

# The Signal



*The Official Newspaper of Fenton High School*

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## Fenton Issues Referendum For \$129.7 Million Renovations

**By Jadyn Golz**

Students flooded through Fenton's doors on a morning like any other. Instead of a wooden wall, students were met with posters and signs. So, what are these pictures and diagrams? What is the term "referendum" that keeps floating around? Well, you, my dear Fenton friend, are in the right place.

Mr. Bruce Martin, our Chief School Business Officer, defines a referendum as "the process of asking the public for authorization; in our case, authority is required to raise the property tax rate by an amount above the property tax cap (limit)." If the referendum were to pass, the school would issue bonds and raise property taxes to pay for the estimated \$129.7 million needed to make renovations. Martin offers this explanation: "Compare the school district's circumstances to a homeowner's. Typically, when work is needed for major repairs or renovations to a home, such as a new roof or room addition, a homeowner often takes out a loan to pay for the repairs over time. Fenton is similar, the projects proposed are major, and we do not have enough reserves to fund them. The district would issue bonds and repay them over a 20 or 25-year term to pay for this. This is common for schools."

Mr. James Ongtengco, Fenton's Superintendent, states that "if the referendum is successful, we will be able to: Renovate our school to make it safer for students and teachers, improve our programming and career learning spaces, and modernize our classrooms for 21st-century learning." Some changes include door and window monitoring, electronic door locks, and even a storm shelter. Ongtengco also states, "We will also be able to better maintain our schools by addressing safety and infrastructure needs. We would renovate mechanical systems, plumbing, bathrooms, sprinklers, electrical, emergency power, networking & cabling, corridors, asbestos abatement, drainage and stormwater management, and ADA compliance (American Disability Act)."

The school plans on expanding classroom size and upgrading equipment. Ongtengco notes, "We will provide increased opportunities for students through optimized and dedicated spaces for STEM, Applied Tech, Culinary, Construction, Health Sciences, Bio-Med, Special Education, and Life Skills Programming."

"If voters approve the referendum, design and construction could take up to three years to be fully completed," Ongtengco states. "However, it would all occur in phases. As construction in one set of classrooms or labs is finished, other classes would shift locations into those rooms – essentially trading places with the construction crews. Next year's seniors (Class of 2023) might experience a few of the early projects."

"Some in the Class of 2023, like our current seniors in the Class of 2022,

can even participate in the outcome by voting. June 28 is technically considered a "primary election," which means the voters decide what candidate in each party should be on the ballot during the regular gubernatorial election on November 8. Because the two elections are connected, Illinois law says all U.S. citizens who are at least 18 years old before the November 8 election can also vote in the June 28 primary election. Quite a few students in the Class of 2023 will turn 18 before November 8. If voters approve the referendum in June, the incoming freshmen Class of 2026 could experience the full benefits of our plan for at least one full year," states Ongtengco.

Martin adds, "It's often believed that investing in schools positively affects housing markets, drawing more people to the community and making home prices more competitive. However, all investments come with a price, which would be in the form of a new tax on homeowners' property tax bill. The new tax would be over a 20 or 25-year term until the construction-related expenses are repaid. The voters within the district boundaries will have to decide how they feel about this investment and then vote to accept or reject the ballot question on June 28." Fenton's website offers a tax impact calculator for those interested in learning how the referendum would affect them.

"Every year, the improvements needed at our school become more expensive, and this runs contrary to our efforts to make our district more fiscally responsible," Ongtengco notes. "We've taken important steps to control spending and ensure that as much money goes into classrooms and students. Fenton has the lowest bond and interest fund tax rate among high school districts in DuPage County and an overall tax rate significantly lower than the state average. Our students deserve the same opportunities provided by other districts in DuPage County. We developed the referendum to provide safer, 21st Century Learning Spaces for all of our students."

Ongtengco closes, "It's up to each person in the community to decide for themselves how they feel. Fenton's administrators, board of education, teachers, parents, and community members, collaborated to build a plan to improve our school because we know our students deserve better. We make do with what we have in our 1950s building, but our second-rate facilities keep our students from reaching their full potential."

For those with comments, questions, or concerns, visit the referendum website at <https://fenton100.org/referendum> or contact Principal Bentsen ([bentsen@fenton100.org](mailto:bentsen@fenton100.org)), Communications Director Rick Kambic ([kambic@fenton100.org](mailto:kambic@fenton100.org)), Superintendent James Ongtengco ([ongtengco@fenton100.org](mailto:ongtengco@fenton100.org)), or Chief School Business Officer Bruce Martin ([martin@fenton100.org](mailto:martin@fenton100.org)).

## Upcoming Summer School Dates, Classes, Most Free of Charge

**By Abby Hernandez**

Interested in summer school or need to make up a class? I reached out to Mr. Castro and got all the information you need to sign up! For summer school 2022, first semester courses will run from 6/13 through 6/30, starting at 7:30 am to 12:45 pm Monday through Thursday. The first semester classes are:

- Accelerated Geometry
- Consumer Education
- Credit Recovery AM
- Credit Recovery PM (5 pm to 8 pm)
- Driver Ed
- English 1 Extension
- ESL Summer Bridge
- Health
- Literacy & Math Skills
- Math Extension
- Newcomers Transition (6/22-6/30)
- PE Credit Recovery

Second-semester courses will be from 7/5 through 7/25, starting at 7:30 am to 12:45 am Monday through Thursday. As 7/4 is a holiday, there will be no classes. Second-semester courses are:

- Accelerated Geometry
- Credit Recovery AM
- Credit Recovery PM (5 pm to 8 pm)
- English 1 Extension
- Literacy & Math Skills
- Math Camp
- Math Extension

All courses but driver's education will be free of charge, as the District wants to continue support from the learning loss due to the pandemic. Registration for summer school opened on Tuesday, April 19th! Lastly, summer school kids and their families are offered a BBQ at Fenton for Summer School Kick-off! This event will take place on Wednesday, 6/8. Details about the BBQ will come at a later date. So leap and set yourself up for success by attending summer school in 2022!



# Speech Team Wins Two State Championships, Takes 6th Overall

By Chrystyna Prokulevich

Imagine: You are getting ready to step up front onto the stage, Your heart begins to race, palms are sweaty, the people in front of you will rate your work that you have been working on for the past few months. Your amazing suit is perfectly pressed, and your hair ideal. But, the most important thing that you have brought with yourself today is your ability to present your well-written speech. This is the feeling that the incredible Fenton speech team has felt for the past few successful months on Saturdays. Through the tough year and coming back after a year online, they have truly made a statement!

Success for the speech team is nothing new. Not only was their beginning of the year incredible, but this year they had so many team members qualify, and Evelyn Perez won first place at State, and Karissa Lara won first and third in her events. Their coach, Nicole Hendricks, speaks on the amazing sweep they made, and how many other awesome students made their hard work and dedication a beacon of inspiration.

She states, "Karissa and Evelyn are outstanding actors and public speakers—both of whom built their successes by never limiting themselves to one type of performance."

Not only were Karissa and Evelyn amazing competitors, their teammates accomplishments are too incredible to not mention.

Hendricks states, "Additionally, Carolina Rosas took 3rd in state this year and 6th in state last year in humorous interpretation...Carolina competes in both humorous and dramatic interpretation and she also directed last year's performance in the round."

As Hendricks mentions, her hard work is amazing, not only is Rosas an amazing competitor at competitions but an awesome teammate. Hendricks also spoke on another amazing student, Xochitl Quinones.

And without a doubt Hendricks is more than proud of her, "[She] advanced in both of her events this year and gave outstanding state performances in radio speaking and original oratory. Xochitl was challenged to take on a new event just this year when we lost a team member and advanced to state finals in that new event—that is no small feat."

All of these four students were, of course, incredibly undefeated, but it is because of their amazing team that they were all able to succeed together.

Hendricks tells me about the round team and their accomplishments, "our performance in the round team took on a story-telling group event and advanced to state with their children's theater piece *The Day the Crayons Came Home*. These 11 students with our 6 events qualifiers assured Fenton a 6th place finish overall in Illinois."

Now, you must be wondering, what does it feel and look like to prepare for State? I asked Hendricks to elaborate and put things into perspective for someone like me, and let's just say it is a very critical process.

Crunch time is always the mindset the team has, she explains, "If a student truly sets the goal to prepare for state, then that student knows that there is no 'off-season' and will prepare before the season starts."

A mindset like this is a difficult one to say the least. But, one thing is for sure, is that Speech has such a wide range, and each kind of event has its own practices, "for acting and public speaking, this means students engage with



Photo courtesy of Nicole Hendricks

texts outside of a classroom, invest in consuming and criticizing news media, and constantly seek to empathize and understand multiple perspectives either for the purpose to reinvent themselves in characters for the 7 acting events or to debate and argue in 7 public speaking and prep events."

After so much hard work, I asked Hendricks about different ways the team loves to celebrate each other, and after so many years, some beautiful traditions have grown; "our team has created a few traditions... We have a Friendsgiving before our Thanksgiving break and we have a white elephant gift exchange before our winter break. One new tradition we want to start is our own speech camp over the summer to set up our varsity with their events and encourage them to prepare for our season..."

The speech team has genuinely made its mark this year, and shown that no matter what family and having a bond with one another is so important. Not only is the entire Fenton community so proud of the team, but the coaches as well.

Hendricks says, "The strength of our team is built on the dedication and determination each team member brings to our season. I always say that I will work hard as a coach for those students who continue to choose to work hard, and I think that when students see dedicated coaches, they know that the investment they make in their personal achievement is reinforced by the investment coaches make in them. Showing up to practice is half the battle for any team."

Practice truly makes perfect and the team has genuinely proven this. Congratulations to Karissa Lara and Evelyn Perez for their personal perseverance and accomplishments this year, and a huge congratulations to the entire speech team.

## Diaz Highlights Importance of Creative Outlets, Hints at Future Projects



By Ethan Diaz

Hello, my name is Ethan Diaz, and I'm indifferent to long walks on the beach. I'm a graduating senior and have been an illustrator for Signal since my sophomore year. I've also written two - count 'em, TWO - articles for the paper - one on my trip to Japan and a review on 2022's *The Batman*. I may have also

been an active member of the Fenton Choir during my time at Fenton, but I'll get back to you on that one. (You can probably tell, but I wasn't really given any guidance on this article in terms of what I *have* to write, so please humor me while I spitball.)

So, here we are at the end of the year, and the end of high school. It's definitely a surreal kind of feeling.

There's the relief of "Oh, you know the daily monotony of coming into school and not retaining any information whatsoever and being tested on said information you didn't retain? Yeah, there's no more of that. And you can do whatever you want now."

And that's dope. But the somewhat louder feeling I have is, "Hey, say goodbye to your daily routine that's been around for practically all of your life. And your friends? They're going to leave you, too. No ifs, ands, or buts about it. They have bigger fish to fry and so should you. Wait, are they your friends? Why don't you feel like you're succeeding?"

As you can tell, there's parts of me that are excited for what's

in store for my future, but all of me has this intense fear of the unknown, uncertain on if I have a future, period. I get way into my own head, probably more than I should. And I'll tell you something: sometimes that inner Hell is what inspires me to draw, to write, to create. It's a truly vicious cycle. This school year has been the most emotionally draining year of my life, and there are several personal issues that have reared their ugly head. And yet, I feel like I've grown as an artist because of it. I think I've grown as a person because of it.

Do the comics I draw for *Signal* specifically reflect that? No, probably not. Do my grades reflect that? No, probably not. Do I still care? No, probably not. Because I want to put all my focus into getting the things that make me happy, the things that will keep me from asking: "Was any of all this worth it?"

But what do I want? What's next for me? Will you hear from me again? You will. Here's the deal, my next step is to write, draw, and publish a comic. Boom. There. Hot of the presses. That is what I am working towards during most of my free time.

I hope to start the art for it over the summer - but I can say that all I want, right?

I will start the art for the comic. Will it be done by summer's end? No, and I can say that confidently. But maybe next year. There's a lot of things I haven't considered or thought about, but I just really need to get this story onto paper. Other than that, I'd like to seek other creative outlets in which to express myself, because that's what I like to do.

I want to leave you with some parting words. Parting words for me. Words I need to tell myself. Maybe you'll find some solace in them, too.

You made it to the end. You did your best - and, even if you didn't, it's in the past and there's nothing anyone can do to make you change it. Your future is not written, but your destiny is to make a difference - even if it's to just one person. And above all else - whether it feels like heaven or feels like hell - you are not alone. Someone will find you, but only if you go find them.

Stay cool. Have a rotten day. Goodbye.



# Fenton Students Welcome Two French Exchange Students

By Jadyn Golz

Going to school and not being able to understand anyone is a thought of nightmares for most of us. But for Thomas and Chloé, it's a reality.

Thomas and Chloé live in suburban Paris, France. For their spring vacation, they've decided to travel to the United States and live with a Host. Both Thomas and Chloé have learned English because they wanted to communicate with more people and English is a language that a lot of people know.

Chloé's staying with Freshman Kiera McGowan who wanted to meet someone from France and get to know what life in France is like. McGowan states, "It's really cool to have someone that's living with you that is the same age. It's also fun to show someone things in America and show what's different."

Thomas is staying with Senior Elvis Sanabria. Sanabria states, "I decided to host because a close family friend of mine had previously hosted earlier this year and he said it was super fun. I later found out that we can host here at Fenton for French class and decided 'why not?' So far it has been lots of fun and my family and I have been enjoying housing our French FES, Thomas!"

Thomas arrived just in time for Senior-Ditch-Day and so, Sanabria took him downtown. "My favorite part about hosting has to be showing Thomas around Chicago and all the good eats as well as the major tourist attractions. Another thing is that it's like having a new sibling and it's lots of fun getting to go out!" Sanabria notes.

Chloé and her host went downtown shortly after. Both students liked the tall buildings and went and saw The Bean.

Chloé and Thomas were shocked that students were allowed to have their phones out during class. At their school, phones have to be off and away for the whole day. If they're caught with it out, it gets sent to the principal's office



Photo courtesy of Kyra Behnke

and their parents have to come pick it up.

Chloé and Thomas have both enjoyed their visit here and Fenton. They agree that, as strange as it is, it's super fun to be around new people and experience a new culture. Lastly, they both agree that the hardest word to pronounce in English is "squirrel."

# Contest Drama Cast, Crew Look Back on Memorable Production

By Sarah Guerrero Gorostieta

This year's Contest Drama production, *A Piece of My Heart*, shined a light on the stories of four valiant women who were sent to Vietnam to serve as nurses and experienced the true violence and brutality of the Vietnam war. With the incorporation of a heartfelt musical selection using moving songs from the show's time period, the directors, stage crew, and cast of Fenton's Contest Drama were able to share their story from Fenton's own showcase, competing their way to state, and their incredible performances allowed this soul-stirring play to reach a piece of every audience member's heart.

Junior Ariana Hurtado, is a 2 year crew member of Fenton's Contest Drama who joined her freshman year but never got to attend a live competition. Returning her junior year, she reflects on what she's learned about this theater group. "At competitions, I saw that our show

was really dark and sad, like most other shows. But we also had a really fun aspect of our performance like the fun songs and dancing," she states. "Each character had a really deep, harsh background, but the message of our show was powerful and all of us found it important to believe in our story so we could genuinely reach the hearts of our audiences. Once we got to competing, I know that both the cast and crew gave it their all, and we made sure we put on performances we'd be proud of. I've learned that when we all have confidence in ourselves and others, we get excited... and that allows us to put on a fun, memorable, and authentic show"

Director Dr. Mitchell touched on the abilities his cast presented, both in a musical and collaborative sense. "This play was special to me because of our incredible musically inclined cast. That aspect of our show really allowed the kids to channel and showcase their own creativity.

For example, Adam Millard thought it would be a great idea to play the national anthem on an electric bass during the opening monologues, and suggesting it early in the season, we tried it out and found that it was perfect. That idea was totally his, and the instrument gave us such a different sound, and his performance really set the tone of the piece. I also have to give so much credit to Ms. Baker, who really perfected the harmonies and rhythm of our "Natural Woman" performance. Honestly, it felt like we were able to put together a mini musical. But the kids really seemed to bond over the music, and that allowed us all to fall in love with our own production."

To exemplify how much experience and wisdom students can gain from being apart of an extracurricular like this, Dr. Mitchell praises the growth of this year's cast, and he highlights the good work of their youngest cast member. "If I could give an award to our "Most Improved" cast member, it would definitely be Lita Aguilar. She really took all of her critiques from sectionals to enhance and develop her performance for state, and the connection she achieved with her character made the performance just so much more authentic. I'm really proud of her, and she's a great example of the growth students can achieve when they're a part of Fenton's theater department."

Aguilar encourages students to get involved in Fenton's Contest Drama and other theater shows, saying "I think being a part of Fenton's theater department is such a great opportunity. You gain friendships, time management and teamwork skills and super memorable experiences

like state trips and celebration meals. I've learned so much, like everyone is valuable in the productions we create here at this school, and I've gotten to see what I'm really capable of as a performer, teammate, student, and as a friend. After this season, I feel like I haven't only become a part of a cast, but also a part of a family, and that's really special to me."

Dr. Mitchell calls on the incoming classes and any Fenton student to join, because "We have an open door policy, and we want everyone to be involved. Even if being on stage isn't your thing, we've got tons of opportunities behind the scenes, and it's a great opportunity to become apart and actively create a community with cast and crew mates."

With a final thought, Dr. Mitchell commends this season's cast, stating that he is "genuinely the most proud of them because of the way they embraced the idea of collaborating and working together. The bond of our cast and crew this year was mind blowing, and time always flew as we worked together- it's rare to have that."

Recalling her experience with the team's state trip this March, Hurtado shares her favorite moment as "the little elevator incident- every cast and crew member, and our directors thought it would be a great idea to cram ourselves, and all of our luggage into a single elevator. It got stuck, and the hotel had to call Oak Lawn's Fire Department to help us get out, but it was definitely the highlight of my weekend." Dr. Mitchell laughs about the situation, stating that if he "had to be stuck in an elevator with anyone, I'm definitely glad it was them."



Photo by Ariana Hurtado



## Quiñones Recounts Group Interp Production as “Truly the Cherry on Top”

By Xochitl Quiñones

It would have to start with scissors; well, a pair of gloves with fake blades sticking out. Of course, it's a no-brainer that in 2020, the arts were deeply impacted. Among them, a special cohort known as Group Interpretation.

Group Interpretation (also known as GI) is a half-hour competitive play with a special twist; all costumes must be uniform, no props are allowed, and it's now recommended that the school uses a universal set provided by the school hosting the competition.

When Directors Nicole Hendricks and Melissa Feinberg first attempted to put on *Edward Scissorhands* two years ago, now-alum Adam Kashif practiced his role as Edward by trying on gloves that mimicked Johnny Depp's infamous hands in the film. Due to the pandemic, however, Group Interpretation was unable to continue. Junior Angel Santiago recalls being “devastated that the season was over before it even began. We had made great memories together and it felt so unfair.”

Last year, the story of choice was *Charlotte's Web*, with myself and Senior Yarely Galeno earning spots as both All-Conference and All-Sectional Cast (meaning ⅓ and ⅔ of the judges had nominated us to get special recognition regardless of how the production as a whole placed). This year, there was an overwhelming majority of cast members who earned All-Conference (where we placed 2nd out of 8 schools) as well as All-Sectional (where we placed

3rd) recognition, and myself, Yarely Galeno (sr.), and Angel Santiago (jr.) were all recipients of All-State Cast medals.

Of course, winning is definitely a perk of competing, but what several cast members would agree on is that the memories of the people we've met and the bonds we strengthened with those we already knew hold a more special value to us than a few medals.

Directors Nicole Hendricks and Melissa Feinberg have often recalled the very fond memory of meeting a brave firefighter when Contest Drama was stuck in an elevator the day of their State performance. “He was very relaxed despite dealing with a group of high schoolers who were stuck in the hotel elevator,” stated Director Feinberg.

Senior Yarely Galeno recalls a different memory— “I loved meeting the other competitors and making special memories with them! I never would have thought at the start of our season that we would end up having half the Bartlett cast at our hotel room and making microwave pasta.”

Junior Tera Pabico still laughs at the special moment of “making and handing out the signs of Bartlett's director, Mez; his reaction to seeing them at state was priceless. I can't wait to see Bartlett's show next year!”

Of course, Fenton couldn't just let our directors go unrecognized, and Senior Yarely Galeno made signs for Hendricks and Feinberg that didn't fall short of making the two laugh and tear up after a long second day at State.

Being a senior and being cast as Kim in *Edward Scissorhands* was truly the cherry on top of such an amazing year and there's nothing I hope for more than for more kids in the arts, and more specifically, in the competitive arts. Although it can be terrifying to be vulnerable in front of an audience of strangers, being in the competitive arts has ultimately been the biggest factor that has gotten me into multiple schools,

won me scholarships, and has helped form some of the most unforgettable memories in high school.

I still catch myself and other seniors tearing up thinking about the thousands of hours we have all spent together and although a surprising amount of change has occurred since State last month, none of us would change it for the world. In other words, *we'd rather remember it the way it was.*



Photo courtesy of Nicole Hendricks

## Niehoff Thanks Fenton, Shares Advice For Future Students



By Abby Niehoff

Thank you, Fenton, for being my second home. Thank you, Signal, for being my outlet. I have so much hope for the future of our world thanks to my time here. As a sign-off, here are five things I wish I knew before I finished high school:

1. At the beginning of the school year, wait to buy supplies until teachers tell you exactly what you'll need. I have a lot of unused notebooks and binders stacked up in my closet.
2. Keep an open mind- my curiosity is what introduced me to some of my favorite extracurricular activities.
3. In-class participation will go far in the long run!
4. Be sure to separate work and play. Don't overload yourself with homework, but don't force yourself out, either.
5. Be careful with microwave popcorn, microwave mac and cheese, anything you make in the school microwaves... watch it carefully.

Again, thank you, Fenton, for the past four years. I'm so excited to watch my little sister and the student body thrive, succeed, and grow- just like I did.

## Perez Reflects on Highschool in “Dalila’s Detailed Dozen”



By Dalila Perez

12 things I wish I knew before senior year

1. Try new things sooner rather than later. I waited till my senior year to join the signal and if only I had joined sooner I would have realized how much I enjoy it!
2. Avoid Coughing because it will be a quick way to get everyone's attention...\*Covid PTSD\*
3. Try and stay motivated!!!! Procrastination hits you like a truck.
4. Although it is important to

- think ahead for the future, don't get so caught up in it to where you forget to live in the present
5. Stay aware of surroundings especially the lunch room... due to some “altercations”
  6. Don't be afraid to talk to Mrs. Georgakis! Trust me, she knows what you're going through.
  7. Sadly, *High School Musical* will NOT prepare you for graduation
  8. Mr. Berry DOES NOT care if you cry in physics
  9. Senioritis is real...and it only gets worse
  10. Take a deep breath and remember that you're trying your best and that's all you can do
  11. Sleep deprivation is real, but that's okay because Red Bull exists
  12. Lastly, that you can get away with Sparknotes and Shmooping and still understand the books without the teacher knowing. (sorry, Mrs. Jackson <3 )

Editors' note: (No it's not. I knew all along, Dalila. <3 Mrs. Jackson)



# Fenton's Annual Spring Concert Returns, Highlights Cultural Diversity Through Music

By Jenny Aguilar

After over two years, Fenton will once again host the in-person, annual spring band concert. While most of the beloved traditions will still take place, the May 5th concert will also feature traditional Mexican songs with help from the professional Mexican folklorico group, Sones de México.

Mr. Garrett George, director of the Fenton bands, explains how the bands received a JCS Arts, Health, and Education grant through Dupage county. George reveals, "I heard somebody say it would be really cool to use this grant to support multicultural music. That really resonated with me." During last year's remote learning, the Fenton bands had the privilege of working with the Old Town School of Folk to learn about and play son jarocho music.

This year, the bands attended a presentation from the Sones de Mexico which taught the students about the types of music native to the different regions of Mexico. George states, I have been purposefully pursuing programs to incorporate more multicultural music; [these groups] are doing cultural

representative band stuff. [Sones de México] is just another maturation of that. The students then found out that certain pieces for the spring concert would be performed in conjunction with some of the members from Sones de Mexico. Senior Izabela Weglarz, member of both the Symphonic Winds and the Jazz Ensemble, says that she is really excited to be performing with Sones de Mexico, after Mr.George told us about them, I got home and searched them up online and enjoyed a lot of their performances."

One of the highlights in this experience for the bands has been working with Dr. Eric Hines, the percussionist of Sones de Mexico, in preparation for the upcoming concert. Both the combined jazz ensembles as well as the combined bands will each be performing Mexican folkloric pieces in conjunction with Sones de Mexico. Weglarz describes the experience working with Hines as "really great...it's been nice to have a fresh face for the band and hearing feedback from someone new that doesn't listen to us everyday. I think it gives us an amazing learning experience."

Sophomore Febe Reyes, member of the Symphonic Winds,

reiterates this sentiment, saying, "Working with Mr. Hines has been incredible. It's amazing that we're able to get the feedback and perspective of someone who works professionally with [this] style of music."

As George puts it, "When you think you know something you realize you don't know it. There is a lot I still don't know [but] I like the idea of learning things differently as a teacher. I like seeing [the music] in a totally different perspective. It has been good for me and the students."

The Fenton community has been actively working to include more cultural diversity within its classes, and the Fenton band program has done an exceptional job in doing just that. Reyes states, "Learning about other cultures' music helps us see that there are many types of musical traditions...helps us be aware of the world around us, which is important because it allows us to be conscious of good differences between ourselves and others."


Weglarz adds, "I love learning about different cultures, especially their music. I listen to all different kinds of music, from American rap to Polish folk and to Colombian reggaeton, so to be able to

immerse myself in a whole new style of music has been super eye opening and interesting. It's always important to learn from other cultures because it makes it so much easier to see all the similarities between us and make many more connections."

The May 5th concert will include performances from the Symphonic Winds and Concert Band, both Jazz ensembles, and the first performance of Fenton's new Mariachi club. The Sones de Mexico will not only play with the Fenton musicians but will also perform a few pieces on their own. George would like to point out that "the cinco de Mayo concert is not just for friends of the band. People who like Mexican music should come out and experience it."

The concert will also feature the senior solo, performed by Anna Micor on flute, the senior song, and recognition for all of the seniors in the bands. In relation to the concert as a whole, Reyes says, "I'm looking forward to playing music that is diverse and different from each other. From being the background of a solo performance to playing the harmonies of a march, all of our music pieces are unique and special in their own way."

# Four Seniors Make Athletic Commitments: Players, Coaches Express Gratitude



**Alexander Lamb (Soccer)**  
Milwaukee School of Engineering

**About the Player:**

"To me soccer means everything, and getting the chance to play at the college level has been a dream of mine for a long time so I'm grateful to have this opportunity" -Alex Lamb.

Alex knew that going into MSOE, he would not only be given a great opportunity to play soccer but a path to starting a successful career in engineering.

**Coach Comments:**

Coach Vic believes, "Alex will be a great addition to the Milwaukee school of the engineering soccer program." After coaching Alex for 2 years, he's seen him grow into the player he is today. Alex had accomplished all sectional honorable mention, all-conference for both junior and senior year, and MVP his senior year.



**Michael Rago (Baseball)**  
Oakton Community College

**About the Player:**

"Baseball has a special place in my heart since I could walk and I am blessed that I have now gotten the opportunity to extend my career to the collegiate level. Ready to get to work, Go owls!" -Michael Rago

Michael dreamt of playing Division 1 baseball ever since he was a little boy. Oakton college gives him the opportunity to do just that with the right connections.

**Coach Comments:**

Coach Kopp has not only had the opportunity to coach Michael in one sport but in two (Basketball and Baseball). He knows that in Michaels's future, he will be successful not only in his athletic career but also in his educational pursuit. "Mike is a very hard worker who shows up every day and not only making himself better but also his teammates around him a great leader and competitor" says Coach Kopp.



**Abbey Boehm (Volleyball)**  
Bluefield University

**About the Player:**

"Having the opportunity to continue my volleyball career means that I don't have to let go of something I love. Over the years volleyball has always been something I can resort to" -Abbey Boehm.

Although Abbey is passionate about Volleyball, she's even more passionate about her career in education. Her main focus was to find a school that helped fit her academic needs and that would help her further her career post-college. After visiting and experiencing such a welcoming environment, she knew Bluefield would become her second home.



**Konstantinos Papadopoulos (Wrestling)**  
University of Wisconsin-Parkside

**About the Player:**

"Wrestling overall changed me for the better as a person, as a student, and as an athlete. I wouldn't have met the people I've met or had the work ethic and personality that I do now" -Kon Papadopoulos

Kon has been a part of the team since freshman year. Each year his passion for wrecking and overall sports began to grow. Due to this, he has decided not only to continue his athletic career in wrestling but to put forth his work ethic into studying sports management.

**Coach Comments:**

Coach Hasting stated that "Kon is the epitome of Fenton Wrestling. Kon developed into an amazing leader and was an exceptional captain. I'm extremely proud of his achievements and the man that he has become." Coach hasting has seen Kon improve each year due to Kons' hard work and dedication to the sport.



# Prokulevich Shares Encouraging Message, Thanks The People Around Her



By Chrystyna Prokulevich

The glow of the sun hits our cheeks, our smiles beaming, just like the rays. We take tiny steps into the grass, barefoot, no worries running through our heads. Our laughter fills the air as the birds sing their melodies and the innocence of the moment feels endless, there is no comparison to what the future holds.

This kind of moment, the one that I believe describes childhood and the aspect of what being a kid is like, is something that so many of us are beginning to stray away from. The thing about growing up is that we never think about it, up until it really hits us. One moment we are playing

in the park, smiling and giggling about different toys, and the next, we are crossing the stage and collecting our childhood in a diploma. Before we set our first feet into this new chapter of life, I wanted to remind us all of the things that we should learn from, and what I believe is important to understand as we continue to grow.

When you begin to see the people that you grew up with begin to stray away and find their path to success, it's a difficult thing to process. Growing up is a journey, and it's one that all of us are beginning to start. We are so accustomed to the same routine, to the same people, and to the same environment. At eighteen it's hard to know what you want. And I'm here to tell you, that it is completely ok to not have everything under control.

The time to begin to focus on yourself is now. So from today on, I want you to listen to your heart and understand that whatever is meant to be will happen, that it's ok to struggle, and it's ok to not have everything under control. You may see people succeeding and appear to have found their paths, but who's to say they are not fighting a battle like you. We will regain the sparkle we believe we have lost and find our way back to the place we believe we belong. Maybe we don't know where our path is leading us now, but one thing is for

sure, everything truly happens for a reason.

Pondering on the past is meant to be a memory that we recall, instead of trying to constantly beat ourselves up for things we did and didn't do. The successes and defeats we had, are behind us, and there is no reason to constantly look behind and feel as though we are failures. Memories are meant to be those golden sunsets that we had when we were kids, even if they weren't all good. Instead of finding ways to constantly make up excuses for your actions, find ways you can learn from them and believe that those moments made you a stronger person.

Yes, a majority of us are completely ready and excited to move onto college, or try new things, or be in a different place other than school. We are ready to grow up, and take responsibilities into our own hands. And as much as that is the truth and reality, we should also remember that we have yet so many years to be serious and work many different kinds of jobs.

Right now, we are in this fine line between childhood and adulthood, a time that will not last very long. And before it's too late, we must all find ways to enjoy these last few moments, to do the things we dreamed of but never dared to accomplish. Go to that amusement park and eat buckets of ice cream. Try skydiving or parachuting if that's what calls your name. Try every kind of pasta there is. Read every book you remember from your childhood. Make a movie. Become a beekeeper.

Write a book. The possibilities are endless. Do not allow yourself to become an adult if you are not ready to become one.

But in the end, never forget where you came from. Being humble to all those around you is one the most important and key factors to life. We all grew up with one another, saw each other develop and grow into the kids we are today, and through it all we remained friends and peers. Our paths may not cross once again, but remembering that without those around you, you would not be who you are right now and in the future. Be excited for everyone around you, because they too are dealing with the same emotions as you are. So as you meet new friends, make new acquaintances, recall that it is the friends you have made before that are allowing you to be so open to those right around the corner.

But above all things, being kind is the world's greatest gift. There is so much evil and despair in the world that adding on to it, would make everything crumble. The simplest of smiles can make someone's day ten times brighter and feel like they matter. Kindness is what makes our world go around and allows for everyone to find connections with someone else. No matter what, become the bigger person, and out of everything we can possibly be, choose to be kind. And with that, take these words, and use them to your benefit. They are yours to keep or to pass along. Thank you for an incredible year, and being people that I can call my home.

## Photo Op: Describe your senior year in three words.



Mike Rogowski  
Eventful. Fun. Bittersweet.



Yarely Galeno  
Kind. Generous. Enjoyable.



Mark Sisco  
What Mike Said.



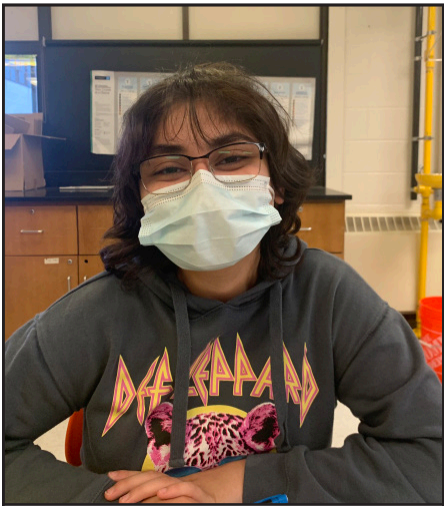
Lili Bermudez  
Hectic. Rewarding. Long.



Cartoon by Ethan Diaz



Senior  
Photo Op:  
Where do  
you see  
yourself in  
ten years?



**Jazmin Camacho**  
I see myself working in the forensics field and I'll probably still be in Illinois.



**Jarisel Carbajal**  
I see myself somewhere that's not here. Probably in Europe.



**Xochitl Quinones**  
A published writer and hopefully a journalist living in Georgia.

Congratulations to  
the Class of 2022!

Fenton Holds 36th Annual Art Show, Winners Are Announced at First In-Person Event in Two Years

By Samantha Lang (She/Her)

Fenton's 36th Annual Art Show took place on Thursday, April 28th. It showcased our AP Art student's best work from their final portfolios. As the last two years have been Digital Art Shows, the Art Department has not invited the community in for a live show since 2019, making this year's show very exciting.

Mrs. JoAnna Rieger says, "Fenton AP artists have worked hard all year and are ready to share their artwork with the community. I am so excited for them."

Students and staff were invited during their lunch period to place their vote for the "Best of Show". At the reception, the artists presented their concepts and techniques to all those who attend. Senior artists were also recognized for their hard work at the show.

The student's artworks were displayed in the ARC for the students and staff to see. Mrs. Elizabeth Wright explains "The AP Art Show was the highlight of my week. I'm surrounded by fascinating ideas, beautifully expressed ... brilliant arrangements of colors, forms, and textures. I loved hearing the artists' stories behind specific pieces and thinking about the relationships among different works by the same artist. Thanks, students, for making my life richer."

After counting the votes, Fenton's 2022 Best of Show winners are: Natalia Szala, Viktor Klimczyk, Anahi Brito, Morgan Tatela, Aracely Ponce, Benjamin Gonzalez. Congratulations!



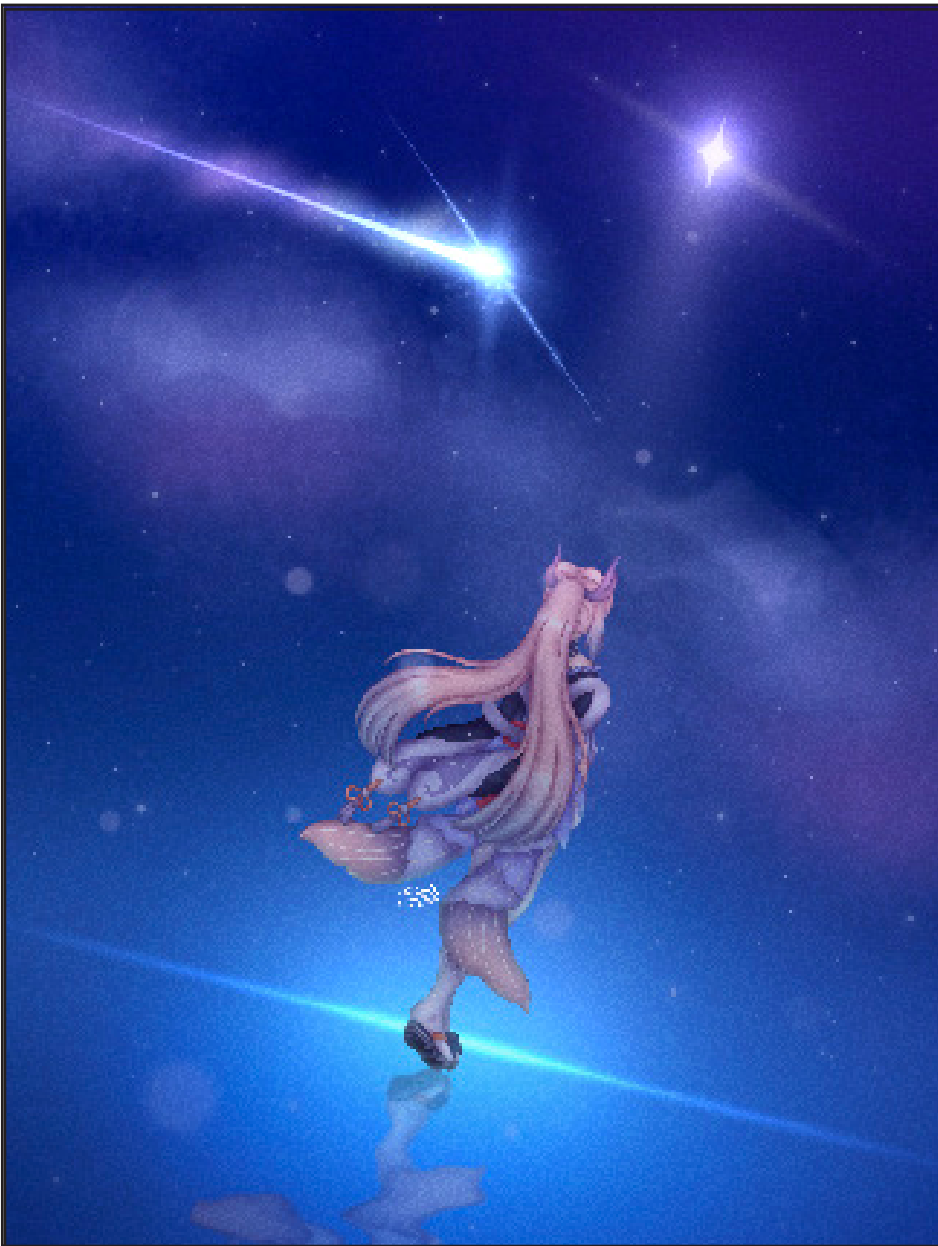
**Ally Durkowski**  
I hope to have a family, my own home, and a career in counseling.



**Sarah Subach**  
Being an orthopedic surgeon in a hospital.



Best Of Show Winning Artwork. Courtesy of JoAnna Rieger.



Cartoon by Samantha Lang (She/Her)



## Editor Jenny Aguilar Looks Back On Her Achievements, Shares Sentimental Senior Quote



By Jenny Aguilar

My favorite senior tradition has always been the senior quotes. I love the idea that upperclassmen get to leave one final sentence that leaves a lasting impression on who they were as people right before graduating. When I was a freshman my older brother was a senior, and I can recall him telling me about the quote he picked which was from LeBron James. As an avid basketball fan, it makes sense he'd quote one of the best players in the world, but what left an even greater impression on me was the actual content of the quote: "Strive for greatness." One of my favorite high school memories

is seeing my brother walk down the graduation aisle after receiving his diploma. I remember, thanks to me being a part of the band, making eye contact with him as he exited the field house and seeing the pure, unhindered joy in his smile. I felt so proud and in awe of him at that moment. I now think back to his senior quote. Seeing someone that I am so close with achieve something that my parents and so many others value so highly made me feel motivated to also "strive for greatness." I wanted to bring joy and pride to not only my family but myself; I wanted to live up to that quote.

Looking back on the past four years, I don't think I achieved that traditional "greatness" that most think of when they hear the word, but I did do some pretty great things. From the joy of receiving a 5 on two AP tests, being an editor for *The Signal* for the past three years, to now being a Fenton Scholar, I can confidently say that I am proud of my accomplishments at Fenton. But I am also proud of the person that I have become. I've stayed true to who I am while also opening up my world view, and I've made friends that will stay with me for the rest of my life. And in the long run, it's those latter accomplishments that I will look back on more fondly than the rest. Getting an A on a physics final feels good at the moment, but remembering that

breakfast with your friends on senior ditch day will continue to mean so much more.

However, all of these achievements are just the result of many, many, many setbacks that may not have been so evident to the casual viewer. As much as I grew during those years, I also had, and continue to have, moments where it was hard to accept myself for who I was; where I questioned why I can't be like my peers, where I got told "no", no matter how hard I tried. But I recently heard a quote, coincidentally from another basketball player, that helped me put all of this into perspective: "Legends aren't defined by their success, they're defined by how they bounce back from their failure,"- Chris Bosh. We all wish that our time during high school played out like how it did for Troy Bolton, Cher, or Regina George, but that's just not realistic or, as Bosh points out, impactful. It's these setbacks and challenges, no matter how small they may appear, that influence who we become and shape our mindset for future obstacles. My achievements mean so much more because of how I was able to overcome the doubt in myself and the obstacles in my life.

After four years of patiently waiting for my opportunity to have a senior quote, you can imagine my disappointment when I hear that this year's yearbook was not going to

include senior quotes. I laugh thinking about how the one senior tradition that I really cared about was stripped away from my reach. Well, here's my chance to share what would have been my senior quote: "There's a million things I haven't done, but just you wait,"- Lin-Manuel Miranda. While I do look back fondly at my time in high school, I have also been of the, what some might argue as derisive, mindset that this is all just that: high school; four years of teenagers trying to figure out who they are before they become a part of the real world. This fall, I will begin my journalism degree at Northwestern University. I am really excited and proud that I was able to even get it but I am aware that this isn't the end of the finish.

As this is an article accidentally full of basketball quotes, there is one that my brother is very fond of telling me as of late in regards to my future: "The job's not done,"- Kobe Bryant. And I'm glad it's not done. I cannot wait for all the new experiences and opportunities that are awaiting for me. And I am ready for each new obstacle that will get in my way (but that's not to say that a few tears may be shed during those times). As proud as I am about everything I have accomplished thus far, know that I am not planning to stop anytime soon. Just you wait.

## Signal Editor Michelle Agyemang Conducts Final Interview As She Bids Farewell



By Michelle Agyemang

As I wrap up my high school career, I've spent a lot of time thinking about the people, places, and things that have influenced me during my four years at Fenton. Whether it be deleting my social media or just sitting and taking in the world around me, I have learned that living in the moment is one of the most important things I did during high school. Getting to talk to people I've never talked to before or learning something new about a student or staff member have made doing interviews for *The Signal* some of the most rewarding experiences I have had at Fenton. Receiving other people's stories and having the privilege to share that with

other members of this community is something that I will always be grateful for. For my senior farewell, I thought I would conduct my last *Signal* interview on someone I have finally learned to love and respect: myself.

### Were all my expectations of high school met?

In short, no. When I was a little girl, I thought my time in high school would be movie-esque. I expected my first day to have its very own version of Troy Bolton from *High School Musical* and adventures like the ones in *Cheetah Girls*. Fast forward ten years, my life couldn't be more different than what I imagined it to be. It turns out that people like Troy don't exist in high school. And, instead of participating in a thrilling new feat every day, I look forward to the late start Mondays that add some spice to my schedule. However, I can't help but think about the pride my younger self would have looking at the accomplishments I've made throughout high school. I can do things that younger me never had the confidence to do, like performing in musicals, playing a sport, and building new connections I'd never thought I could build on my own. I've gotten awards and recognitions. I've even found my voice as a leader. Most importantly, I have a fantastic group of friends who understand and support me no matter what I do. So maybe, in hindsight, a few of my expectations were met along the way.

### What have I learned from being a part of the *Signal*?

Writing for the *Signal* has taught me that my words are powerful, and I can cause a real change in the community around me. Before I was a part of *The Signal*, I didn't understand the value of the voice I was given. I grew up being told to be quiet and change how I act and speak around different people to cater to them. This constant dismissal of my ideas caused me to feel insecure about my opinions, and I never felt comfortable sharing what I honestly thought about the issues around me. However, writing for the *Signal* has taught me that hiding behind the person I am supposed to be, makes me a terrible writer. Writing for the *Signal* has made me much more empathic and understanding of other people's stories. I learned that I can impact lives by confidently using my voice and writing an article I feel passionately about.

### What is one piece of advice I would give to underclassmen?

Find something you're passionate about, and then do something with it! Whether it be a club, a sport, or something in your personal life (for me, it was all the above), I can't urge people enough to engage in what they love and care about. My faith was the one thing that got me to the end of my senior year. Being a Christian has taught me things like perseverance and discipline, but most importantly, it taught me

how to love others. I was able to take my passion for my faith and become a leader in Ignite, Fenton's Christian Club. Ignite has given me a community of people that I can laugh, cry, and be honest with, which is something every high school student probably needs more than anything. What I have learned from my faith has applications in everything that I do, and no matter if you are religious or not, having something that gives you a community of people that you can lean on is priceless.

### Is there anyone you would like to thank?

I could probably write a completely separate article thanking the adults that have helped me throughout my years at Fenton. Thank you to the teachers who have challenged me and made me a better student because of it. Thank you to all my club sponsors for molding me into the person I am today. Thank you to my friends who have shown me what it's like to be a quality human being.

Even though I put off writing until the last minute, I can't ignore the fact that the end of senior year is getting closer and closer. I've learned so much from my time here at Fenton, and I will never forget the memories I gained during my four years here. Although this time comes with many sad emotions, I'm excited to embark on a new journey, no matter where it takes me.