where her father served in the Army Corps of Engineers, her grandfather was a Naval Officer, and she was born on an Army base in Berlin where her father was serving.

"As a member of the Chamber and Ladies Auxiliary, I have been a proud supporter of Boys State, Girls State, and I have worked with the West Point Admissions recruiter to sponsor several NH

students. As a result of my efforts, Michael Bukosky contacted me to see if I would be an advisor for the new Junior ROTC Club. We are meeting on Friday to set up a club schedule. Michael is the President, and we plan to hold a meeting to nominate the other officers," explains Mrs. Hayes.

The administration and Hayes reached out to a Colonel in the ROTC to gather more information about what key aspects the club needs to run smoothly and how to maximize the

benefits for the students. "We thought that a JROTC club could prepare students for ROTC training in the future and further expand their opportunities," says Assistant Principal Tony LaRocca.

In rigorous JROTC programs at other high schools, students are allowed to replace their gym class for the JROTC elective because of the intense amount of physical training. When JROTC is taken as a class, students study army skills, history, military drills and partic-

ipate in military fitness. Since this experience is extremely new to Northern Highlands, the club will be "focused on the physical fitness tests that are required by the county," says LaRocca. In addition to the many leadership and soft skills aspects of the club, "the physical fitness will include running, doing calisthenics, pull ups, etc. and will help to create a healthy relationship between the body and the mind of the students" continues LaRocca.

According to LaRo-

cca, "this type of focus, movement, and discipline offered by physical activity will help students become better prepared for the military, and if that is not their primary interest, become better prepared for general challenges in life."

In the future, the club may grow into something bigger, but as of now this is a new start to JROTC at Highlands that will give students an opportunity to see if they would be interested in being an ROTC in college. ■



# THE PATHWAY TO STUDENT SUCCESS

Thomas Walsh joins the Academic and Career Pathway team for an exciting year.

*Continued from Page 1*

Previous internships include political work under Josh Gotteimheimer, shadowing veterinary medicine clinics, and even researching with biomedical engineers.

A big part of Walsh's job is to supervise these job sites, where he details, "Yes, I personally go to check these sites and make sure everything's going well. I go through all the paperwork and forms necessary, but it really is a lot of fun being so hands on."

Other experiences include college partnerships and earning degrees or credit during high school, which, according to Hayes, "is just an incredible opportunity. One of my previous students saved something like \$30,000 because her school gave her a scholarship for all the college

credits she earned during high school."

There is also independent study program that provides resources to students who are interested in research. This allows them to conduct studies on any topic of their choice, ranging from neuroscience to geopolitics.

Additionally, trades

We want to prepare our students as much as possible while they're still with us."

Senior Eileen Rashduni has taken a college-level Quantum Computing course through this program. In an interview with her, she explained that, "I was wanting to take a Quantum Computing course but could not find

er Science, she notes, "I was able to further advance in quantum Computing and next semester will consider going on the advanced track."

It seems that the Career and Academic Pathways program will continue to grow and positively impact students at Highlands as the team expands.

On a final note, Walsh wants students to know that "this is all about experience. You don't have to go in and get a job in the career of your internship, or program you go to. It can also be used to rule out things you might not like. What our final mission really is, is to get students out there, and experience different options, gaining those skills they'll use along the way." The experiences that volunteering, internships, and independent studies offer have the

**"We want to prepare our students as much as possible while they're still with us"**

*Kimberly Hayes*

training is also available. Hayes expands on this, saying, "I really think trades are the future. We provide apprenticeship training like electrical trades training, because it really does take a long time to get certified.

anything under [which] I was offered this. It really introduced me to something I would not have expected to learn until much later in my college years."

As an ambitious student already taking AP Comput-



Representatives at the Career and Academic Pathways fair, including Camp Acorn and HolyName Medical Center.

Photo courtesy of Kimberly Hayes

ability change the course of a student's education, and if your schedule allows for it, you should absolutely

reach out to the program coordinators for more information. ■

# DON'T GET HIT IN A FENDER BENDER

An inside look at the accidents the class of '23 has been getting into.

*Continued from Page 1*

Breen's mother called the police and Breen went to the main office later to "talk about it with someone because I thought they should know about the accident since it was on school grounds. I was asked some questions, but other than that, the school didn't need to be involved."

In other cases, the issue is that a student's car gets hit during the school day and they don't know who hit it.

To help the student fig-

ure out who hit their car, Assistant Principal Tony LaRocca says that "there are cameras in every single one of the lots and we have license readers as you enter and exit the building, so we go back and watch the area on the cameras, usually with the person whose car was hit."

Sometimes this process is inconclusive, especially if the student isn't certain that their car was hit on school grounds.

Other than the students' cars being damaged, there aren't usually any conse-

quences for the students if they get into an accident on school property (besides figuring out how to break

quences if the student who gets into an accident is a junior without a parking pass, or if the student was driv-

**"There are only consequences if the student who gets into an accident is a junior..."**

*Principal Joseph Occhino*

the news to their parents, of course).

According to Occhino, "There are only conse-

ing recklessly through the lot, causing the accident to happen."

Occhino explains that in

order to prevent accidents between parents and students, "A letter went home to parents to try to keep them from dropping off their students in the teachers parking lot on the right hand side of the building."

Additionally, a recent change is the removal of the cones that used to block parents from continuing to drive straight in the right lane during drop offs.

Many parents try to skip the traffic by dropping their kids off in the teacher's lot, clogging up traffic for both teachers and students try-

ing to get to their parking spots and into classrooms on time.

In response to this, Occhino says that "we have moved those cones to encourage parents to drop their kids off at the front of the building."

While it is exciting to be granted parking privileges, it is important to remain safe in the parking lot and always follow the speed limits to avoid getting into car accidents before or after school. ■

# EXERCISING BOTH THE MIND AND BODY

The fitness center finally re-opens to students after school post-Covid.



Exercise equipment in the fitness center.

**Amy Tullett '23**

After being closed to the general student population due to COVID-19 for the past two years, the Northern Highlands fitness center is back open for student use after school from 3-4pm on Monday through Thursday.

"We're at a point right now where we don't have to worry about distancing, we don't have to worry about kids wearing masks, we don't have to worry about cleaning everything in creation...so opening the fitness center is just a nice attraction for kids after school," Principal Joseph

Occhino said.

While the administration does not anticipate an extremely large number of students utilizing the fitness center after school, even if they could get "a dozen students in there after school...that's great," Occhino said.

However, if it is a worry that students may have to work out while sports teams are also their workouts in the fitness center, the administration has made sure that "the fitness center is open just to the general student population from 3-4pm and then teams can go in there after that time, so not just one stu-

dent is working out in there while an entire team is also in there at the same time," Assistant Principal Tony LaRocca assured.

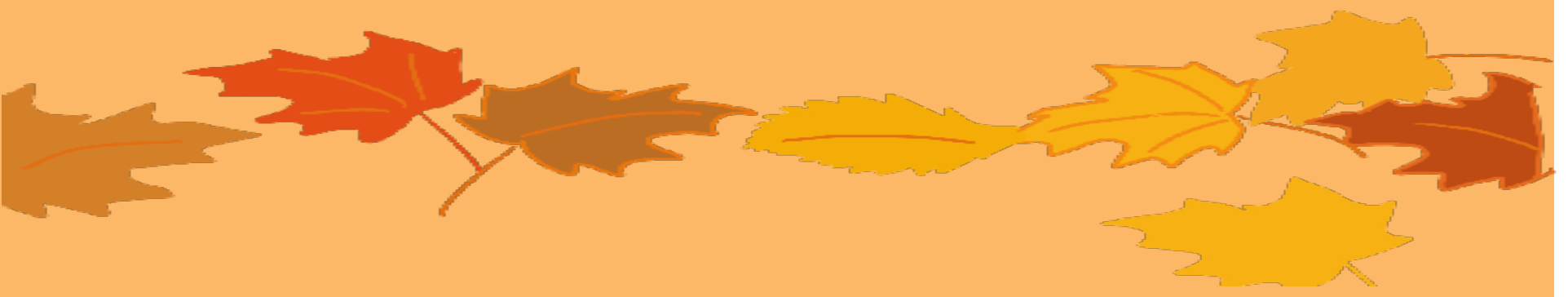
Additionally, with the recently passed referendum, the current fitness center is planned to be converted into classrooms. But, "we will build the fieldhouse first. Once the fieldhouse is built, it will be equipped with a state-of-the-art fitness center. Then the current fitness center will be converted to two large instructional spaces to move classes into," Occhino said. So students who plan on taking advantage of the fitness center

reopening will be able to continue doing so through the implementation of the referendum proposals.

Occhino recognizes the multiple aspects of importance the fitness center brings with it, saying that "it's a place for kids to get together socially," and "to get exercise, which I think is great for your mental and physical wellbeing."

So, for students looking to blow off some steam after a stressful day, the fitness center is a now readily available option to utilize after school with friends or by yourself. ■





# FALL'S FUN ADVENTURES

## *How Highlands Takes on Fall*

Fall is the ideal warm and cozy time of year. Everything about this season makes us feel, eat, and do things that we wouldn't just do any time of the year. It's a special couple of months many look forward to all year.

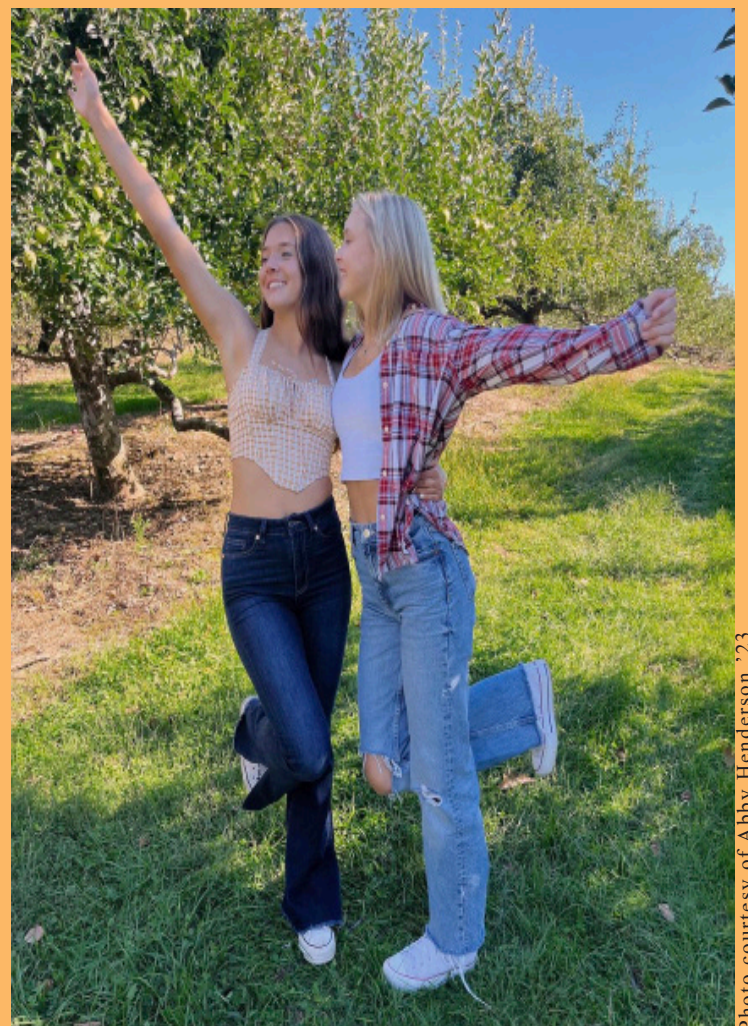
There are a lot of feelings in the air when fall comes around: excitement for pumpkin spice lattes, worry about starting college applications for seniors, and the hard-to-accept reality of the colder weather and the shorter days darker nights.

Fall is the time for roasting s'mores around the bonfire, pumpkin patches, spooky haunted houses, and warm apple cider! Highlanders might be teenagers, but they're not too old for fall fun!



Seniors Ava Kearl and Abby Henderson pose in front of an apple tree with a bag of freshly picked apples.

Photo courtesy of Abby Henderson '23



Senior, Abby Henderson, and Freshman, Maddie Willkomm, pose while apple picking.

Photo courtesy of Abby Henderson '23

Senior Lauren Rowland told us how she and her friends ventured to Warwick's Apple Fest this year. They ate fresh pumpkin pie and drank pumpkin spice lattes. "I love fall because it is nostalgic for me; it sparks back memories of when I was a kid and how excited I was to go on a hay ride or go apple picking with my family."

Some girls from the lacrosse team also participated in team bonding by going apple-picking with each other. They had a wonderful time dressing in warm flannels and sharing laughs while being in the fall season.

Written by Mia Anselmi '23



# Highlands Fall Festivities

Writing by Ava Marino '23

Art by Izzy Levine '23

Fall is a fun time of the year because of all the spirited festivities. Every year, Highlands students look forward to the fall-specific activities and, of course, Halloween; because Highlanders are too old for trick-or-treating, Halloween is best celebrated at school through the sports teams' costumes.

Halloween wouldn't be the same without the endless amounts of candy. Whether you are in third grade or a senior in high school, who doesn't love a good pillowcase filled with candy from trick-or-treating? Around Highlands, some of the popular favorites are kit-kats, reeses pieces, Twix, and snickers. Senior at Highlands, Leah Kovar, said her favorite halloween candy is definitely reese-pieces.



Photo courtesy of Arden Flynn '23

Photo from Halloween 2021, showcasing the girl's varsity soccer seniors from class of '22 with the now current class of '23 seniors posing in their soccer Halloween costumes.



The biggest Highlands Halloween tradition is when the fall sports wear their costumes to school. Each year, the seniors on each fall sports teams plan costumes for all four grades in their program. In the past we have seen costumes as wild as a 6 foot inflatable shark, oompa-loompas, and many other characters where the student athletes come to school decked out in humorous costumes.

Kate Pedicano, one of the captains of the Girls Field Hockey Team said that this year, the theme they selected was outer space. "Its tradition that the freshmen usually dress in the most extravagant costumes." This year, they are being blow-up spaceships.

The sophomores are being foam earth, juniors will be mad scientists. "Last year as a junior we had to wear wigs and beards and facial hair, so this year we are planning on encouraging mad scientist props including a wig."

The seniors' costumes will be a surprise to all. Kate shares that it "is [her] last year dressing up with fall sports and it was exciting to finally choose the theme, especially coming from falling down the stairs in an inflatable shark costume [her] freshman year."



Photo courtesy of Grace Martin '23

Photo from Halloween 2019, showcasing the field hockey girls beach themed Halloween costume.





A MURDER MYSTERY PLAY IN ACTION

Highlands students are excited for this year’s fall play *Clue*

K.C. Suchkova '25

This year’s 2022 Fall play production is *Clue*. The play is based on the board game and

isolated mansion by someone who knows too much and too many secrets. Everyone creates fake names for themselves, gets handed a weapon,

“The play is relevant to our times, which is part of what makes it super funny... Hopefully they will be entertained, and hopefully they might learn something new too.”

Shaina Strang-Wolf

crime.

Shaina Strang-Wolf, the director of this performance, says that the kids in the play are trying their very best at rehearsals every day, and that they are super motivated to put on a great show for everyone.

She says, “it’s been hard during the pandemic to navigate sickness and maintain safety, but the kids are dedicated, and are willing to make the show as smooth as possible.”

There have been many other successes as well. Even though it’s been hard, Strang-Wolf proudly claims that, “it’s a really hilarious show, and the kids adding their own parts of their humor makes it even more wonderful.”

She states that, “the play is relevant to our times, which is part of what makes it super funny. The audience will

have a great time watching. Hopefully they will be entertained, and hopefully they might learn something new too.”

Senior Patrick Keeble, who plays Wadsworth in the show, says that, “it’s a community, and like every other extracurricular, everyone is in it together. It’s a real, collective team activity, which makes it a lot of fun.”

Junior Ella Gorga, “Chief of Police”, says that, “all of us in the pro-

one another which I think is really special.”

Junior Alexis Cirillo, who acts as Mrs. Scarlett in the production, explains what it is like to have such an important role in the play. Cirillo says, “it’s really fun; something I’m not used to. I feel like I’m really connecting with my character, and learning a new side of myself with her.”

The student director, Katie McWilliams, who plays Yvette in the play as

ater is decently time-consuming when you’re here everyday, but it doesn’t feel like work. I enjoy every minute of it and look forward all day to being here.”

This is going to be a fun production to see once it is all complete. Everyone is on the same page, having a good time, working hard, and most importantly having fun.

When is the play, you might be asking? The play is on November 17, 18, and 19, at 7 pm, right sy Northern Highlands. Bring family and friends, and a magnifying glass to really catch onto the clues. ■

movie, and is now being performed by our fellow students here at Northern Highlands.

Clue is about six blackmailed characters who are invited to visit an

at which point the lights flicker off, and then someone kills the blackmailer.

The six witnesses have to figure out who killed the man or they all become victims of the

duction get along super well. We are all friends to

well, describes how much theater means to her: “the-

NH CHOIR TO VISIT MIDDLE SCHOOLS

Highlands choir students can’t wait to get back to this tradition

Drishti Chauhan '24

Many Highlands students that went to a middle school in the district fondly remember a tradition for the Holiday Season; the annual visit of the Northern Highlands Music Department to the middle schools.

Whether it was the joy of watching the sleigh bells ring down the aisle as the band regaled the audience with the easily recognizable tune of Sleigh Ride or the excitement of watching the intricate choreography of the choir singing “The Parade of the Wooden Soldiers,” this was certainly an enjoyable experience for everyone.

After a two year long hiatus due to the pandemic, the middle school trip is back.

Sophomore Nick Franchi says, “A lot of the people here, including the seniors, never got to go to the middle school, and I think it’s going to be a really fun experience in general because it’s really nice to try to recruit all the young middle schoolers.”

Due to the pandemic, participants in the music department have severely dwindled and the inability to go down to the middle school and advertise is a large cause of that.

Tom Paster, the choir director, mentioned how “the pandemic year, the year 19-20, I used to have around 110 kids in choir class, but this year I have 35. That’s how bad [the pandemic] killed us. So we have to build that back up.”

The goal of the trip is to “let [the middle schoolers] see what music at Northern Highlands is like, because, you know, we’re not one district, we’re four different districts so it’s important” Paster says.

A huge benefit of taking band or choir from freshman year is that it not only completes the art requirement necessary to

graduate, but if a student finds that they enjoy the class, they can choose to take it all four years.

Choir is known to be a fun and enjoyable class for all regardless of skill level. “We’re all really focused on having a really good sound as a choir, so It’s not really about being the best individual singer, it’s about sounding the best within the choir,” junior Dylan Yu claims.

Many students remember being amazed by the novelty of hearing from the great music department at Highlands. For students that were already musically inclined, it was enjoyable to experience truly amazing music, and for those that maybe hadn’t considered music before, it opened up a potential elective to take once they came to Highlands.

Yu states, “I’m super excited for the middle school visit because one of the highlights from when I was in middle school was seeing the band and choir come down and seeing how good they were.”

Yu adds, “I haven’t gotten to do that in the past two years because of COVID and I’m super excited to come down to the middle schools and perform. I’m also super excited to show all of the middle schoolers how much fun both band and

“One of the highlights from when I was in middle school was seeing the band and choir come down and seeing how good they were.”

Junior Dylan Yu

chorus can be and try to get more people to join band and choir since we have a really small group for both this year.”

The fact that students can take both band and choir during the same

freshmen who usually only get one elective option.

The trip to the middle schools will take place sometime in December right before holiday break to increase the festive

“I used to have around 110 kids in choir class, but this year I have 35.”

Thomas Paster

period (half of rehearsals spent in choir, and half spent in band) without taking up two electives in their schedule just adds to the appeal.

Students can explore multiple avenues, and it almost feels like they’re taking two electives for the price of one, which is especially enticing for

spirit and create a fun and memorable experience for the middle schoolers, as well as the Highlands music students while showing incoming freshmen the amazing opportunity available to them. ■



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# K-POP IS HERE TO DOMINATE

## Highlands students express passion over Korean Pop music

Gabriella Ragazzo '26

Have you ever heard of K-pop? K-pop, known as Korean pop music, is a genre of popular music with its roots in South Korea.

When the band Seo Taiji and Boys released their breakthrough song, "I Know," which topped the Korean music charts for 17 weeks, modern K-pop began to take over.



Mingyu giving a message to his fans.

The band's music, which combined contemporary pop with American New Jack Swing, outshone the country's then-dominant slower ballads.

The South Korean government has supported its creative industries by providing subsidies and funding for start-ups since the end of the 1990s, which is at least partially responsible for the rising global appeal of Korean pop culture.

With the enormous success of Korean television, films, food, and K-pop, Korean culture has recently experienced an explosion in popularity across the globe, especially with American audiences and online.

To hear more opinions on this topic, we interviewed a freshman with some knowledge and dedication to the subject. The individual explained and elaborated on their interest in K-pop band BTS.

South Korean boy band BTS, short for the Bangtan Boys, was formed in 2010 and had its public debut in 2013. The septet, made up of members Jin, Suga, J-Hope, RM, Jimin, V, and Jungkook, co-write and co-produce a large portion of their own music.

The student explained that the music provides them with a feeling of happiness from BTS's upbeat and relatable songs.

BTS has recorded nearly 100 non-single songs in addition to 42 singles as a lead artist, nine singles as a featured artist, two promotional singles, and three soundtrack appearances.

"Yet To Come" is one of their popular songs due to its calm and relaxing mood and the story-telling lyrics.

The freshman says, "their songs are personal and bright." The songs are

frequently based on real-life events.

However, a lot of K-pop stars rely on pro-



One of the most famous K-pop bands BTS at the 2022 Grammy Awards.

ducers to write their songs.

Recently, the freshman hasn't attended any concerts, but are making plans to.

Senior Karen Bae's favorite K-pop group is Seventeen, originally founded by Pledis Entertainment, but now under HYBE. S.Coups, Jeonghan, Joshua, Jin, Hoshi, Wonwoo, Woozi, DK, Mingus, The8, Seungkwan, Vernon, and Dino are the group's members. Her favorite song out of all the 21 singles is "Say Yes."

She loves this group in particular because "they make hilarious content on YouTube, playing games like mafia and kickball.

They have very distinct personalities and are so entertaining to watch. They're also incredibly

in maintaining a steady voice while dancing. The dancing includes hip-hop and freestyle.

"These groups also have designated roles for each member such as main vocalist, main dancer, and main rapper." It's evident why K-pop has developed such a grasp on fans in

of the concert, they encored their most popular song "Very Nice" at least six times.

They also had a segment where each member gave a message to the crowd. Bae stated, "K-pop concerts feel very personal and sentimental."

Without catchy mel-

### K-pop follows a similar pattern, using techniques that stick in your head right away.

America and all over the world.

She recently went to a Seventeen concert at Prudential Center. She describes it as "really fun" and the concert lasted very long, estimated around 4 hours. At the end

odies and sing-along lyrics, pop music would be nothing. K-pop follows a similar pattern, using techniques that stick in your head right away.

Both boy and girl bands have the art of crafting catchy songs down to a science, which makes their music accessible to listeners, regardless of the language they speak. ■



Lisa, Jisoo, Jennie, and Rose from K-pop girl group Blackpink.

# 'TIS FINALLY THE FALL SEASON

## Students share advice the for fall festive activities coming

Seerat Dhir '26

The summer days are over for 2022. Let's be real: it was over the moment we entered the school year.

Our first full month of fall has now arrived.



Haunted maze at 124 Sheridan Terrace, Ridgewood NJ.

Although we can wave goodbye to summer for a while, fall is here now. Many Highlanders

have already gotten a start to their fall activities.

Lucky for us, fall is not only a season for great weather and scenery, but it is also a season to make fun plans with friends and family.

Bergen county has

at Highlands.

Ridgewood is a hotspot for recreational activities, but what in particular has opened recently and appeals to many teenagers? The yearly haunted maze at 124 Sheridan Terrace is a staple for a free halloween activity. Many Highlanders have already taken a visit, and highly recommend it.

"It's a fun maze, and it is pretty hard because of the hidden doors and passages," freshman Laney Mcrosson says. Mcrosson visited this maze for a fun Friday night with her friends.

What else is trending around Allendale these days? Well since pumpkin picking season is in, freshman Anika Rothe and her friends decided to spend the day at Secor Farms.

"Overall it was a really fun experience because we got to take fun photos with friends, and come

home with treats like apple cider donuts" Rothe

thing, then spooks and scares might interest you.



2022 Dunkin' Donuts advertisement for new pumpkin-flavored products.

adds.

If mazes and fun photos are not really your

A group of freshmen had the scare of a lifetime at a haunted hayride in

Montvale. "I was clutching my bag so hard that night it actually left scuff marks," Rothe says.

There are so many different fall activities available in the community. Students at Highlands have already had great experiences and created awesome memories this fall, and I encourage you to do the same.

Speaking of festive activities, it's also pumpkin and cinnamon spice season. If you don't have a preference for hands-on activities, fall brings the best menu. Grab someone and go out for some fall treats.

Many students love to order Starbucks' and Dunkin' Donuts' fall items, pumpkin flavors, halloween donuts, and many more. Fall is a great time to create fun memories and explore your county. ■



# PODCASTS: THE NEW AGE OF INFLUENCE

Explaining the new form of many media influencers have been flocking to

**Abigail Koudinov '23**

Podcasts, for ages now, have not been a source of online activity among teens. Recently, though, the popularity of podcasts has grown tremendously to a point where students listen to their favorite podcasts in their free time during school hours.

media influencers turning to create their own podcasts on topics they feel are necessary to talk about. While many popular podcasts have a large audience due to adoration, some podcasts are popular due to controversial discussions.

Many people question which influencers deserve a big podcast platform,

who promote hate, misogyny, and racism. However, there are numerous advantages of podcasts that have positive impacts on an individual's life.

Karina Rosenberg, a freshman at Highlands, says, "my favorite podcaster is Lexi Hidalgo." Rosenberg continues by saying, "I definitely think her episodes and podcasts in general are effective. There are so many different podcasts on different topics, I think everyone can find a podcast that is effective for themselves."

A sophomore at Highlands adds, "my favorite podcaster is Emma Chamberlain." She claims, "podcasts are amazing tools. They allow important topics to be listened to while doing productive things like cleaning your room and doing chores."

The two main appeals of podcasts for this new generation are their easy accessibility and their simple implementation into lifestyles.

Each podcast is unique to a topic which guarantees everyone to discover at least one they can enjoy.

Podcasts have gained immense popularity and some believe they should be used in classrooms. Laney Mccrossin, a freshman at Highlands voices, "podcasts can be very helpful teaching tools."

With professionals creating public podcasts about whatever they specialize in, it can be beneficial to students to listen to these programs during certain class periods. This can advance their understanding on any subject they want to learn more about.

Not every podcast is meant for positive purposes; some are created to spark issues when in the public eye. A popular example of this is Andrew Tate.

Tate came to fame on the media platform TikTok, and started speaking on numerous podcasts on

his ideologies.

He is known by some for his misogynistic outlook on women and known by others as a successful man.

This disconnection of support and hate lead to arguments on whether he should be allowed to have a major podcast platform because of the potential to influence younger people to follow his discrimina-

tory ideologies.

On a positive note, podcasts can be used as a helpful tool in formal or informal settings to develop a listener's perspective on the world and grow their knowledge of different subjects. ■



Photo Courtesy of Lexi Hidalgo

This abrupt adoration mainly comes from social as it is believed there are a handful of podcasters



Photo Courtesy of Emma Chamberlain

# PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

A deep dive into the Northern Highlands band rehearsals

**Nolan Rota '25**

The Northern Highlands Regiment, which students have heard perform at every Highlands football game, is a critical part of the Highlands community.

There are a variety of

in August: an entire week, where we come in at 7:30 in the morning, and we are there until 7:30 at night. We usually train 12-hour days, which is longer than a typical workday."

Taylor Rehe, the newly appointed band director, shares her thoughts about

Woody Nelson, along with two original pieces.

Original marching band songs are often created by composers who are inspired typically from different types of music, and they put it into a marching band format. Nef states, "songs trans-

Saturdays will vary, only if the band isn't preoccupied with a competition.

The Highlands Regiment, in particular, has been preparing for many different shows and competitions. The marching band has been working on the home show, at the football games.

More importantly, the marching band went to a state competition on October 29. The state championship includes bands about the same size as Highlands from all across the state of New Jersey.

Charles Perruzzi, a senior at Highlands, shares how the band has benefited him in different

aspects of his life. Perruzzi states, "it gives me a place to call my own, it gives me my own little slice of this chaotic world that we call high school. It has also helped me with my applications. A lot of schools look very highly at marching bands, as it teaches you to nurture skills, practice and dedicate time to them, and show leadership. For example, I am the drum major so I am supposed to lead the band and everyone in it. To keep track of them, and make sure they are doing their work, but also to be there for them when they need someone by their side."



Photo Courtesy of Kyle Gentile

In uniform outside the stadium.

Band members have worked very hard on their skills to put together a show for highlands. Go support the Highlands Regiment by visiting their shows! ■



Photo Courtesy of Kyle Gentile

Highlands Marching Band on the football turf practicing for competition season.

programs that Highlanders can sign up for. Marching band exemplifies a tight-knit community, as well as a hard-working team of students.

Marching band at Northern Highlands is an unforgettable experience to participate in. The hard work Highlanders put in marching band can be seen in a single week of August. Connor Nef, a junior at Highlands, describes the typical practice hours, "we do a week

the Highlands band community. Rehe states, "every single person who's in the band really is committed, wants to be here, and wants to get better, and they are all on the same page. You don't see that everywhere. I've worked in a couple of different schools and some kids are kind of just not mentally there, but [at Highlands] everybody feels all in."

Currently, band members are rehearsing "On the Road Again" by

lated [into marching music] are not completely different from the original, but sometimes they can be. This year [our music] is heavily inspired by different pieces, but more optimized for marching bands."

Following the rigorous training week, during the school year, band members will also have to rehearse on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and occasionally on Saturdays for extra rehearsals. Rehearsals on



Photo Courtesy of Kyle Gentile

Highlands Marching Band in uniform and getting ready to perform.



# STARTING OFF STRONG

## A cappella students are getting excited for the new season

Drishti Chauhan '24

This year's a cappella season is off to a great start for all three of the Highlands groups. Highlands Voices, Highlands Belles, and Highlands Harmonics, directed by Tom Paster, Irene Lahr, and Taylor Rehe, respectively, have been hard at work to get back into the swing of things and set themselves up for success this competition season.

All three groups rehearse every Monday from 6-9 PM, with added Thursday rehearsals when competitions get closer.

For this year's competition set, Voices plans to sing Miracle by Kimbra, Minefields by John Legend and Faouzia, and Viva Las Vengeance by Panic! At The Disco. The set was decided by students from last year's group, many of which are returning to Voices this year.

When asked about his thoughts on the competition, senior Pat Keeble stated, "I'm excited about the group of songs as a whole for competing. And I'm excited for [competitions], but there's still a long way to go." The ICHSA semi finals are going to be around January to February this year, so the groups have quite some time to get performance-ready.

Belles is also at a similar stage of preparation for the year. They plan

to sing Greedy by Ariana Grande, Dandelions by Ruth B, and What is Love by the Empire Cast featuring V. Bozeman. Junior Antonia Bellapianta says, "currently where we

ing the Belles' ability to sing songs from different genres."

This year, Harmonics has a brand new director—Taylor Rehe, the band teacher and march-

will be some challenging rehearsals that seem incredibly redundant as we just experiment with vowels and tone quality. However, that's part of the fun of being in an a cappella group—every single person matters, so everyone has to embrace the learning process to be the best that we can be."

This year Harmonics plans to sing Golden by Harry Styles, Ocean Eyes by Billie Eilish, and Wonder by Shawn Mendes.

So far the general consensus is that this year will be like no other. Rehe stated, "After just a couple rehearsals, I'm already excited for the group's sound and energy. Everyone is working hard and on the same page of wanting to get better and be the best that they can be. I think that we're going to have a super fun year ahead."

Paster spoke about his joy to "finally be back to normal." Last year, while in person, there was still the ever-present worry of COVID safety.

Paster also spoke about being "back to singing better." Like any other activity, taking a year and a half off took its toll on the a cappella groups as well. Many of the members had never sung in an a cappella group without a camera as a buffer, but with rejuvenated and more experienced groups this year, there's no telling

what the Highlands a cappella groups will do.

Of course, the journey matters the most for a cappella. As Lahr states, "to see and hear the music and musicians evolve from the first rehearsal to competition-ready is a special privilege. That's

what I'm most excited about. Everything else is icing on the cake!"

The Highlands a cappella groups have great potential this year, so make sure to come out to the performances later on to support them and have a fun experience. ■

**“[T]hat’s part of the fun of being in an a cappella group—every single person matters, so everyone has to embrace the learning process to be the best that we can be.”**

*Harmonics Director Taylor Rehe*

are right now, if we keep going like this I feel so confident with what we're going to do. I think it's going to be a great year for Belles."

The idea of the Belles set is to bring the audience along on a journey as they sing.

Director, Irene Lahr, spoke about how they came up with the idea for their set. "It all started with a single musical arrangement that everyone really liked. From there, it became a collaborative effort to find other songs that worked to weave a story together. I think we've found three songs that complement each other well, while showcas-

ing band director at Highlands.

Even though it is her first year directing Harmonics, she has plenty of experience to draw from. Rehe states that "something [she's] learned with all musical groups that [she's] worked with is just making sure that they sound good. That seems a bit obvious, but vocal challenges include matching vowels, blending tone quality, and balancing the various voices and voice parts in the group, in addition to the usual musical elements."

Rehe adds, "it will take some time to figure out [their] group 'sound' and balance, and there

**“I’m excited about the group of songs as a whole for competing. And I’m excited for [competitions], but there’s still a long way to go”**

*Senior Patrick Keeble*



Photo Courtesy of Michael Reifman '23

Highlands Voices Members at the 2021-2022 A Cappella Banquet



Photo Courtesy of Michael Reifman '23

Highlands Voices at their first practice of the 2022-2023 competition year



Photo Courtesy of Michael Reifman '23

Highlands Voices members preparing for the March ICHSA Semi-Finals competition



Photo Courtesy of Michael Reifman '23

Highlands Voices winning the ICHSA Quarter-finals



# FIELD HOCKEY SEASON: TWEET

## The freshman girls' field hockey team starts their season & varsity updates

**Gabe Tejeda '26**

How does it feel to be undefeated? On top of the league? Northern Highlands girls' freshman field hockey could answer.

"I feel very great. We worked so hard this season, and it feels like an accomplishment," says Rhea, who is on the freshman team.

Being undefeated is no small accomplishment, this involves the freshman field hockey girls putting in their all. This season has been a whirlwind of intense fun for them. A repetitive series of accomplishments, they leave every game with a smile on their faces.

A key to the success of the girls' freshman field hockey team is bonding activities. From making shirts together for the pep rally to pasta parties, the players spend lots of time together.

The more bonding activities they do, the more connected the whole team

is on the field. They hang out together almost every weekend, having fun before and after games.

For these girls, their favorite part about being on the team isn't just being on the field, it is also being with each other.

"We're so bonded as a team, and we're so excited for next season," states freshman Hanna Lilijgren.

Field hockey isn't just about intense practice and hard work on the field, it also relies on the happiness and hard work of the players.

The freshmen who just joined the Highlands Field Hockey program are already invested in the amazing experience.

"The most difficult thing has to be conditioning," says freshman Zoe Heins.

Conditioning is a process taken in most sports where they exercise different parts of the body through intense workouts. This can range from two minutes to the entire

practice.

Most sports players share their negative experiences and opinions on conditioning, claiming it is the most horrible part of the sport. From football to field hockey, almost all teams can relate to this.

The intense turbulence on the field is highlighted in games against IHA and

Ramsey, who posed the most difficulty for this team.

From the 9 girls interviewed, 6 said IHA was their toughest opponent and 3 said Ramsey. Even though the game between Ramsey and Northern Highlands ended in a 7-1 for the freshman team, they still easily claimed it

was the hardest match for them.

With IHA, their first game got canceled. This raised the tension between these two teams, and they were anticipating the defeat of the other. This game still has yet to happen.

Every game, it seems as though their team spirit rises higher and their ener-

gy increases.

The sport already has a very action-filled foundation, so without energetic teammates, no one will get anywhere. Thankfully, this isn't at all an issue for Northern Highlands, who have the spirit. "I like the adrenaline rush from being on the field," says freshman Jacqueline Citera.

Without a strong leader, this team wouldn't be anywhere. "Well, we've had a really fun season and we really love our coach," says freshman Leila Shamash.

The girls are very appreciative of their coaches, and upperclassmen who helped out. To field hockey seniors, juniors, or sophomores, thank you for supporting the grades below you.

According to the freshmen interviewed, there was a lot of different grade support.

"I recommend this sport to anyone, really," says Citera. ■



Freshman field hockey before the Pep Rally.

Photo Courtesy of Tia Charney '23

# WOOHOO CHEER CAPTAINS

## Northern Highlands cheerleading captains take on the 2022 fall season

**Alexa Denburg '23**

When you think of the heart of Highlands spirit, your mind automatically goes to cheerleading. Cheer is not just supporting the football team on the sidelines during the games. For the Highlands cheer squad, it is about showing spirit and brightening every Friday night to get the crowd, students, and players excited and engaged in the football games.

This season, the Cheer Squad looks to carry out this goal with coaches DeGilio and Lawlor. They are excited to take on the coaching responsibilities and provide a successful season for the cheerleaders.

Since early August,

have been practicing four days a week, preparing and learning different cheers to perform during halftime and during the games on the sidelines. The team has also recently went on an NCA (National Cheerleaders Association) retreat to New York where they spent hours working on drills, building up stunts, and increasing their technique in preparation for this season.

One of the most important parts of the Highlands cheer squad is the captains, as they are the glue that holds the team together. This year, Jamie Freedman, Isabelle Alarcon, Joy Navarro, and Kiera Klatt were selected as captains because of their dedication and visions for the team.

extensive process each captain went through to get selected for the role. Klatt states, "All seniors had to fill out an application explaining why we should be captain, what our goals are for the season, and how we could improve as a team. Me and three others were chosen because of our application and dedication to the team over the past four years."

The cheer captains carry many responsibilities to ensure the season goes well. Navarro explains these responsibilities as she says, "We are in charge of making sure the team is up to date with all of the changes made in the routine and cheers. We also hold ourselves accountable for the overall spirit of the team. It's important to



Varsity cheerleading during their half-time performance.

Photo Courtesy of Tia Charney '23

the chants and cheers to initiate spirit if we feel it is lacking within the team."

The captains also have the responsibility of planning team bonding events. Freedman explains, "This year we have three teams and over 60 girls on our team. We created big-little families where juniors and seniors are paired up with sophomores and freshmen. We switch off every week where we bake for one another. Team bonding is critical because it is not every man for themselves. If you don't have good trust and communication with each other, nothing is going to work. We rely

captains to make sure we trust one another and work together as a team."

Navarro explains the hours of preparation spent into making this season a good one. She states "To prepare for the season we put together band dances for the new songs the band plays at the games and taught all the cheers to new members of the team as well as went over them with past members."

In addition, the NH cheer team has made it a goal to raise money for their organization. Freedman highlights all the accomplishments the team has made as she says, "We

got new uniforms for the first time in over 15 years from fundraising events such as a car wash, bake sale, and canning. We also raised enough money to get new cheer mats in order to ensure safety during practice."

This has been an exciting season so far as the Highlands Football team has won many critical games against Hackensack, Pascack Valley and most importantly, Ramapo. When asked about how it felt to win against one of our greatest rivals, Freedman was excited to share her feelings about the game. She says, "We were all shocked but very happy about it. At the end of the game we were all standing in a line by the goal post watching the game and hoping for the win. It was a great feeling to see the crowd and the football team so excited after a huge win."

NH seems to have an outstanding cheerleading program with amazing leaders. Good luck to all the highlands cheerleaders as they finish out their fall season. ■



Cheer performing at a Highlands football game.

Photo Courtesy of Tia Charney '23



# PUT SOME PEP IN YOUR STEP

## President Chase Fishman leads the Northern Highlands 2022 Pep Rally

Raya Baghal '26

A pep rally is a school-wide event that encourages school spirit with great excitement. It is a night for students and faculty to engage in order to celebrate and honor good sportsmanship. Pep rallies get everyone pumped up for the biggest games of the season.

The Northern Highlands Pep Rally this year took place on Thursday, October 6.

School President Chase Fishman says, "I think it went really well; it

overwhelming amount of work; duties include making sure all of the sports players arrive on time and ensuring everybody enjoys their night.

As Fishman carries on the role of school president this year, it is a big priority of his to make sure each event is organized and successfully goes to plan.

"I worked a lot with Mr. Koth, the Assistant Principal of Athletics. We worked on things, like what teams would be coming out at which moments, and to involve everybody, we announced through the loudspeaker and sent

through word-of-mouth," Fishman says

"In terms of preparation we also talked with the captains of each team and discussed what song they wanted to come out to and how they wanted to present themselves as a team."

He begins to elucidate on the past pep rallies from what he remembers in his previous years at Highlands, and how those went. "In the past (my freshman and junior year), it wasn't the most cared about or suspenseful event for most students and faculty, and wasn't as short-coming. Not that many kids went, but I feel as though this one was way more inviting."

Fishman continues to say that it wasn't always on the football field, but in the upper parking lot. Bringing it to the football field made it a nicer environment and opened up a lot more space.

"There were bleachers for people to sit down and watch performances by the cheer team and the marching band. This brought a much bigger and better crowd to the pep rally and

you felt like you were at an actual event."

The Northern Highlands Sports Association also helped by serving free ice cream and pizza to everyone who attended, which was certainly a fan favorite.

The sports teams showed up to the pep rally, ready to rock their matching outfits to showcase exemplary school spirit.

All of the fall sports teams were called onto the football field, with special shout-outs to the seniors and captains, to commemorate their achievements as dedicated student-athletes during their high school career.

All fall sports attended: girls and boys soccer, girls tennis, cheer, football, cross country, field hockey, and volleyball.

Having an annual event such as the pep rally is classic, but this one was a new experience for many sports players at Highlands.

Due to COVID, the past couple of years' pep rallies weren't as exciting, but I think the live performances of the marching



NHBS seniors at the pep rally.

Photo courtesy of Tia Channey '23

band and cheer, and a lot of school spirit, really helped make it a great night.

Thankfully, our school spirit has been very high recently and in the past years our sports teams did really well. People at Highlands always have a lot of energy and spirit to go to games whether to support their friends playing or just to support Highlands.

Fishman continues to say, "in the future, we should keep working for the pep rally to be a very anticipated event and I believe it can truly evolve into something people will look forward to."

"This year and last

year, school spirit fell off because we weren't together as a whole school, and students really missed going to a football game every Friday night and meeting up with their friends, or going to watch a playoff game for any other sport. People miss that because it is a great part of what makes Highlands, well, Highlands."

This year, the amount of excitement revolving around the pep rally and overall school spirit increased tremendously, and personally, I'm excited to see what's to come. ■



NHGS seniors at the pep rally.

Photo courtesy of Tia Channey '23

was a big success."

Pep rallies can be an

emails to come to the pep rally. It also spreads

## THE BOYS ARE BACK

NHBS celebrates a huge win against Bergen Catholic High School

Gabriella Ragazzo '26

Northern Highlands defeated Bergen Catholic, ranked No. 20 in NJ.com's Top 20, 1-0, with Marc Putrino's 11 stops in goal. Despite having more shots than Northern Highlands (2-5)(3-3-1), Bergen Catholic was unable to score.

In the second half, JUNIOR Aidan Dario scored the goal that would win the match. The assistance was attributed to Gavin Gonzalez. To get more information towards the win against Bergen, we interviewed the captain of the boys' varsity team, senior Jack Dolan, to get his point of view of how the game went.

He explained that the hype during the game was the highest and most ex-

citing it's ever been while also stating, "everyone was putting everything they had into this game." After the intense game he elaborated that he felt extremely proud of his teammates because of how great they played.

He and his team really wanted to give Northern Highlands a feeling of content and joy that they defeated Bergen on a big night.

In all, he was more excited rather than nervous since he knew it was a big game on an important day.

Jack stated that he knew the competition was going to be challenging going into the game.

Senior night did really give them luck. A. Dario scored the winning goal leading the team to victory. He announced that from his point of view, the seniors really enjoyed the night of honor while accepting and earning a win against a top-ranked school team.

The coaches of the team figured out a unique plan to defeat Bergen and had the usage of a great scout.

The practices weeks before leading up to this intense game were physi-

cally and mentally a lot of pressure.

Although, to loosen things up, the parents came together and made a special day for the seniors.

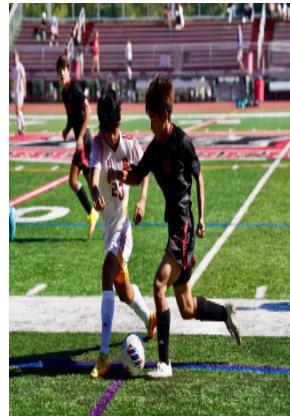
Balloons, colorful decorations, and photographs of each senior were displayed for a remembrance of what a special and amazing team they built.

To return the favor, the seniors and their parents were announced in appreciation before the game and after was a huge celebration.

Each individual senior got the highlights of their soccer career and future milestones ahead.

Dario states, "yes, it was the only goal of the match but the whole game was a team effort. Marc Putrino had a shutout game that was really game-saving. I remember him making a couple of great saves to give us a chance to win. The 4 in the back line also got credited for the shutout game, winning the air game and making solid tackles all day."

The boys have an unbreakable bond and skill. Mark your calendars for more upcoming games. ■



Junior Sota Shimizu fights for the ball against BC player.

Photo courtesy of Tia Channey '23

## NHFBH DOES IT AGAIN

NHFBH wins counties for the second year in a row

Izzy Levine '23  
Charlotte Riley '24

The Northern Highlands Girls Varsity Field Hockey team won their County Tournament for the second year in a row on October 23rd.

They won 3 - 0 against their rivals, Ramsey, in the Bergen County field hockey championship at Westwood Regional HS in Washington Township.

Sophomore Alexa Birch and Freshman Kelsey Bennett scored in the first half of the game.



The varsity girls field hockey team celebrates with their county championship trophy.

Photo courtesy of NJ.com

Bennett '26 scored with an assist from her sister Belle Bennett '23.

Birch scored her second goal in the second half with an assist from Captain Sarah Baternhorst '23.

Junior Abby Sardo made many excellent saves, resulting in a shut-out for Northern Highlands.

The girls had an amazing season this year, only letting in four goals out of 18 games. As of currently, they are ranked at number 8 in the state.

Batenhorst expressed her pride about this year's season, "I'm so proud of how well we have worked together as a team this year. Winning the league title and county championships were two of our goals, and we are really excited for states. This is such a special team and we are enjoying every minute together".

Now, they will advance to their first states game on November 1s, which will determine whether they progress further to state finals. ■



# COMMITMENT CORNER

## CATCH THIS: MUNDY TO F&M

Gabby Mundy decides to continue her softball career at Franklin & Marshall

Joseph Manberg '23

For what once was a dream, senior Gabriella Mundy's wish has come true as she has committed to Franklin & Marshall for softball.

Throughout the years, Mundy has climbed up the ranks of Highlands Softball, becoming one of the best hitters as well as a dominant shortstop.

Last year, Mundy recorded 33 hits, resulting in 30 singles and 33 doubles. Along with this, Mundy recorded 23 runs, as well as 5 stolen bases.

Mundy's dynamic performance resulted in a .402 batting average.

In fact, Northern Highlands performance against Passaic Tech was one of its best games of the 2022 season, winning 14-4.

Other notable wins include a 16-0 shutout against Hackensack, a 16-0 shutout against Demarest, and a 12-0 shutout again

against Hackensack.

Unfortunately, Northern Highlands' 2022 season ended unfavorably, losing to Immaculate Heart in the Quarterfinals of the BWCA County Tournament, and losing to Old Tappan in the Quarterfinals of the NJSIAA Tournament.

But with seniors like Mundy stepping up to play, there is no concern for the 2023 season.

As a matter of fact, many pieces of last year's team are here for 2023, such as seniors Lia Miller, Emilie Chin, and Jaclyn Paglieri.

Led by head coach Jackie Forte, there is no doubt the team will be ready to play when April rolls around, as the Highlands are ready for its winning season since 2019.

One of Mundy's best performances last year was against Passaic Tech, in which Mundy recorded 3 hits, resulting in 2 Singles

and a Home Run that resulted in a 3-run score.

Her amazing play has resulted in many awards, including 2nd team All-Division Honors in 2021 and 2022.

Her introduction to Softball didn't start off at Highlands, of course. Softball has always been one of her favorite sports, "I have been playing since I was in kindergarten."

Mundy also notes the people around her who have motivated her in growing as a softball player: "my dad always played baseball so I always looked up to him."

Franklin & Marshall is a Division III Athletic School, competing with other teams such as Swarthmore, McDaniel, and Muhlenberg in the Centennial Conference.

Based out of Lancaster, Pennsylvania, Franklin & Marshall's softball program is nothing to scoff at, and has over the years

created many great softball players.

Throughout the years, Franklin & Marshall's program has churned out 88 All-Conference selections, 2 Conference Championships, 2 Centennial Conference Players of the Year, 2 All-Region Selections, as well as 11 No-Hitters.

This year, Franklin & Marshall will have a new head coach, Kaitlyn Cooper, who previously was

head coach at Delaware Valley.

Franklin & Marshall replaced its previous coach due to their 15-21 record. They are hoping for a fresh start, with Mundy being a key piece to Franklin & Marshall's rebuild.

Mundy notes her excitement to go to Franklin & Marshall, "I'm looking forward to the classes and making friends."

Though, much like

any college athlete, Mundy has to allocate time to their sport as well as school-work.

Mundy points out, "I am nervous about the workload and how I will do that with practices but I think if I am organized and don't procrastinate, I think it will work."

But, with 4 Academic All District Members throughout Franklin & Marshall's years, Mundy should be assured about any work that comes her way.

The reaction of others to her commitment was one of eagerness, especially from her parents. "They were very excited for me. My parents love the school and one of my close friends goes there so she was excited to hear that I will be playing with her," Mundy says.

We wish the best of luck to Gabriella Mundy with softball at Franklin & Marshall. ■



Gabby Mundy's recruitment to Franklin & Marshall announcement.

## BARLAS BECOMES A KNIGHT

Andrew Barlas verbally commits to play D1 lacrosse at Arcadia University

Carly Simmel '23

Senior Andrew Barlas has been a stand out lacrosse player throughout his years here at Northern Highlands.

SO, It was no surprise when Barlas announced his commitment to continue his lacrosse career at Arcadia University.

Barlas has been playing lacrosse since fourth grade and has made his impact on the lacrosse field, as a starter for the Northern Highlands team since his junior year.

Barlas says that one of his biggest inspirations throughout his career is

his old trainer. "He did so much more for me than just train me, he was more like a fatherly figure to me. He helped keep me motivated and on a straight line throughout some rough times, but he was always there for me and he always pushed me to my limits," Barlas says.

He had a huge influence on him throughout his recruiting process, and always pushed him to the next level.

As for his career at Northern Highlands, Barlas plays attack, and has a total of 26 goals and 11 assists.

He also plays on the Brotherhood Lacrosse

team, coached by Kyle Ojakian, who is also the Highlands boys' varsity lacrosse coach.

There is no doubt that Barlas will be a huge asset this year on the Northern Highlands team, as they are striving to earn county and state titles.

It is evident that Barlas is sure to make a difference at Arcadia University, coming in with so much experience as a lacrosse player.

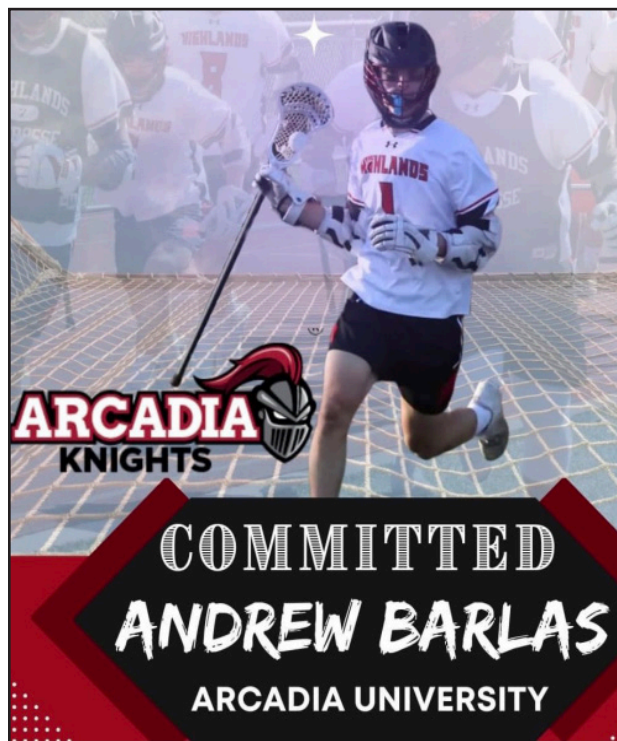
He is also thrilled to become an Arcadia Knight. "I think that going to college will be a great experience overall, considering I will be hopefully making lifelong friends and great memories," Barlas says.

Arcadia is a Division III program that plays in the Middle Atlantic Conference (MAC) Freedom conference.

Their competition includes Stevens University, York College, and more.

It takes a lot of dedication both in and out of the classroom to achieve such a great achievement of playing lacrosse at the collegiate level.

Even though it can



Andrew Barlas announces he will be committing to Arcadia.

often be tough to try and juggle playing a sport at that level while also being a student, Barlas thinks that Highlands has prepared him very well for what is to come.

"The study habits that I have learned have definitely prepared me for college, even just through how some classes are run by certain teachers. They run it more self-dependent

which is pretty nice and what college is more like."

The academics at Highlands are very rigorous, so it is clear that Barlas is extremely prepared for what is to come in the future.

Barlas has put in countless hours into lacrosse, and it is clear that his hard work has paid off in earning him a spot on Arcadia's roster.

He states, "when I got the call from my coach, my mom came running out to the living room and knew that I was going to get offered a spot."

He continues, "it was pretty funny, she actually started crying happy tears for me." His friends and family were ecstatic for him.

With all of the support from those around him, he added that, "I felt like for the first two days after I committed, life just felt like I was dreaming."

He clearly has an amazing group of people supporting him.

He is a talented player and the Highlands community is thrilled to see all that he accomplishes in the next chapter of his life.

Barlas has played such an important role on the Northern Highlands lacrosse team, and will continue to demonstrate his skills for his final senior season.

Congratulations, Andrew Barlas. ■



Andrew Barlas running with the ball during a game.



# EMMA DRIBBLES TO COLLEGE

## Emma Starr verbally commits to play basketball at Emory University

**Samantha O’Connell ‘26**

As the winter sports season is set to start in November, the girls basketball team is starting to gear up. Many girls are excited for the basketball season to start.

Emma Starr is a senior who has been playing basketball for 13-14 years and has committed to Emory University to continue playing basketball. Starr is an outstanding player and is very dedicated to basketball.

She says how much she loves playing basketball and has been playing at Northern Highlands

since day one.

Starr is a strong leader whose hard work and commitment to her sport has shown her teammates, coaches and colleges what an amazing player and leader she is.

She explained, “I have been playing basketball since I was about 3 or 4 years old and I have been playing club since she was 8 years old.”

She practices everyday of the year whether it’s shooting hoops, lifting, watching, calling coaches, or doing research.

She explains that “basketball has really consumed my life these past 5

years.”

Her inspirations throughout playing basketball were her two older brothers who went on to play college basketball and her dad who taught her everything she needs to know about basketball.

Starr has “always been inspired by them while competing in basketball because they made her who she is today.” She applied their dedication to her own life.

Starr has had a very successful career in basketball at Northern Highlands and has thought about colleges for awhile.

Starr explains her point on choosing Emory University, “There was a crazy recruiting process for me as I looked at colleges. Once I saw Emory University, I knew it was where I wanted to go to college.”

The reason being “it had a great balance between academics, sports, and social life” which is what she had been looking for.”

She is excited to continue her basketball career at Emory University, but

she says she “will miss Highlands a lot.”

When she played club basketball, she played for the NJ Gym Rats then for NJ Freedom.

Both teams taught her how to be a part of a team and become a leader, which is what helped her become the captain of the Highlands team last year.

Starr is very happy to have found the right place to continue her basketball career.

Highlands has not only prepared her for basketball in college, as she has been able to play with new girls and became a leader to guide them, but also prepared her academic wise.

By taking a rigorous course load, Starr will be able to have a smooth transition into her college classes next year.

Starr has “always had great teachers that supported and helped her when she needed it and were very kind.”

She feels ready for sport and academic wise to go to college as Highlands prepares all of us for the journey past senior year.



Photo courtesy of Tiaa Charney '23

Starr shooting a basketball during a Highlands home game.

Starr’s hard work and dedication to the sport has helped her achieve her goals, but she still thanks her brothers and dad for helping her along the way.

And one thing she wants young girls to know is “to stick with their passions even through the ups and downs. In the end, you will see your work pay off and it shows you how far you have come since the beginning.”

She explains how “the tenth man in third grade can be the star in high school so work hard and keep pushing forward.”

She encourages and

inspires young girls, even if they have a rough start or are just learning, to stick with their passion and keep pushing because even last place can be a star.

Starr pushes herself everyday in order to do her very best in basketball, but reminds others that it pays dividends in any sport.

Starr will be missed at Highlands next year, but we wish her luck as her journey continues in sports and academics at Emory University. ■



Emma Starr’s Emory University commitment announcement post.

# HULACK TO MUHLENBERG

## Rylee Hulack commits to play D3 lacrosse at Muhlenberg University

**Ava Waller ‘23**

You may see aggressive and agile Rylee Hulack on the Highlands turf, but soon you will see her play at Muhlenberg College for their Division III girls’ lacrosse team.

After starting lacrosse at the age of 5 and continuing her career, Hulack has grown into a key player that has attracted attention from recruiters.

Playing the defense position on the varsity Northern Highlands girls’ lacrosse team and mid-field position for her club,

Hulack is infamous for her determination to steal the ball from the other team, and start many counterattacks.

Hulack first started playing club lacrosse in 6th grade, which is when her interest in playing at the collegiate level sparked.

“I would see all of the older girls on my club team commit to schools and I thought it was the coolest thing,” she says.

“After growing up and realizing what it truly meant to be a college athlete, I knew that I wanted

to continue lacrosse as long as I could and be a part of a college team,” Hulack adds.

A lot of Hulack’s inspiration has come from Julia Pash, a 2016 Northern Highlands graduate who has been a mentor and trainer to Hulack since she was little.

She went on to play for Saint Joseph’s University, and was admired by Hulack throughout her athletic career.

While Hulack has had a lot of success over her career, she has been faced with obstacles along the road.

One of these was a serious hip fracture that prevented her from playing in many recruitment events and tournaments.

“I ended up committing to Muhlenberg while I was on crutches through film.” Film from games is a way for colleges to evaluate and look at certain players.

“Everyone was really surprised since I was still newly hurt, but even more proud at all of the hard work I went through to commit,” Hulack reveals. “[They were all] super

proud and happy for me,” Hulack says.

Hulack has been able to visit Muhlenberg College and sees a lot of opportunities for herself to grow as a player.

“What I love about the coaches is how understanding they are, but still push the players to be the best athletes they can.”

The Head Coach of the girls’ lacrosse team at Muhlenberg mentioned numerous games, practices, lifting sessions, and speed training sessions the girls would take as a run-through of the season, but didn’t fail to mention the importance of good mental health and a positive well-being.

“She added that she cares a lot about mental health and understands if we need mental health break days which I thought was amazing,” Hulack admits.

Located in Allentown, PA, Muhlenberg College has a lot more to it than lacrosse for Hulack. With its variety of architecture and landscape, the campus is beautiful.

Hulack is most looking forward to the commu-



Photo courtesy of Tiaa Charney '23

Rylee Hulack’s Muhlenberg commitment announcement post.

nity at the school. “After talking to students who go there and visiting the campus, I noticed how all the athletes get along and hang out with each other, as well as students who go to the school.”

Since Hulack was little, she had always wanted to play lacrosse in college, and now gets to live out her dream of being a collegiate athlete.

She’s not only excited to play for the school, but also to meet new people and step into a new envi-

ronment.

“Since I was little I have always wanted to play lacrosse in college and my heart was always set on D1. But after seeing the freedom I would get as a D3 athlete with the same feeling as a student-athlete, I can’t wait to be a Muhlenberg lacrosse player!”

We can’t wait to see what Hulack does at Muhlenberg College. ■



Photo courtesy of Tiaa Charney '23

Rylee Hulack running with the ball during a lacrosse game.



# Breast Cancer Awareness Month

Braden Slayne '23 and Caleigh Amano '23

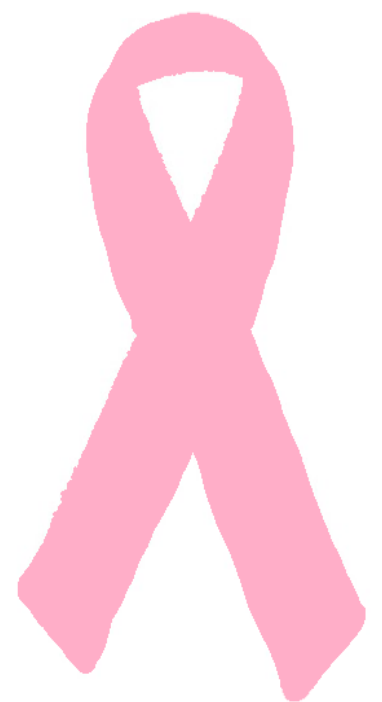
October marks Breast Cancer Awareness month. Throughout the month, we raise awareness for breast cancer: one of the most common cancers that primarily affect women. This disease is far reaching, touching many members of our extended Highlands community.

That is why we participate in education and awareness activities, like “Pink-Outs” at sports games, during Breast Cancer Awareness month. The pink t-shirts sold through the school store were worn proudly by Highlanders at the football game on October 7th. The Highlands field hockey team also showed their support by wearing custom pink t-shirts at school and during their game.

The color pink is powerful and people wear it to honor survivors, remember those lost to the disease, and to support the progress we are making together to defeat breast cancer. However, our efforts should not be limited to the month of October. Creating greater awareness throughout the entire year saves lives. With more people educated on the symptoms of breast cancer, it's more likely that people will be able to catch it early on. Like other cancers, early detection through screening is when the disease is most treatable.

As a Highlander, you can help create moments of hope and support finding a cure for breast cancer and other types of cancers beyond this month through Relay for Life this spring.

Relay for Life is the largest community-based fundraiser at Highlands, dedicated to celebrating survivors' stories and saving lives from cancer. Let's rally together and make an impact for lifesaving change.



School Store Manager Braden Slayne thought it would be a great idea to design breast cancer awareness tee shirts, not only to take part in spreading awareness for breast cancer, but to show Highlands students' pride for joining in the fight against the disease.

After advertising the shirts on social media, there was a crowd in the school store to purchase the spirited tees the day they arrived. Students sported their new shirts at the annual pink-out football game.

Every shirt was sold out within 10 minutes of their sale. Braden expressed her pride of seeing all the shirts being worn at the pink-out game and the awareness that Highlanders were spreading.■