



FOX TALES

*Quarterly*

A STUDENT PUBLICATION

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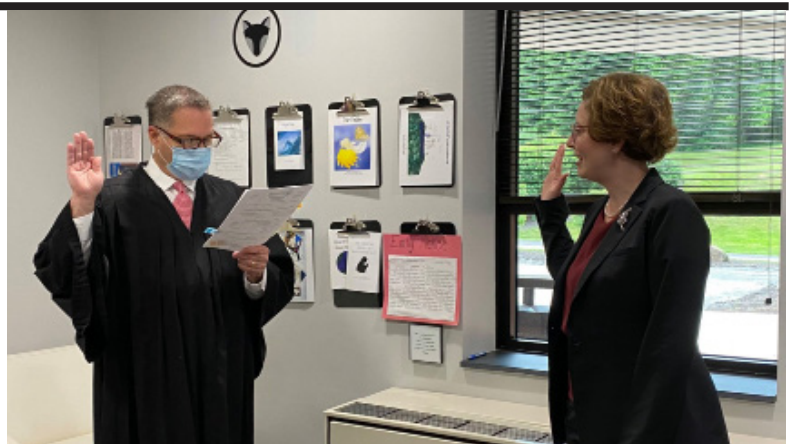
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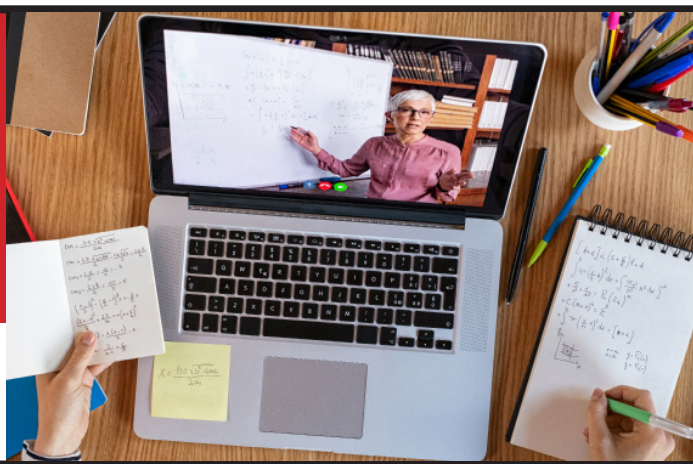
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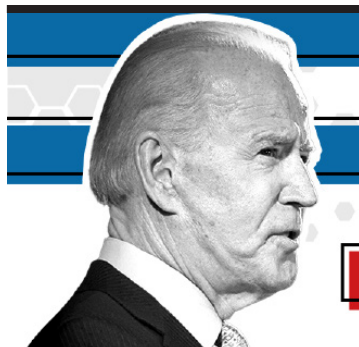
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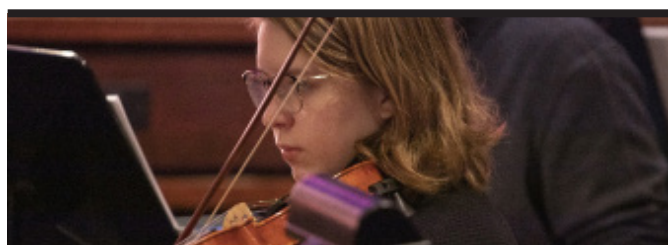
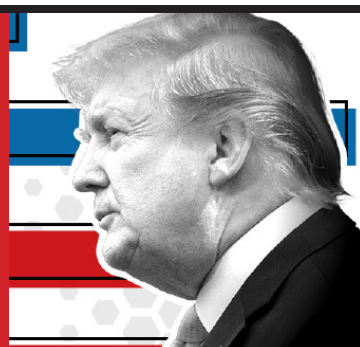
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# Won't You Be My Neighbor?

FCAHS Students Release Fred Rogers Documentary



The Fox Chapel Area High School students with "Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood" producer Margy Whitmer on the set of the show which is housed at the Heinz History Center. From left to right are: University of Pittsburgh intern Jessica Morris; students Anushka Vis, Ryan Kenyon, and Santiago de la Torre; "Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood" Producer Margy Whitmer; students Jean Daniher, Lance Wilhelm, and Adina Munin; and teacher Ryan Devlin.

What began in April 2019 as a voluntary book study of Maxwell King's "The Good Neighbor: The Life and Work of Fred Rogers," became a 70-minute documentary on the life of a remarkable man, produced entirely by Fox Chapel Area High School students.

Students in teacher Ryan Devlin's digital media production course have released their documentary, "Our Assignment from Fred Rogers." The documentary, which took more than a year to make, includes interviews from many people who were close with Rogers, including his wife, Joanne, as well as "Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood" producers Hedda Sharapan and Margy Whitmer. Also included in the documentary are interviews with King, Mr. Rogers' biographer, and David Newell who played Mr. McFeely



FC senior, Lance Wilhelm interviews the director of "A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood," Marielle Heller, at the movie's premier.



on the long-running children's television show. Three of the interviews were filmed in front of the original Neighborhood of Make-Believe set pieces displayed at the Heinz History Center, and students were responsible for all elements of the production.

Originally, once the students had completed a few interviews, they planned to release them, but, an unexpected telephone call from Roger's widow, Joanne, changed the direction of the entire project. When she heard about it from her plumber, she called one of the Fox Chapel Area High School students in the group and then invited them to her home in Pittsburgh for a truly memorable interview.

The students involved were 2020-2021 senior Jean Daniher (producer), 2020-2021 senior Ryan Kenyon, 2019 graduate Adina Munin (producer),



*Above: FC graduate Adina Munin (currently studying film at Temple University) with Margy Whitmer who produced Mister Rogers' Neighborhood.*



*Left: Fred Rogers biographer, Maxwell King, is interviewed by student producers Jean Daniher and Adina Munin and Assistant Project Advisor, Jessica Morris, in the O'Hara Elementary School library. Maxwell King is the author of "A Good Neighbor," a biography about Fred Rogers that these students read.*

2019 graduate Santiago de la Torre, 2020-2021 junior Anushka Vis, and 2020-2021 junior Lance Wilhelm (director). Additionally, Jessica Morris, a 2018-2019 intern at Fox Chapel Area High School from the University of Pittsburgh, was also involved with the production.

According to Lance, one of the most inspiring things he learned while working on the documentary was the importance of taking time to really listen to others and to make interactions with people special, which is just what Rogers would have wanted.

"Fred Rogers made a constant effort to be the kind and caring individual that everyone who watched his program knew him to be, which is the most inspiring aspect of his life that I had the opportunity to observe in working on this project," Lance says. "The idea that anyone can strive to be the best version of themselves in how they interact with others is one of the more hopeful messages that is touched on in the lessons of Fred Rogers."

Lance also learned that making a documentary takes a great deal of time and effort, but that is what must be done to create a compelling and meaningful program for the audience. He also commented that working on the project opened his eyes to exactly how genuine Rogers truly was.

"One of the most remarkable things about Fred Rogers is that when he was on his program, he wasn't playing a character. Fred Rogers was exactly the person who he was on television. That aspect of honesty in his life shows what a truly caring and loving person he strived to be."

"Our Assignment from Fred Rogers" was inspired by a quote from Rogers that reads, "Try your best to make goodness attractive. That's one of the toughest assignments you'll ever be given." The full documentary is now available to watch on the Swift Fox Media YouTube channel which can be found online at <https://youtu.be/0ijzTmatpdM>.

## Deputy Superintendent Receives National School Safety Award

Fox Chapel Area School District Deputy Superintendent David McCommons, Ed.D., is the recipient of the 2020 National Association of School Resource Officers (NASRO) Chief Nicholas Derzis Safe School Leadership Award. The award recognizes individuals for their contributions and dedication to a School Resource Officer (SRO) program and who exemplify leadership, innovation, and dedication to taking proactive measures to enhance the safety of their school community.

According to a letter to McCommons from Mo Canady, the executive director of NASRO, there were many worthy nominations, and it was a privilege to bestow this honor on McCommons.

“Your dedication to systematically establish safer schools – through the creation of inter-agency partnerships, attainment of grant funding, and careful selection of officers whom you ensured were solidly trained, stands out as a shining example of innovative, proactive, and resourceful leadership in school safety.”

McCommons was nominated for the award by Joseph Kozarian, Fox Chapel Area School District’s chief of school police/school safety and security coordinator, who describes McCommons as being “extremely skilled” in school safety. Among other things, McCommons was instrumental in starting the district’s first school police department, which now

includes eight school police officers and one safety officer, that are all certified as SROs through NASRO. Additionally, during that same time, the school district was awarded more than \$1 million in safety grants, implemented systems that support school district safety and communications, performed risk and vulnerability assessments districtwide, and overhauled the school all-hazard plan.

“I have received extremely positive feedback from students and parents regarding the impact the SROs are having on the school district and staff, as well as positive feedback on the impact the officers are having on the students through the productive relationships they are building. If anyone is to take credit for these positive reviews, it is Dr. McCommons,” Kozarian says.

The award was presented to McCommons during the opening ceremonies of the virtual 30th Annual NASRO School Safety

Conference that was held August 5, 2020. McCommons was presented with a plaque in honor of his achievement. Additionally, the 2020 award recipients will also be honored at the 2021 NASRO School Safety Conference.

McCommons has been with the Fox Chapel Area School District since August 2007. He served as assistant superintendent until 2017, when he was named deputy superintendent.



*Deputy Superintendent, Dr. David McCommons was instrumental in starting the district's first school police department.*





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# Garimella Draws Attention to Societal Issues

By Ryan Kenyon

Back in March, a group of 15 black artists, recruited by Cameron Nesbit, created a Black Lives Matter mural along the Allegheny River. In the following weeks it was vandalized, paintballed, and scraped away. Fox Chapel senior Amulya Garimella witnessed this and decided to “contribute something meaningful and sustainable that could help others”. She was further inspired by Black, Young, and Educated, an organization started by high school students dedicated to equal representation for all.

“[protestors] too are risking their lives to help others and putting in immense amounts of work.”

Since starting the project, she has been honored with numerous awards and accolades. The Arts and Activism Competition, a virtual gallery event for POC ages 21 and under to support the Black Lives Matter Movement, has recognized her as one of six finalists. On August 28, she appeared on a panel at the virtual gallery, which also gave her a chance to sell some of her art at the Mattress Factory Museum. In



*The above and other pieces of Amulya's artworks can be viewed on her Instagram page, @art.mulya. Proceeds from the artwork sold are donated to the activists whose portraits were sold.*

In May, she started the Draw Attention Project, an ongoing series of portraits chronicling the essential workers and community organizers of the coronavirus pandemic. Each work includes a quote from the subject about their experience and how to support them, as well as links to their favorite charities. Her most recent work focuses on Jade Asean, a local activist who emphasizes that “these issues don’t go away when you put down your phone or leave a protest. What you learn needs to be put to use in real life!”

Her goals were simple — first, to draw attention to the efforts of real people involved in organizing peaceful protests and fighting on the frontlines of the pandemic and secondly, to get information out on how to support these individuals and organizations directly. Most importantly, she wants people to know that “heroism is hard to achieve. Day by day, it takes so much work. Essential workers are out there risking their lives to help others and that is a decision that was made by a real person, not an idealized hero,” that

addition, her art will soon be showcased in Oakland’s Forbes Digital Plaza. Next, she had the opportunity to discuss her art, activism, and youth organizing on the #Vote4OurFuture Pittsburgh Community Activist roundtable, a campaign run by Zero Hour and the National Children’s Campaign that highlights youth activism. Finally, she shared thoughts on activism in her own article in the Health Righters Magazine, a publication covering human rights issues globally.

She plans on continuing the project indefinitely, with the ultimate goal of “translating [it] into a meaningful platform for activists and essential workers so that a feature leads to increased and concrete support for people who need it.” But for now, she just wants people to listen and learn. Go see her art by visiting her instagram page @art.mulya!

If you know anyone who should be featured or would like to be featured yourself, you can contact her at amu.garimella@gmail.com!





Photo credit to National Geographic

# Let's Get Philpsophical

By Noah Bradley

A relatively new club rising in popularity is the Philosophy Club. Intrigued with thinking about the world, human thought, and the connections between them? Interested in verbalizing those thoughts in both group and one-on-one discussions? If yes, this may be the club for you. Some of the topics that have been discussed and will be continued to be brought up are consciousness and technology, death and afterlife, and relative happiness. You don't need to have any strong opinions on any of the aforementioned topics, or any topics for that matter. Participation can be in the form of simply listening to others. Good listening will usually spur insightful conversations. "I had never thought of it like that," said Ryan Zatman, after a group discussion about the complexities of nature vs. nurture. It is

important to constantly reevaluate things from others' perspectives and Philosophy Club can help you do just that. The Co-President Eduardo Weissmann said, "I think every member takes away one new idea or outlook, no matter how small, from each meeting." If you think Philosophy Club is the right fit for you contact any of the founding members: [healy\\_thomas@student.fcasd.edu](mailto:healy_thomas@student.fcasd.edu), [weissmann\\_eduardo@student.fcasd.edu](mailto:weissmann_eduardo@student.fcasd.edu), or [bradley\\_noah@student.fcasd.edu](mailto:bradley_noah@student.fcasd.edu).



## Philosophy Club

WE DON'T KNOW WHAT WE NEED TO KNOW  
UNTIL WE ASK THE RIGHT QUESTIONS



## Student Art Medal Winners

Two Fox Chapel Area High School seniors

were named national winners in the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards of 2020. Amara Ostroff received a Silver Medal for her mosaic art titled, "Lost in the Mass," and Annabella Zgurzynski won a Silver Medal for her enameling project titled, "Overgrown Cottage."

Hundreds of thousands of works of art and writing were submitted by students in grades 7-12 through regional contests and only the top one percent were recognized at the national level. Prior to being named national winners, Amara and Annabella were named Gold Key winners in

the Pittsburgh Region of the Scholastic Art Awards of 2020. Gold Key works were then judged at the national level by a panel of creative-industry experts and some were selected as the most talented young artists and writers in the nation by receiving national Gold and/or Silver Medals.

All of the national medalists had their work published on the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards online galleries in June. The Fox Chapel Area High School Silver Key winning students were under the instruction of art teacher Sarah Stewart.

The Scholastic Art & Writing Awards continues to be the nation's longest-running, most prestigious educational initiative supporting student achievement in the visual and literary arts.

# Meet the 2021 National Merit Semifinalists/Commended Students

Seven Fox Chapel Area High School seniors have been designated as National Merit Semifinalists and 13 have been named Commended Students in the 2021 National Merit Scholarship Program conducted by the National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC). The Semifinalists from Fox Chapel Area High School are Suparna Agrawal, Amulya Garimella, Brendan Gladwin, Ryan Kenyon, Mark Puthenpurayil, Jackson Romero, and Vinisha Sant. The Commended Students from Fox Chapel Area High School are Erin Doherty, Nataalka Harris, Emily Li, Lucy Markovitz, John Polcyn, John Scott, Sanjay Seshan, Vivian Shao, Aaron Tien, Michael VanDemark, Joey Wang, Alwyn Williams, and Nathaniel Yerge.

All of these students were selected based on their 2019 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT) scores. Each year, more than 1.5 million juniors complete the PSAT/NMSQT and are automatically entered in the National Merit Scholarship Program. Approximately 16,000 advance to become Semifinalists and about 34,000 are Commended. The Semifinalists represent less than one percent of the nation's high school seniors and the Commended Students represent the top five percent. A Semifinalist must have an outstanding academic record throughout high school, be endorsed and recommended by a high school official, and write an essay. The Commended Students are recognized for their exceptional academic promise. The Semifinalists now have the opportunity to advance to the Finalist level and compete for some 7,600 National Merit Scholarships worth more than \$30 million to be offered in the spring of 2021.



**Suparna Agrawal**

Suparna's top school activities are Forensics/MUN, Fencing, and DESI Club. "I think FC helped me reach my goals through the numerous opportunities offered. The variety of clubs and activities allowed me to explore a wide scope of areas and increased my overall growth. It also helped that the school did begin to try to address student mental health through activities like therapists, mental health days, and #mefirst, because even if they didn't completely eliminate stressors, it helped to know I wasn't alone. I really appreciated that if I was ever struggling in any of my classes, most of my teachers were always willing to put in the extra effort to help me reach my goals." In the future, Suparna hopes to practice law and eventually hold a position in political office.

Amulya is proud to be the student coordinator of FC's annual STEM Symposium. She also writes for Fox Tales and actively participates in Book Club. "At FC I've had many opportunities to learn and grow. Everyone is passionate and committed to what they do and that's invaluable. There are so many resources available: teachers and administrators at FC support student-run conferences and hackathons, events like DESI night, voter registration drives, and student literary publications. There's also so much information available about local opportunities in nearly every field or topic. The support available for students here is amazing." Amulya wants to study computational biology in college and beyond. "I'm really interested in the brain, and ultimately I hope that I can use my passion to help people. One day, I hope to help cure Alzheimer's Disease."



**Amulya Garimella**





**Brendan Gladwin**

Brendan is an active participant in the Cross Country team and Volleyball. He shared that, "FC has helped me reach my goals through the great teaching and all of the courses offered at our school." When asked about his future aspirations Brendan indicated that he plans to attend college and major in biology or chemistry. He is considering a career in the medical field but is currently undecided.



**Ryan Kenyon**

Ryan is a long-term member of the Cross Country team. He also regularly participates in Book Club, and Latin Club. Ryan feels that FC's awesome and helpful teachers enabled him to reach his academic goals. His future aspirations are to pursue a career in the field of healthcare and to live a happy life.

Mark's top three school activities are Mu Alpha Theta, Science Bowl, and Strategy club. "This school has always helped me to reach my goals by having wonderful teachers with very effective teaching styles and by always having opportunities for further challenge if I ever wanted any," he says. "In the future, I aspire to be a chemist, though that may change as I am partial to physics and computer science as well."



**Mark Puthenpurayil**

Jackson is a member of the debate team (Forensics), Model United Nations, and also is an active participant in the science fair. "FC has a ton of teachers that all have an immense passion for their respective subjects," he says. "As a student that makes learning significantly easier and more fun." In college, Jackson wants to study Computer Science and Political Science.



**Jackson Romero**



**Vinisha Sant**

Vinisha stays busy through her participation in many extracurricular activities, including DESI Club, HOSA, and FBLA. "FC provided me with so many opportunities to explore my interests," she shared. "The clubs, as well as school field trips, have allowed me to narrow my interests and figure out what I enjoy and what I dislike as I move forward in narrowing my career choices. The teachers at FC have always been very supportive and helpful, and have often introduced me to certain things that I enjoy that I wouldn't have given much thought to previously." After graduating from college, Vinisha would like to enter medical school and work her way up to becoming a practicing physician. "It has always been my aspiration to become a doctor. Currently, I'm debating between becoming an anesthesiologist or pediatrician."

# Thirumala Named to Top 300

Fox Chapel Area High School freshman Adhitya Thirumala was recently named among the Top 300 middle school innovators in the 2020 Broadcom MASTERS® – the nation's premier Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) competition for middle school students. The program seeks to inspire young scientists, engineers, and innovators to solve the grand challenges of the 21st century.

The Top 300 students (including 15 from Pennsylvania) were selected from 3,476 applicants from 34 states and Puerto Rico. Adhitya was chosen based on his project, "Developing an Early Screening



*Freshman Adhitya Thirumala was chosen based upon his project, "Developing an Early Screening Application to Detect Lung Abnormalities Using Machine Learning."*

Application to Detect Lung Abnormalities Using Machine Learning," that was completed when he was an eighth grader at Dorseyville Middle School.

"I am honored to congratulate the top 300 Broadcom MASTERS during what is a very challenging time," said Maya Ajmera, President and CEO of the Society for Science & the Public and Publisher of Science News. "We are



**CONGRATULATIONS  
2020 TOP 300  
Broadcom MASTERS**



thrilled to be able to celebrate these amazing young scientists, who are poised to solve the world's most intractable challenges."

In recognition of their achievements, the Top 300 Broadcom MASTERS will receive a \$125 award from DoD STEM, as well as a special prize package. In recognition of the role that teachers play in the success of their students, each designated teacher will also receive an award.

A total of 30 finalists will be announced later this month and will compete for more than \$100,000 in awards and prizes. The contest will be held virtually.

The Broadcom MASTERS is a program of the Society for Science & the Public, and MASTERS stands for Math, Applied Science, Technology and Engineering for Rising Stars.

## Teen Media Contest Winners

Three Fox Chapel Area School District students and one recent graduate placed in the 2020 Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh's Teen Media Awards. Fox Chapel Area High School 2020 graduate Anzu Sekikawa was awarded first place and an honorable mention for her 2D art. 2020-2021 junior Alexa Berman won second place and an honorable mention for her 2D art. Fox Chapel Area High School 2020-2021 sophomore Sloane Simon won first place in the music category. Dorseyville Middle School 2020-2021 seventh grader Dalisay Quemado also won an honorable mention for her 2D artwork.

More than 200 young writers, visual artists,

musicians, filmographers, and inventors in Allegheny County vied for honors in the library's 2020 Teen Media Awards, which includes the Ralph Munn Creative Writing Contest and the Labsy Awards. The awards, which serve as a platform for celebrating teens and their original content, recognize a broad range of creative work. First- and second-place winners in each category received cash awards. The Labsy Awards, which is the portion of the contest Fox Chapel Area students won awards in, are open to Allegheny County students in grades 6-12. Entries were judged by a panel of 33 Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh staff and Learn & Earn teen employees.



# Fox Tales Quarterly Wins Two First-Place Awards

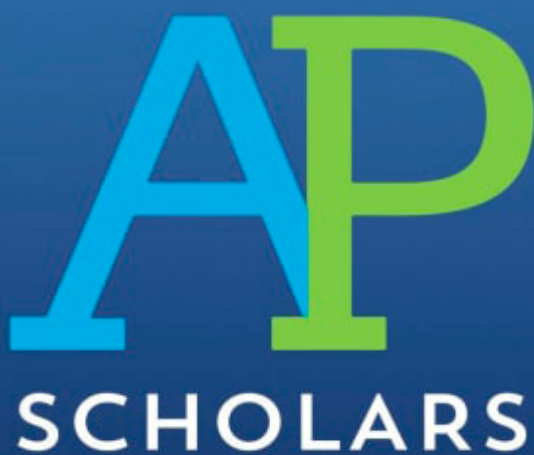
The American Scholastic Press Association, which was established in the 1980s, holds annual competitions in three categories: math, newspapers, and yearbooks/magazines. These competitions are entered by many schools all across the United States, making them very competitive. For their issues from the 2019-2020 school year, Fox Tales Quarterly, won first place with special merit in both the magazine and newspaper categories. "Your magazine shows the superior efforts of talented and creative editors, writers, artists, photographers, layout/graphics designers, staff members, contributors and advisor. ASPA congratulates all on your First Place award," a Scholastic judge noted in regard to the quarterly news publication.

Fox Tales Quarterly is a magazine that is published both electronically and in print form at the end of each quarter. The purpose of the publication is to showcase the many positive events happening in our school and community. The magazine is composed of the works of many high school students. When asked about why she writes for Fox Tales Quarterly, junior staff member Kaylee Uribe explained, "Fox Tales gives me the chance to be creative and to cover events that many students don't even know about! It's a way for our school to unify, and I'm glad I am able to help out in any way." Another junior-year staff writer, Justine Eng, was asked about her reason for writing throughout the past two years. "I think it's a good opportunity to be able to write about things you're interested in. It's also really fun to work together with all the writers to come up with a really cool magazine that actually gets published." Both writers,

By Ann Yonas



and teachers, learn more about local events, share their ideas with others, and so much more. If you are interested in writing an article or would like to be involved with the publication process, contact Mrs. Gibson (Lisa\_Gibson@fcasd.edu) or stop by her office in room 168. New members of the Fox Tales team are always welcome!



A total of 139 current Fox Chapel Area High School students and 2020 graduates have been named Advanced Placement (AP) Scholars by the College Board for demonstrating college-level achievement on the AP examinations taken in May 2020. The College Board recognizes several levels of achievement based on the number of courses and exams. At Fox Chapel Area High School:

- 2020 graduates Jackson Boychuk, Hanna Chen, J. Oliver Choo, Gwendolyn Davison, Claire Fenton, Rajeev Godse, Noah Hertzman, Michael Mendelson, Min Robert Grant Nishikawa, Christiana Paljug, Aaron Santilli, Anzu Sekikawa, Sina Shaikh, Charles Smith, Jake Sperry, Shane Susnak, Ameya Velankar, Felix Vesper, and Aaron Wu; and 2020-2021 seniors Anthony Nguyen, Mark Puthenpurayil, Vinisha Sant, Sanjay Seshan, and Vivian Shao qualified for the National AP Scholar award by earning an average score of 4 or higher on all AP exams taken, and scores of four or higher on eight or more AP exams.

- 2020 graduate Sina Shaikh received an AP International Diploma (APID). This diploma is a globally recognized certificate awarded to students who display exceptional achievement across a variety of disciplines. It is available to international students attending secondary schools outside the U.S. and to U.S. high school students applying to universities outside the country. The APID certifies outstanding academic excellence

with a global perspective and students must score a 3 or higher on 5 or more AP exams.

- The following graduates/students qualified for the AP Scholar with Distinction award by earning an average score of 3.5 or higher on all AP exams taken, and scores of 3 or higher on five or more of these exams: 2020 graduates Abigail Alexander,

Ethan Alfery, Paige Asbury, Macey Balk, Jackson Boychuk, Alyssa Carnevali, Hanna Chen, J. Oliver Choo, Hazel Cline, Gwendolyn Davison, Roman DiSanti, Blair Echnat, Jasmine Eng, Tobias Fennell, Claire Fenton, Rachel Ferris, Christian Fitch, Alayne Gaghan, Elizabeth Gay, Rajeev Godse, Hannah Gordon, Keith Haw, Jeffrey Hertzberg, Noah Hertzman, Gavin Hitchens, Henry Jacques, Patrick Kiszka, Adrien Lagasse, Puyuan Liu, Michael Mendelson, Anna Meyer, Sophie Muller, Shando Naini, Min Robert Grant Nishikawa, Christiana Paljug, Karl Pil, Michael Prato, Jacob Rendall, Preston Rowe, Aaron Santilli, Anzu Sekikawa, Sina Shaikh, Vivian Shao, David Shin, Charles Smith, Kavya Soman, Jake Sperry, Shane Susnak, Olivia Tang, Thomas Tsai, Angelique Uku, Ameya Velankar, Felix Vesper, William Wang, and Aaron Wu; and 2020-2021 seniors Suparna Agrawal, Amulya Garimella, Ravi Hughes, Ryan Kenyon, Anthony Nguyen, John Polcyn, Mark Puthenpurayil, Cecilia Rike, Jackson Romero, Vinisha Sant, Sanjay Seshan, Dong Hyun Shin, Aaron Tien, and Joey Wang.

- The following graduates/students qualified for the AP Scholar with Honor award by earning an average score of at least 3.25 on all AP exams taken, and scores of 3 or higher on four or more of these exams: 2020 graduates Amelia Bothe, Marilyn Brach, Claire Cummings, Samantha Dockey, Sean Doherty, Serena Fisher, Charlotte James, Ian Lowe, Casey Monroe, Luke O'Connor,



## 2020's AP Scholars, continued

Navjot Pabla, James Peterson, Rory Quinlan, Caroline Rost, Mario Rotunno, Haylee Stringer, Robert Tabor, and Thomas Traub; and 2020-2021 seniors Katherine Cecil, Rachel Chang, Erin Doherty, Faith Holmes, Aidan Ireland, Hannah Jahnke, Emily Li, Isabella Liberto, Lucy Markovitz, Abigail Rickin-Marks, Benjamin Siri, and Dylan Stein.

•The following graduates/students qualified for the AP Scholar award by receiving scores of 3 or higher on three or more AP exams: 2020 graduates Scott Bitar, Joanna Delaney, Grace Gackenbach, Annika Gleason, Harrison Hinz, Madolyn Kieffer, John Klamut, Owen Kreidler, Gunnar Loeffler, Emma Lusk, Jeevanjot Pabla, Joseph Rhodes, Jenny Shulkin, and Sydney Ulanowicz; 2020-2021 seniors Arda Akinici, Lyle Blaylock, Zoe Boychuk, Kathryn Chivinsky, Elena

Conway, Ella DeCecco, Antoinette Faucher, Ethan Flanders, Ainsley Good, Catherine Heidenreich, Luke Johnson, Ava Kazmierczak, James Klatt, John Nury, Amara Ostroff, Brooke Ryan, Elizabeth Schwartzman, Anthony Shin, Nishi Thawani, Lexie Wagner, Tyler Weinberger, and Annabella Zgurzynski; and 2020-2021 juniors Patrick Alexander, Zhiyi Chen, Zoe Lakkis, and Nathaniel Mueller.

Advanced Placement exams are graded on a 5-point scale, with 5 being the highest. Most of the nation's four-year colleges and universities award credit and/or advanced placement for qualifying exam scores. Every year, AP examinations are offered in a wide variety of subject areas, each consisting of multiple choice and free-response (essay or problem-solving) questions.

# HomeLost Project Offers Fun Way to Volunteer

By Ann Yonas

You might not realize how prevalent homelessness is in your everyday community, but it is an issue that affects people all across Pittsburgh, including your peers. When junior Griffin Kerstetter and Ann Yonas were in second grade, they were struck after learning about people experiencing housing crises. It had a huge impact on us," Ann says. "We both talked to our parents about ways that we could help out and make a difference, and our solution was the HomeLost Project." Their project consists of collecting gently-used t-shirts that they sew into quilts, which are distributed to homeless communities and shelters across Pittsburgh. "We hold events called sew-ins in order to get members of our community to work together and help with the quilt-making process." Over the past eight years, they

have hosted many sew-ins, both in Fox Chapel and in partnership with United Way. All of these sew-ins have yielded over 300 complete quilts!

In order to continue having their project grow and to raise awareness about homelessness in Pittsburgh, Griffin and Ann have decided to make the HomeLost Project a school club. "This year, since we are not able to have in-person meetings, we are planning to hold monthly virtual meetings, where we can all work together and and create quilts, while continuing to follow Covid-19 guidelines." If you are interested in helping out, volunteer hours can be awarded, either for a graduation requirement or for National Honor Society. Interested participants should contact

yonas\_ann@student.fcasd.edu (Annie) or kerstetter\_griffin@student.fcasd.edu (Griffin). You can also find more information on their website, [www.homelostproject.org](http://www.homelostproject.org).



*Participants at a past HomeLost sew-in display one of many quilts made that day.*





# Progression Towards Inclusion

By Abby  
Rickin-Marks

Throughout the past few months, our country has seen a call to action when it comes to police brutality against people of color. On May 25, 2020, George Floyd was killed in Minneapolis, Minnesota by police with a video of his murder shared through social media. Protests ensued, spreading internationally to over 2,000 cities in over 60 countries, becoming the largest civil rights movement ever in the United States.

In response to these current events, high school students at Fox Chapel spoke to teachers and administrators, letting their opinions be known and their voices be heard over zoom calls. These conversations let faculty recognize the basic needs of their students, igniting the spark needed for changes to be acted upon. The school board also responded to this need by passing a resolution in June on racism and diversity equity. This resolution explains what outlined things, such as reviewing curriculum for all grade levels, the school board will stand behind.

Only a few years prior, William Generett and Warner Macklin, alumni of the class of 2020, created the Black Student Union (BSU) with the sponsorship of Mrs. Jessica Green. The BSU sought to create a haven where the black students of Fox Chapel could be truly and authentically themselves. Although both Generett and Macklin have graduated, their club will have a teacher of color, namely Ms. Shannon

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**“I know mistakes will be made, but that should not deter us from making progress.”**

**– Dr. Michael Hower, Lead Principal**

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Finley, as its sponsor for the year of 2020-2021. When asked about her plans for the BSU, Ms. Finley shared, “As a new teacher in the district, but specifically a female Black teacher in the field of education, I hope to bring my experiences and knowledge to the BSU organization to guide them in ways I did not receive when I, too, attended a PWI [Predominantly White Institution] with few Black staff members and one, or oftentimes no, Black educators. At Pitt, I was a member of several Black student organizations, and I have plans to [show] students how to create a formidable organization, plan events that celebrate our culture, and share with our Fox Chapel community [to] create a culture and environment in the district that supports anti-racism.”

Throughout this summer, both teachers and administrators implemented numerous changes, one being the creation of the diversity council, initially developed in June 2020 by Mrs. Green. This council is

an outgrowth of the conversations Dr. Michael Hower and others had with students over the summer. With the numerous amounts of culturally- and diversity-based clubs such as the Black Student Union, the Jewish Student Union, and Desi, Mrs. Green believes it to be beneficial for these different prongs and facets that may feel underrepresented and belittled to be the ones to work on what inclusion resembles in the building. For students in cultural/diversity clubs, a representative from each club will be on the diversity council. In addition, there will be at least five “at-large” slots per grade level open to those not part of these clubs who are still interested.

As this idea became tremendously immense, a faculty version is also being developed. While the ideas created in the faculty version, such as curricular work, may not be an overnight development, they will continue to embellish the legacy of Fox Chapel. As Superintendent, Dr. Mary Catherine Reljac said, “We all have a responsibility to continue the story of our school district and to leave our mark in whatever way so that people that come after us may benefit from that.” Further, some teachers desired to become more educated on issues of diversity and began a voluntary summer book club. Members of the club, over 15 members of the faculty, chose to read books and articles dealing with the current state of our nation and community in order to further their learnings and support their students.

When tackling an issue this large and systemic, a school cannot just focus on one issue, but rather has to direct their attention in a holistic approach. In addition to the diversity council, Fox Chapel administration is also focusing on curriculum development and

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**“We all have a responsibility to continue the story of our school district and to leave our mark in whatever way so that people that come after us may benefit from that.”**  
**– Dr. Mary Catherine Reljac, Superintendent**

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*“I have plans to [show] students how to create a formidable organization, plan events that celebrate our culture, and share with our Fox Chapel community [to] create a culture and environment in the district that supports anti-racism.”*

*– Ms. Shannon Finley,  
Spanish Teacher and  
new sponsor of the Black  
Student Union*

teacher training. As a result of students sharing their stories from microaggressions to hate speech, this curriculum development will not only impact the high school, but every school in the district. In order to advocate for all students, we must celebrate our differences, but also actively combat racism. Both Dr. Matthew Harris and Dr. Ashley Constantine, the executive directors of secondary and elementary education and instruction respectively, are reviewing texts read by all students, including texts found in the elementary school libraries, through a lens of diversity.

Fox Chapel administrators also began consultations with professors at the University of Pittsburgh’s School of Education, providing teachers with resources needed to continue progressing. In August, all staff had professional development on combating racism and anti-bias in the classroom, using resources from both the University of Pittsburgh and Harvard.

When meeting with Dr. Hower and Dr. Reljac, I asked what they would want students to know in terms of the progress our school is making. Dr. Hower said, “I know mistakes will be made, but that should not deter us from making progress. I want to encourage the dialogue and that this environment is what they want it to be.” Dr. Reljac similarly encourages students, saying, “The advocacy of our students...hopefully [can] become an example of what a community can do together to combat racism.”

Ultimately, the steps being taken will allow us to celebrate our diversity and combat the racism and prejudice we have seen in our schools. As students continue to advocate for themselves and others, Fox Chapel will push forward when it comes to being inclusive and equitable.



# Meet the New Superintendent

## A Q&A Exclusive with Dr. Mary Catherine Reljac

By Maggie Kelly



We are happy to announce that Dr. Mary Catherine Reljac is our new district superintendent. Superintendents essentially serve as the face of a school district. They work directly with the school board members and others in order to make the most important, and oftentimes tough, decisions about the school district.

Dr. Reljac came to Fox Chapel from Franklin Regional where she was the assistant superintendent since 2013. Before that, Dr. Reljac was an upper elementary school principal at Pine Richland from 2011-2013. In the Gateway school district she was an elementary principal, a middle school assistant principal, federal programs coordinator, child accounting supervisor, and a music teacher from 1997-2011. Dr. Reljac received her doctorate of education from the University of Pittsburgh in 2016. Dr. Reljac has lived in Fox Chapel for nineteen years, and she is thrilled to work with our district. She realizes the importance of activities, arts, and extracurricular activities in our district, and she values them. She believes in collaboration, and she would love to get to know students, staff, and parents. Dr. Reljac's goal is to make sure students have access to high quality programs and support for their academic success and emotional development. She is very excited to be able to help our district and our students to be the best they can.

To get to know Dr. Reljac better, the Fox Tales staff asked high school students what they would like to know regarding her vision for the future of our school. Her responses are very insightful!

***1. Have you noticed any significant differences between Fox Chapel and your previous district (Franklin Regional), and if so, have you experienced a learning curve in adjusting to these differences?***

Every school district has similarities and differences. Fox Chapel Area and Franklin Regional are similar in that they both have wonderful students, staff, and families and both of them value robust educational programs that focus on academics, arts, athletics, and citizenship. Both districts value the relationships that they have with the community, too. Because of this, it was an easier transition for me into the district. Transitioning into the new position of Superintendent during a time when schools are managing the effects of COVID-19 was probably more challenging than the change in school colors!

***2. What policy do you hope to enforce that sets you apart from other superintendents?***

A superintendent is responsible to implement all School Board policies and district procedures. Personally, however, I believe that we are better as a school district when we work together and treat each other with respect. We can disagree but should not be disagreeable. It is through productive dialogue that we grow together. I look forward to working with all members of the school community to build our future and I expect respectful and productive interactions.



**3. FCAHS has four of Pitt's College in High School (CHS) courses. Do you plan to add more CHS courses?**

I was excited to see that FCAHS has College in High School courses. They are a great and cost-effective opportunity for students to earn college credit while in the halls of our high school. When I worked at Franklin Regional, it was important for that team to increase the number of College in High School classes and, when I left, there were seven higher education partners and over 30 College in High School courses. I look forward to working with the Fox Chapel Area team to explore options for our high school.

**4. How do you plan on supporting the music department during these uncertain times? Are there additional opportunities for chorus, orchestra, and band students to continue their learning safely?**

As a former music teacher, I know the importance of music classes and the value of chorus, orchestra, and band. In these uncertain times and out of an abundance of caution, we have paused some of the activities in our music classes that may be risky. The administrative team is working collaboratively with the music department educators to review research studies and guidance to inform how we move forward with singing or playing wind instruments in schools. As we continue to learn more, we hope that we can provide more opportunities for students to continue their learning safely. I think it is important for all students to remember that music class is much more than producing music, too. Instead of thinking what we cannot do right now, I try to think of what we can do. We can still learn other music skills, music appreciation, and the value of teamwork in creative ways.

**5. What are some examples of how you are incorporating inclusivity throughout the district?**

A school district needs to constantly consider if it is inclusive and if its students feel comfortable and valued in their learning experiences. I am trying

to incorporate inclusivity first by listening to the stories of students, staff, families, and the school community. By listening, I am learning, gaining a better understanding, and hearing from multiple perspectives. Next, I plan to use what I am learning to create some action steps for improvement. I am currently working with the administrative team to support adult learning throughout the district so that we, in turn, can support inclusivity for our students. This will be an ongoing focus for me.

**6. Do you have any environmental initiatives to reduce waste throughout FCASD?**

Thus far, I have not yet launched any environmental initiatives specifically focused on reducing waste throughout FCASD, although this is something that I have worked with in some of my previous positions. It is important for us to be cognizant of our environmental impact as a school district. Unfortunately, some of the safety procedures required because of COVID-19 (such as disposable lunch supplies) are just part of how we need to do business right now. As a result, I am looking at other ways to reduce waste such as not producing as many printed documents. Being conscientious of our environmental impact and actively working to minimize it is something that is important to me, and I look forward to exploring what already happens in our district so that we can chart our next steps together.



*Dr. Reljac, an Aspinwall resident, came to Fox Chapel from Franklin Regional, where she served as the assistant superintendent since 2013.*

**7. How do you feel the district's newfound online system will affect future years of instruction at FCAHS?**

Change sometimes happens in small increments and sometimes it happens through rapid events. Over the last few months, the field of education experienced multiple disruptors that forced rapid change, including new online systems for education similar to what we now have at FCAHS. In business and in technology, disruptors can be harnessed to help remake the industry (think about the advent of

## *Superintendent, continued...*

bitcoin or smart phones). I believe the same is true in education and I am excited about the opportunity to reimagine how we interact with each other, how we learn and teach, and how we “do school.” I believe that we are creating a foundation for future years and that online interactions and systems will only grow. The key is to make sure that we are using technology as a tool instead of a goal, and that we are judicious about redesigning our educational interactions so that they reflect what we value and what makes a difference for students.

### *8. Can you tell us a bit about what you have planned for the arts programs at all levels?*

One thing that drew me to the Fox Chapel Area School District is the value that it has on arts programming at all levels. I believe that the arts (and athletics) are important for well-rounded students. In

fact, in my last position I was working with a team of educators to develop a Creative Arts class for elementary students specifically designed to promote creative problem solving and iterative learning experiences for elementary school students using multiple art modalities. At FCASD, my plan is to first learn about what already happens in arts programs throughout the district. Then, I plan to listen to the ideas of our students, staff, and community as we continue to consider how we can develop and support arts programming. I believe all students need to have opportunities to engage in music, art, drama, and movement in their school careers.

### *9. How do you plan to include the student body in decision making? In past years, many students have felt out of touch with the school board and I think that*

*is an important relationship to keep strong.*

Student voice at all levels is very important to me. Our schools are for students and students are often able to share what is working, what is not working, and ideas for change that are extremely valuable to me. Since becoming superintendent, I engaged students as members of the Return-to-School Coalition, a group of over 125 stakeholders that met over the summer in smaller workgroups to help provide input into how we would return to school this year and the ideas/insights from our students shaped our planning. I also have had the opportunity to meet with a few small focus groups of students, to speak with some students individually about issues, and to hear from the student body representative to the School Board. My goal is

to set up regular opportunities to connect with students personally to discuss issues and gather input. I also like to visit schools and attend events to see what is going on and to lend my support. If you see me on campus, please introduce yourself and know that I am

excited to meet you and to hear from you!

### *10. What is one thing you wish you could tell your younger self?*

I wish I could tell my younger self that it is OK to try something new and fail. In high school and in college I was often very focused on doing well and doing what I thought was expected of me. Sometimes, I shied away from new experiences because I was afraid that I wouldn't be good at them and I was afraid to fail or look foolish. Now, I realize that it is important to do things that are outside of your comfort zone and even if you try something and are not the best at it, you will still learn and that experience sometimes creates great memories. Do not let your fear of something new or of failure keep you from trying – you may just find that you enjoy it or are successful!



*Superintendents have a daunting task. All pretty much work 24/7/365 or, if they don't, they're certainly on call 24/7 because the weather, students, staff or parents can cause a crisis at any time. – schoolnewsnetwork.org*



# Turning Lemons Into Lemonade

By Calla Truschel Jacobs

In the light of recent events regarding racial inequality that are happening across the United States, many students have begun to take action in any way they can in order to show support for the Black and Brown communities. This summer, O'Hara Elementary students proved that little efforts can go a long way by raising almost \$700 for the FC Black Student Union by hosting a lemonade stand! The elementary school students that thought of the idea were present at the Black Lives Matter rally in O'Hara Township, and they felt that it was important to help the BSU in any way possible.

According to the former BSU sponsor, Mrs. Jess Green, the Black Student Union will most likely use the money raised for events such as field trips, guest speakers and Black History Month supplies. This money is going to play a huge role in the continuous education on racial disparities that happen across the U.S. and in our community. With the funds raised by the determined elementary school students, the BSU has more opportunities to further education on the topic of racial injustice. Recently Senorita Finley, the new sponsor of the BSU, reported that decisions would be made more definitely when the new members of the club get together to discuss as a whole what specifically the funds should be used for.

Senorita Finley also stated that the fundraiser not only helped to amplify the struggles of Black and Brown students and people in the community, but it also allowed for a deeper connection with the community during the socially distant summer. With COVID-19 having a constant impact on everyone's lives, it was refreshing for people to get out and give to their community through the lemonade stand. Reports even circulated of some customers at the

lemonade stand giving \$10 or \$20 simply because they felt inspired to do so. The lemonade fundraiser gave the residents of Fox Chapel Borough and O'Hara Township something to look forward to in the midst of all the chaos and change they were experiencing.

Seeing the young O'Hara Elementary students be so impacted by the messages of those that spoke at the rally held over the summer shows the importance of what they were raising money for. Without the funds necessary to publicize and organize events such as the rally held over the previous summer, the important message from students such as William Generett (former President of the BSU) and Warner Macklin (former Vice President) wouldn't have as much of a platform.

When asked about the overall message of the fundraiser and how it impacted her, Senorita Finley stated, "As a new teacher in the district, and being the only female Black teacher in the high school, I hope to bring my experiences and knowledge to the BSU organization to guide them in ways I did not receive when I, too, attended a PWI [predominantly white institution] school district from third grade until 12th grade with few Black staff members and one or oftentimes no Black educators. One of my long term goals is to take my experiences as a leader to show students how to create a formidable organization with founding principles that bring forth growth and change. Another goal is to create events that celebrate our culture and to share with our Fox Chapel community on educating ourselves on ways we can lift Black voices and create a cultural environment in the district that supports anti-racism."

Thanks to the contributions of Mrs. Green as former sponsor of BSU and recently Senorita Finley as well as the contributions of the O'Hara Elementary students who have established an impressive precedence through their hard work and support of the Black and Brown students; our community has begun to unite over a common and prevalent issue and is taking steps to prevent racial inequality in our everyday life.



# Tips for Online Learning

By Justing Eng



With the new learning system in place this year, it has taken some effort to adjust. Fox Chapel in particular has three learning options in place this year: fully virtual synchronous learning, fully virtual asynchronous learning, and hybrid learning. With these choices, every student has had at least three days of online learning per week.

Adjusting to this new experience can sometimes be difficult. It is easy to stop paying attention during class or get distracted, causing some difficulties in online learning. For this reason, Fox Tales, with the help of FC teachers, has compiled the following list of best tips for online learning:

**1. Effectively manage your time.** Time management can often be a problem for not only online learning, but also in-school instructions. Being able to effectively manage your time will ensure that you get assignments turned-in on time and completed.

**2. Minimize distractions.** With online instruction, being at home may be an added distraction. Your siblings, parents, pets, or other people with you may distract you by talking or making loud noises. Snacks and a comfy bed may also be distracting for you. All these potential distractions could hinder your online learning which is why it is important to minimize your distractions while you are taking classes or completing your homework.

**3. Keep track of important due dates.** Due dates, whether online or in person, are often hard to keep track of. Many classes, all with assignments due on different days and times, can get confusing. An online calendar or a physical planner may help you in organizing your important due dates.

**4. Set up a regular schedule.** Humans are creatures of habit. Having a regular schedule will encourage you to get up on time and show up to class on time. This will also help you to not feel lazy or tired.

**5. Give yourself short breaks.** School can be tiring. For online classes, sitting and staring at a computer all day is strenuous on your eyes and unhealthy for your body. To keep concentrated and motivated, give yourself short breaks to get some fresh air and move around.

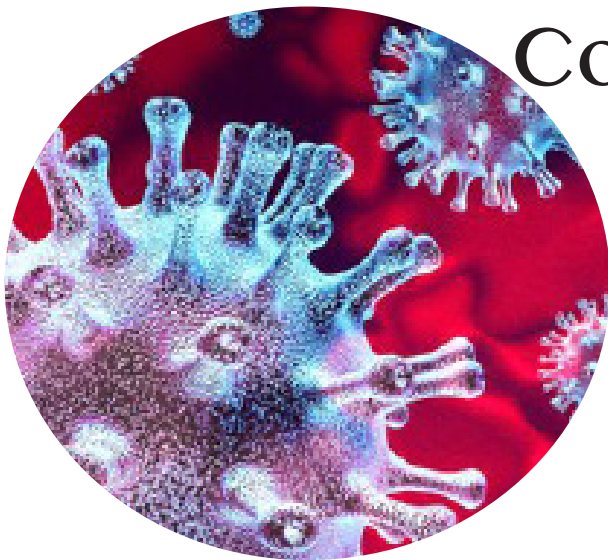
**6. Don't do your work in bed.** Your bed is associated with sleeping and resting. Doing work on your bed may not only cause you to fall asleep, but may also cause your mind to start associating your bed with working, causing you to not be able to fall asleep at night. Making sure you don't lay on your bed all day while in school will keep you more awake and motivated.

**7. Set up a spot for success.** Your work spot is very important to your success in online learning. Find a place where you can focus, be productive, and learn effectively.

**8. Ask for help.** Especially with online learning, reaching out to teachers may seem more challenging. Taking the extra step to email or contact your teachers to clarify or ask about something not only shows your interest and dedication to their class, it will also help you in understanding things in the long run. Teachers are usually willing to help answer your questions, but they don't know when you're confused, so make sure you ask for help.

I hope you found these tips helpful. Good luck in school, in person or online!





# Covid's Effect on Future Educational Models

By Katie Jenkins

As we progress in this new reality with covid, one of the main aspects of our lives, school, has had to adjust. For some, this implies going to school two days a week for the hybrid option, while some opt for all online learning. However, with these new methods, many high school students have a newfound favoritism for online school. As for the education aspect, some believe they can focus better by working in a quieter, more personal environment. School can be stressful at times, so learning from the comfort of one's own home eliminates that chaos.

On the other hand, others have experienced the opposite. Many people have younger siblings at home that either need to be watched or may be loud and a distraction while trying to learn. Also, being in school provides more structure and hands-on teaching, which certain students find to be more helpful when it comes to retaining information and keeping up in classes. With these new online calls and submissions, technical difficulties and confusion become evident as well. Making sure every student has access to efficient wifi and devices adds to these issues even more. At the beginning of the school year, many people had to borrow laptops from the school if they did not have them available at home. This did solve problems for those struggling to find access to electronics, but it also created additional chaos for the school, teachers, and students.

One fully online senior, Kenzi Kavalir, explains her thoughts about returning to school. "When school opens again, I will most likely go back because at school I get more social interaction and it is easier to get all of my tasks done and stay focused." Many can relate to Kenzi. Being in school provides much more structure as it is more of a working and productive

environment. By learning fully online, an issue that arises for her is that, "it can often be difficult to stay focused and on-task as the class moves along. It is easy to fall behind because since it is self-paced there is less motivation to work." As she progresses closer to college, the idea of taking online classes remains evident. "I think that this does drive my decision to take more online classes because the workload is much easier and there is less stress with online classes." This is just one example of the many students that have been influenced by the new schooling methods to take more classes like this in the future based on their positive experiences.

For sophomore Lindsay Scheffler, hybrid schooling has become her new reality. She explains that when school fully opens again and the option of becoming an all online student becomes an option, "I will probably go all in-person because I like the in-person class environment better." Once again, many find being physically in the high school is the better option, especially because of social aspects and the positive environment. As for online school, she explains some struggles she faces. "It feels a lot harder to reach out to teachers for help during online school and I often find myself getting more confused during online lessons." However, with this knowledge, for her future of online and in-person learning during and after covid, she explains, "I would feel more comfortable taking online classes in the future because I already know what it's like." After seeing the positives and negatives of learning all online, students can decide what they prefer, how to handle the situation, and if this is something they would like to continue in the future. Even when life begins to return to normal, some may have found a new favoritism for this covid-style learning.

No matter what option works best for each individual, the important thing to remember is that high school students have the flexibility to choose which learning model they prefer and stick with that model. What works best for one person might not be the best option for another, and our high school accommodates the preferences of all students.





# SEASONAL, COVID, AND SCHOOL: SO MUCH STRESS AND SO MUCH YOU CAN DO ABOUT IT

By Beata Turnquist

As the leaves on the trees begin to change from shades of green to the wonderful warm tones of autumn, you may feel your emotions begin to move in a negative direction. Seasonal depression, which is scientifically called seasonal affective disorder, may be the reason that you get that anxious feeling at the pit of your stomach even when you're not watching a scary movie. A great number of people are actually affected by the mood disorder and it's definitely not something to sweep under the rug. As the seasons begin to change, many people start to feel on the moody side or as if they can't get a clear grasp on their emotions. While it's easy to dismiss these feelings as unimportant or normal, you shouldn't brush off that yearly feeling as simply a case of the "winter blues" or a seasonal funk that you have to tough out on your own. Take steps to keep your mood and motivation steady throughout the year! Taking care of yourself during these dark and dreary months is vital when evaluating and looking out for your own mental health. The effects of seasonal depression often manifest during the autumn and winter months, but usually come to pass as the sun comes back out in the spring. Those who suffer from this type of depression feel down throughout the majority of the day and the things that traditionally please them lack the spark that they usually have. They also may begin to feel on the sluggish side or as if they feel mentally blocked and have a lack of emotional stimulation. While it's normal to feel down, if you see a repetitive pattern in depressing thoughts or start to feel hopeless or lost, then it may be a sign that you need to reach out to someone, this be someone close to you like a friend or parent, whom you feel as though you can safely confide in. It can also be someone online in some sort of anonymous support group.

If you feel as though you can not get support from those around you, one should never feel weak or

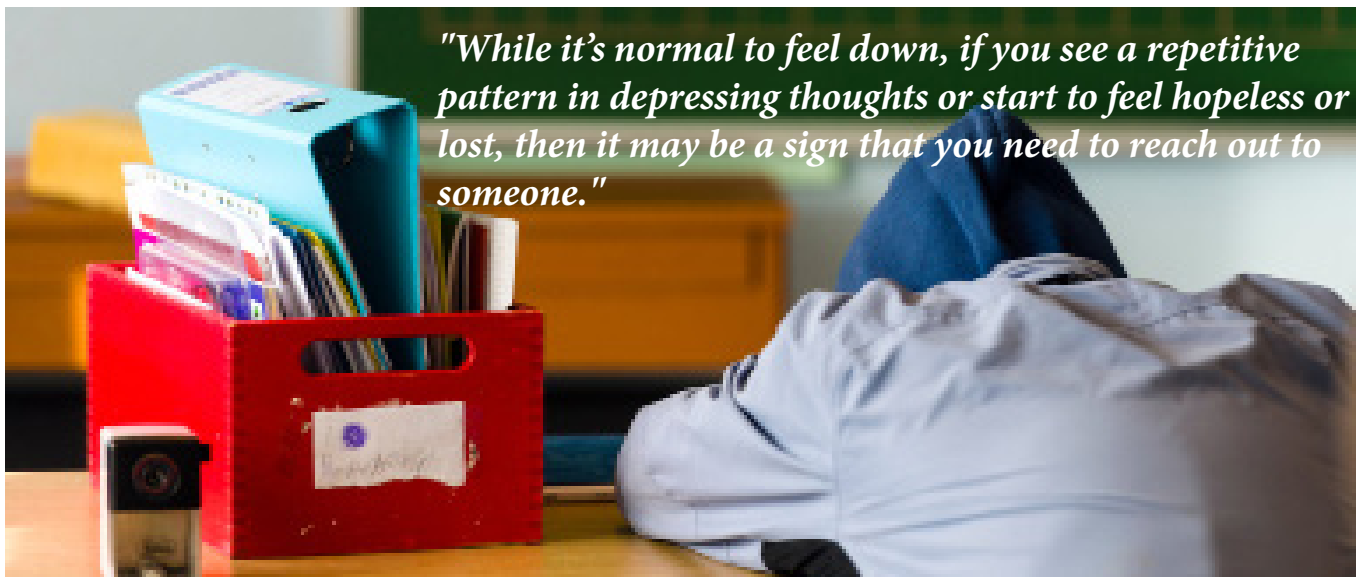
like a burden for reaching out for help. If depressing moods or dark thoughts as an effect of seasonal affective disorder persist for too long, one can fall into severe patterns of social withdrawal, start to experience school or work problems, substance abuse, develop other mental disorders such as anxiety or eating disorders, or stumble down the road of suicidal thoughts or behavior. If reaching out or confiding in others is a daunting task to you or someone who is struggling, there are other small changes that one can make to improve their mood during the darker seasons. This seasonal depression may actually be caused by the reduced level of sunlight during winter and autumn. This change in sunlight may disrupt your body's internal clock and thus lead to depression. In order to incorporate more sunshine into your life, look into purchasing a sun lamp. This light actually acts as a fake source of sun; which positively impacts the body's regulation of melatonin, a hormone that helps control the sleep-wake cycle, as well as serotonin, which helps regulate your mood by relaying signals in your brain. One may also pursue certain relaxation techniques such as yoga or meditation which may regulate the heart rate and allow for the body to relax. As we begin to shift into the upcoming autumnal season, make sure to take care of yourself and others in order to prevent a dramatic shift in your mood and/or your mental health.

Now as if the "seasonal scaries" weren't enough to send you crawling back under the blankets on your bed, as an entire society, we have been thrust into this "new normal". While maintaining our social distance, a lot of the population became out of tune with their social selves as well as their own personal sense of individuality. Along with the period of forced isolation, fear and anxiety surrounding the pandemic may also cause issues with one's mental health. Parents

may start to stress about students' health, which may lead to them being slightly overbearing. Understand that they aren't trying to "hold you back" or "pin you down", but they simply care about you and want to keep you safe. Similar to seasonal depression, anxiety surrounding the coronavirus may lead to changes in eating or sleeping patterns, difficulty sleeping or concentrating, and worsening mental health conditions. If a student is stressed about the virus or the health of others like family members or teachers, this may result in less attention to things like school or grades. It's important, as students, to reach out to others, specifically your teachers, if you feel as though you're falling behind in classes as a result of anxiety. Our teachers are here for you and want you to do well in their class. There is no reason to be nervous

subject nowadays... but it shouldn't be. Fox Chapel Area School District actually has one of the higher percentages of students who suffer with mental health issues, with the majority being anxiety. This comes as a result of our school's reputation: we're from Fox Chapel, we're supposed to be the smartest, the best at sports, popular, wealthy – the list goes on. But this pressure builds up in the students, and many sacrifice time with their family or time for themselves throwing themselves at their school work or into sports practices. Trust me, I know... because I'm a Fox Chapel student, too. I also feel the pressure that our school, parents, teachers and our own selves put on our shoulders. We all feel this way, so let's talk about it!

The Psych Club is a student-based club that wants to normalize discussion involving mental health. The



if you need to speak with your teachers, no matter the reason regarding why you need to talk to them. If you or someone that you know is struggling with their mental health as a result of the pandemic make sure you prioritize your mental health and your self care. It's also important to take a quick break from watching the news or reading about COVID-19 on the internet. Also, be sure to reconnect with others and strengthen the bonds with family and friends that may have weakened during our isolation stage. Considering the fact that many young adults feel as though they are undeserving of help or as if their problems aren't deemed worthy enough to reach out, many students may wonder if there is an outlet for students at our school. The answer is yes!

Welcome to the Psych Club! Our first official meeting was last year, and we are excited to keep things going this year! Mental health is a touchy

majority of people in the world, especially teenagers, have feelings of anxiety and depression. So why is there stigma about it? Why are people so scared to talk about it? At the Psych Club we encourage a safe and open space for all to be able to share how they're feeling. It's a judgement-free zone and completely confidential. With COVID restrictions, the club is looking a little different this year. We are working to arrange virtual meetings and "share sessions," but for now make sure to look for our mental health tips on the rolling announcements.

Remember, FC students, your teachers, guidance counselors, parents, and other classmates are here to help. Don't be scared to reach out! You don't have to go through your struggles alone. If you would like more information about the Psych Club please contact me at [turnquist\\_beata@student.fcasd.edu](mailto:turnquist_beata@student.fcasd.edu)





# Positive Attitude – The Goal for Girls Soccer

By Lindsay Scheffler

“I’m playing every game like it’s my last and not taking any of it for granted,” senior goalkeeper Sammi Dunlap says. This is the attitude the Fox Chapel girls soccer team has been committed to exhibiting this year. With so much uncertainty before the season the team feels especially grateful to be able to play their season, and safely. They started their season with an impressive 9-1 record against a rigorous schedule and earned the rank of number one in the WPIAL and reached number four in the state, despite all of the challenges. With so much change it is quite impressive to see what the Foxes have already been able to accomplish and they hope to keep the momentum heading forward to the finish of the season and into playoffs. The girls didn’t have an easy start to the season as the team had four returning players from last year have to be quarantined for two weeks due to exposure to COVID. Luckily, the girls followed and continue to follow a very strict and safe protocol that ensured the safety of every member of their team that they were able to continue playing despite having players out. The team was able to turn over the film of the practice when the girls that were exposed were there, and Allegheny County health officials

ruled that they were not in contact with anyone within six feet and without a mask long enough to have exposed any members of the team.

The protocol that the team follows has brought many changes, including no shared water bottles or jug, masks on during warmups, eating team meals in the cafeteria before leaving for away games instead of eating on the bus, sitting six feet apart on the bench, daily health forms and temperature checks, not being in tight huddles before

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***Despite challenges, the girls soccer team is on track to continue to dominate this season and show their resilience through it all.***

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games, and even eliminating the use of shared pinnies during practices. The team has committed themselves to keeping these standards at all times to guarantee the continuation of their season.

Fox Chapel has been an example for other teams on how to make these new protocols work, “We are one of the only



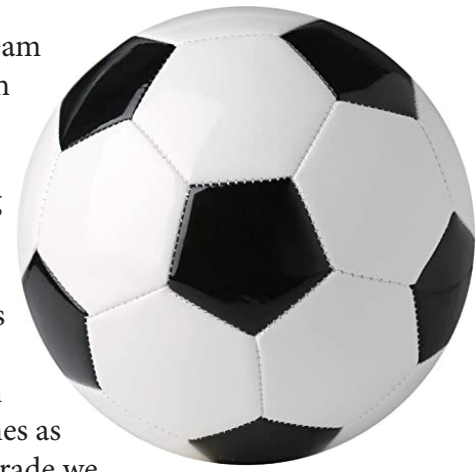
teams in our section that properly wears masks and social distances. It's seen on the bench at games, where we use three benches the opposing team uses one." Dunlap said. One of the most important things to the team is making sure that not only is everyone safe but that everyone feels safe as well. Returning sophomore Zoe Fitzsommons said on the matter, "We stay socially distanced and we are outside. If I felt unsafe I probably wouldn't play, but the coaches do a good job keeping us spread out and making sure we stay safe." Due to how well the girls have been able to follow these new rules they have been able to play which didn't seem like a possibility just a few months ago.

One of the big losses from last year is the girls soccer team's close relationship to the Best Buddies organization in the school. In past years some of the kids from the club would come to the games and ball boy/girl with the girls on the team during the JV and varsity games. Returning junior Kaylee Uribe said, "Something I really miss is not being able to connect with Best Buddies with our ball boys/girls. It is definitely one of my favorite things during soccer season, and I'm very sad to not have this be part of our season this year." The presence of the Best Buddies club has been missed by all members of the team and the girls are looking forward to having them back in the future once it is safe.

This season is most important to the team's seniors. Senior starting attacker Britta Lagerquist is even more determined due to the current situation. "It makes me care even more about giving everything every single game, because you never know when it's going to be our last game so we want to end on a good note and be proud of what we have done in the season we have had." While they are thrilled to get their senior season, they have also felt how the changes this year have been affecting the team, "I definitely feel like there is less team bonding.

We couldn't have the team bonfire or have as much fun after wins on the bus." Lagerquist said, however they are doing their best to make up for it, "We have gotten to know our teammates individually more and still do the locker room cheer before home games as well as picking which grade we want to take the bus with is kinda fun because we get to know different grades better each time."

The girls have been able to take down some of the best teams in the WPIAL so far this season including North Allegheny and Norwin. The Foxes got their first loss this season playing Norwin for the second time, and falling 0-1 to the Knights. Girls soccer has continued to ride the strong start throughout the season and are hoping to maintain through playoffs. After losing in the second round last year to Norwin the girls are unsatisfied and are looking for a higher finish this year. "We have got the potential and the attitude to make it further this year," says Lagerquist. Dunlap shared that same attitude about playoffs, "I



*"It makes me care even more about giving everything every single game, because you never know when it's going to be our last game so we want to end on a good note and be proud of what we have done in the season we have had."*

expect us to stay confident and stay ready and use our strengths to our advantage. We need to keep working together and working as a team to work towards our goal of winning the

WPIAL". Despite challenges, the girls soccer team is on track to continue to dominate this season and show their resilience through it all.

# Is Systemic Racism MY Problem?

By Amulya Garimella

What does “systemic racism” mean? How can laws be racist if they don’t target specific races? I don’t see color; how can I be racist?

In the current moment, Black people are demonstrating against injustice and violence. For some, it can feel uncertain or confusing when people talk about privilege and societal racism. Here’s a quick explainer on what people are talking about, why it’s important, and what you can do to help.

## WHAT IS SYSTEMIC RACISM? - AND A (VERY) SHORT HISTORY OF ANTIBLACK RACISM IN AMERICA

Systemic racism means that an entire system or society is biased against a certain racial group. For centuries, American society has been systemically racist against Black people. Even after mass enslavement ended, Black people were shut out of academic institutions, voting, and positions of power. When Black people did amass economic prosperity, they quickly were targeted by violence: their neighborhoods were ransacked and they would be lynched. The justice system was patently racist; testimony from a Black person was worth less than from a White person.

The oppression continued into the mid-1900s, in subtle and overt ways. The problems of “race riots” (more aptly, massacres), ransacking, and lynching continued. Black neighborhoods were considered less desirable than White neighborhoods; when Black people started to move into a mostly-white neighborhood White people moved out. Black people found it difficult to purchase homes — and this continues today.

The FBI suppressed Black leaders like Dr. Martin

Luther King, Jr.: J. Edgar Hoover called Dr. King the “most notorious liar in the country” as the FBI wiretapped and surveilled King, and even sent him an anonymous note urging him to commit suicide. They created an official Counter Intelligence Program (COINTELPRO), still attempting to discredit King, and eventually taking action against the Black Panthers. Federal agents even raided the Free Breakfast for School Children program — sometimes even while the kids were eating.

All this is to say that the end of slavery did not

mean the end of racism.

The oppression was actually baked into the system, sanctioned and even encouraged by the government. Although it’s to a lesser extent today, these policies were created not that long ago. Our grandparents and parents lived through them!

Because of these impacts, I consider our society racist on a fundamental level. Even though there are no longer any laws that target people based on race, many laws are unequally enforced or end up targeting certain people anyway. An illustrative example that we can see in our schools and communities is the problem

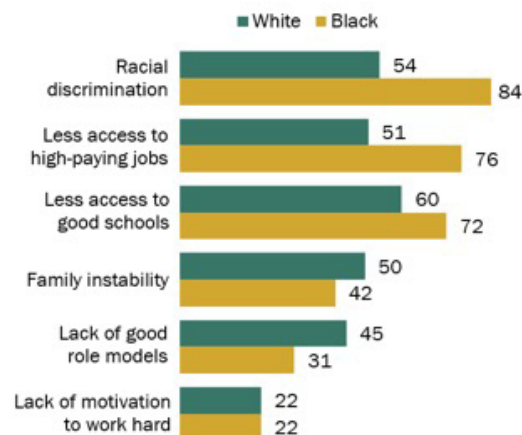
of school funding. Property taxes make up almost half of school funds, and property taxes are higher in high-income areas. This is in theory non-racist (although it definitely does create class division). However, Black communities tend to be lower-income, so the most well-funded schools end up being majority-white.

## AM I RACIST?

Even if you think that everyone should be equal, you might still see racist ideas reveal themselves in your behavior or thoughts. We grow up in a society

### Blacks are far more likely than whites to say discrimination is a major obstacle for black people

*Among those who say being black hurts people’s ability to get ahead, % of whites and blacks saying each is a major reason why black people in our country may have a harder time getting ahead than white people*



Note: Whites and blacks include those who report being only one race and are non-Hispanic.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Jan. 22-Feb. 5, 2019.

“Race in America 2019”

PEW RESEARCH CENTER



where racist outcomes are common, but we can get better and try to educate ourselves about how the system is racist. It doesn't mean you're fundamentally a racist and there's nothing you can do about it. There's a lot we can all do when it comes to this issue.

## WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT

First, you need to see color! This might seem counterintuitive, but most peoples' experiences and viewpoints are in some way tied to their race. Ideally, this wouldn't be the case — but in a society where race is such a large factor, it is. Often, "treating everyone equally" means "treating everyone as if they're white" — not understanding the role that race plays in shaping viewpoint. Everyone is in some way molded by the society they grew up in. It's respectful to acknowledge that reality.

You might have seen a lot of "anti-racist reading lists" crop up all over social media this summer. These reading lists might mix specific anti-racist text guides with general works of fiction or memoirs written by Black writers. My advice is to read those anti-racist texts! Anti-racism guides can be really helpful as long as you're reading intentionally and taking time to understand how racism has affected your life, thoughts, and actions. Don't read — or do anything — to look good or fit in. Read because you want to understand and become better.

Beyond that, incorporate BIPOC authors into

your regular reading diet! There's a whole wealth of perspectives out there that we often aren't taught as "classics". If you can, try to check these books out from the library or buy them in order to materially support the author.

Outside of reading, give yourself permission to question yourself, your friends, and the people around you. Start those hard discussions with friends and family members (if it's safe for you), if they say something ignorant. And your friend might not be such a good friend after all if they're not willing to be questioned.

If you can, donate to local Black community organizers, as well as funds dedicated to justice and mutual aid. Donation information and several resource lists are linked below.

Finally understand that even if you're non-racist or actively anti-racist, you can still have racist thoughts, behaviors, or actions. If someone calls you out or questions you, try to react with an open mind and see where the other person is coming from. It can definitely be tough, but the journey is ultimately a rewarding one to take.

I don't have all the answers — I'm not some ascended anti-racist being by a long shot. These are simply my thoughts and

some ideas that were helpful to me. Let me know what you think: direct any questions, comments, or feedback to [amu.garimella@gmail.com](mailto:amu.garimella@gmail.com) or DM me on Instagram @amulya.garimella. Let's have an open dialogue.

### Local donation information & resources:

Pittsburgh Mutual Aid - [pghmutualaid](#) on Venmo and Cash App

Black Young & Educated - [blackyoungedu](#) on Venmo and Cash App

Trans YOUniting (founded by Dena Stanley) - [transyounguniting](#) on Paypal, [Trans-YOUniting](#) on Venmo, [transyoungunitingpgh](#) on Cash App

Lorenzo Rulli - [lorenzorulli](#) on Venmo  
Rulli is a local activist who has been helping aid unhoused people in Pittsburgh and organizing protests

Danielle Brown - [Danniex2](#) on Cash App  
Brown is hunger striking to get answers about her son, Marquis Jaylen Brown's, death

SouthSide Supply and Slide  
Pittsburgh Black Business Relief Fund

Dignity Act Now Collective  
Black Urban Gardeners and Farmers of Pittsburgh Co-op

Note: Opinion articles do not reflect the view of any organization or person except the writer. If you'd like to contribute your own opinion article, or a response to this one, please fill out the following form: <https://forms.gle/X5ESfJMpienQkm1Y7>

Contact information: [amu.garimella@gmail.com](mailto:amu.garimella@gmail.com), @amulya.garimella on Instagram

# Oh, Brave New World!

By Abe White



[thepattersonfoundation.org](http://thepattersonfoundation.org)

COVID-19 has changed all of our lives. From a hybrid school model to social distancing to wearing masks wherever we go (please do this!) it's safe to say that our lives might never be the same. Even when I watch television from a few years ago, and people are gathered in large numbers at, say, a party, I feel a little jump in my gut before reminding myself that this was normal in the days before the pandemic. It's shocking to think that a virus could wreak this much havoc on our everyday lives for this long.

This is not even to mention the fact that as of right now, over 213,000 people have died from this virus, and that number is still rising. But are we as a society processing this? We're aware of the fact that people have died, and we know it's a large number, but why aren't we feeling shock? Or grief? Or shame at how our country, one of the greatest and richest nations on the entire planet, handled this pandemic?

I've been thinking about this for quite some time. A possible conclusion is that humans need to be able to blame a tangible thing for their problems. We've already seen this in a small way with the coronavirus: instead of addressing the major issues, people in power have turned to China as the root cause of this. Whether it's a conspiracy theory to take down our economy, or wild, baseless claims, it allows these people to deflect the blame from their own handling of the situation to others.

But forget all of this for a second, and think: Which of the following causes more shock to you?

- 1,856 US soldiers died from hostile action in Afghanistan, as of July 27th, 2018.
- 213k people have died from a virus in the United

States as of October 9th, 2020.

At first, people in the United States were terrified of this virus. There were mass shortages in personal protective equipment, people were panic buying items like toilet paper, and the lack of information led to false claims that were spread across the country by social media platforms.

Our schools shut down when there was one death in Pennsylvania, and several positive cases in Allegheny County. People ultimately saw this as the right decision and the safest one. And now our schools are reopening to half capacity in-person learning when there are over 7.5 million cases in the US alone. Why is that? Perhaps because the shock has worn off, and we now accept the virus as a way of life. It's hard to remember what life was like before social distancing and online school. COVID has become our new lifestyle.

So, for just a moment, try to understand that the number of people who have died from COVID could fill Heinz Field three times over, and the number of people infected could fill the stadium 100 times. No matter where you live, your life has been touched by this virus. Maybe your mother works in a hospital, and she has seen patients die without saying farewell to their loved ones. Maybe your brother's friend had an uncle who got sick, then infected his whole family. Maybe your own grandparents are terrified to leave their building because they don't have health insurance and if they got infected, they wouldn't have access to proper care. Think about these people, and take the necessary precautions. And remember those who have died, because it's more than you can possibly imagine.



# Why You Should Join **FBLA**

By Russell Fenton

Despite tumultuous times, students are doing their best to find ways to further themselves academically and have some fun. Fox Chapel's chapter of Future Business Leaders of America is inviting all students to join this school year and experience an immersive and enjoyable, yet safe club experience.

Why join? First and foremost, doing so can help you pursue your passions and interests in the business world while working with a diverse and unique group of fellow students. "We have had athletes to musicians to tech-savvy students get involved in FBLA. There is something for every interest," says Mrs. Congalton, the FBLA sponsor at the high school. FBLA activities cover a wide range of topics, from accounting to entrepreneurship and from journalism to parliamentary procedure, so members are sure to be able to find something to do that interests them.

Additionally, FBLA is full of passionate students who are driven by a desire to enrich themselves. According to Fox Chapel senior and the Vice President of FBLA Melina Bradley, members are united by a shared inclination to learn. "FBLA is great because all of the members are self-motivated with a desire to learn more about the business world, you gain life skills, and have the opportunity to give back to your community." FBLA is entirely composed of students who have immense enthusiasm in the club, which is reflected in students' zeal and excitement when participating in local, state, and national competitions. Fox Chapel students find great success in these events, often winning awards, and achieving top scores.



*FBLA Enterprise Day, November of 2019.*

Joining FBLA can have benefits in students' futures as well, whether it be in higher education or in their careers. FBLA holds the title of the largest student professional organization in the world, so being a member opens doors to the vast network of current or former members in the business world and beyond, says Mrs. Congalton. "Students will also network and build relationships not only with their local high school peers, but students, advisers, and other professionals they meet at conferences throughout the years." Participation in FBLA can also significantly strengthen a student's resume for college and careers. Thus, membership can yield dividends far beyond high school.

What if you have no interest in a career in business? No problem, says David Kronman, a Fox Chapel senior and FBLA President. "I always respond with the same thing, neither do I! I'm studying Marine Biology in college next year. Other members I know are going into medicine, athletics, construction, and countless other non-business related fields, yet we all agree; FBLA has and continues to provide valuable lessons for personal development."

Though the COVID-19 pandemic has forced all clubs to adapt, FBLA still offers students an excellent opportunity to strengthen their resumes, learn more about the world of business, and most importantly, have a good time.

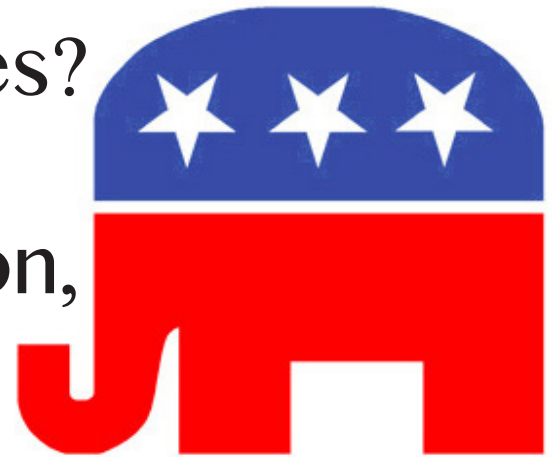


*Students break for a photo at the 2019 State Leadership Conference in Hershey, PA.*





# Who Cares? It's Just an Election, Right?



By Madeleine Muller

“Why should I care about politics?”

“As a high school student, it barely affects me!”

“Why would I waste my time watching the news when I have to worry about my present and future?”

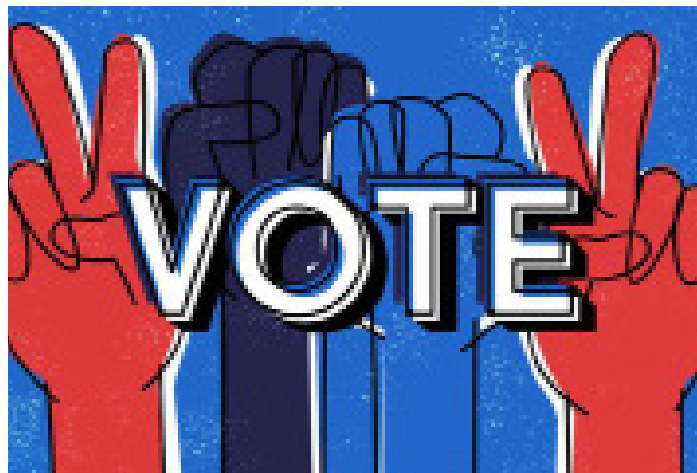
High school students across the country are thinking these exact thoughts, and the answer will always be the same: politics ARE your future. Things that may seem unimportant to you specifically (taxes, for example, since we don't pay them) have huge significance to everyday life. Taxes mandated by the local government affect how much money your school can put into new books, laptops, supplies, and the quality of your education. Everything decided in Washington, D.C. (or Harrisburg locally) has an impact on your everyday life.

Democracy is the principle upon which America was built, and one of the most sacred parts of democracy is the right to vote. Voting has been part of the foundation of our nation since 1776 when it was born. Originally, the sacred act of voting was only granted to the elite: land-owning residents. We have progressed from only white, landowning men being able to vote, to men of all races (minus Native Americans) being able to vote, to women, and finally to Native Americans. Now, with more people able to vote, some are finding more ways to make it harder to vote. They require multiple forms of picture ID which many citizens, especially low income, are unable to get. It has been a long road to inclusivity and

yet even now, some people take that sacred right for granted! After 244 years of fighting to be able to cast a ballot and choose which President comes next, voter turnout is still under 55%. Historically, older voters go to the polls more than younger generations, along with minorities voting less than white people. This is because of both intentional and unintentional barriers including limited access to information about elections and discrimination in ballot application processes.

The 2020 Presidential Election in particular is important to our generation because we can actually get involved. If you cannot vote (you must be 18), it is easy to register to work at the polls, write letters or make phone calls for either candidate encouraging people to vote, and providing information about voting methods (again, for the candidate of your choice). We can form our own opinions on the current leadership of the US and decide for ourselves who we want commanding it. This also may be the first election where the outcome is all on the huge amount of new voters trying to form their own views. Both presidential candidates are on very different sides of the political spectrum and most recurrent voters have

formed an unchanging opinion regarding who is better. Generation Z, the upcoming voters, are large in number and have the power to change the course of the election. The sheer number of new voters would be enough to turn the tide, exclusively if all of us who can vote, voted. The next course of leadership only



## *Election, continued...*

comes from staying involved and informed. A great way to do this is watch the Presidential and Vice-Presidential debates, and keep up to date with the news. For voters trying to form their own opinions on current events, watching the news on time trusted sources such as PBS, CNN and the networks is a good start, as is listening to your local NPR radio station, as well as reading national newspapers like the New York Times and the Washington Post. If you are worried about whether a source is biased, listen to what they say, then tune into another source or two. If you compare what you hear and they say roughly the same thing, chances are it is an unbiased source because it is unlikely that multiple different stations are biased in the same manner. Another important part to staying informed is to make sure you take the opinions of other voters into consideration, but realize they may be biased when debating political topics. This can help you to form your own opinions about current events.

Most importantly, be sure to register to vote in advance of the election. Some jurisdictions make it difficult to register closer to an election. Once you are registered, stay on top of getting your ballot in the mail or know your location to vote in person on November 3rd. To be able to vote you must be registered by the state you wish to vote in. The registration deadline for Pennsylvania is October 19th. If you are uncertain about your registration status, want to make a plan to vote, or want more information about the ways to vote go to: <https://iwillvote.com/?state=pa>. There are four ways to vote in Pennsylvania: mail in ballots, voting early in person, voting in person on November third, and absentee ballots. All are equally legitimate voting methods and will be counted. If you are unsure about which way you want to vote there are many resources available online to help from both parties. Voting is a sacred right and one of our founding principles as Americans. Two hundred plus years of successful elections have cemented that tradition. Being part of this country comes with the responsibility, and right, of choosing who you feel is the best fit to lead it, and casting your vote if you are 18 or older on November 3rd.

“Come on, Dad, you know the Pirates are going to lose again, let’s watch the coverage of the debate!”

# The "S" Word

By Rachel Horne

Suicide. Something everyone knows about, but no one talks about. Why? It’s touchy, but ever so critical. These facts might offer some perspective: suicide is the tenth leading cause of death in the United States. In 2018, there were an estimated 1.4 million suicide attempts, and almost 50,000 suicides in that year, alone. Pause and read those numbers once more. Those aren’t just statistics – those are lives. These victims range from a stranger you may see waiting at the bus stop, to a student you walk past on your way to math class every day. Crazy to think about, huh?

Then begs the anticipated question – what can we do to prevent these tragedies? In most cases, we will never know what a person is struggling or battling in their own personal, mental, and physical life. If you straight up google the question, “why is suicide so common?” you’ll be given, to state a few, the most apparent reasons; mental illness, traumatic stress, and hopelessness. You may fall on the side that can entirely relate to this mental battle, or you may fall on the side of the spectrum in which you cannot imagine how one can feel this way, but you want to help. Let me pause for a moment and say, if that person is you – someone who has battled or IS battling depression or having harmful thoughts, you are needed. You are seen. You are not alone. You are loved. AND you have a purpose in this world that no one but YOU can fulfill.

If you’re on the other end; where it breaks your heart to see people hurting like this and you’re wondering what you can do to bring change. Start with kindness, compassion, becoming an outlet, a friend. For those you are closest to, and for those who you thought you would never talk to. I promise you, the little things always add up and make all the difference.

Let’s break down walls and begin to talk about AND do the things that make us step out of our comfort zone, because that’s where we will begin to see change. Life-changing change. It starts with you. “Be the change that you wish to see in the world.” -Gandhi.



# Orchestrating Positive Outreach

By Kaylee Uribe

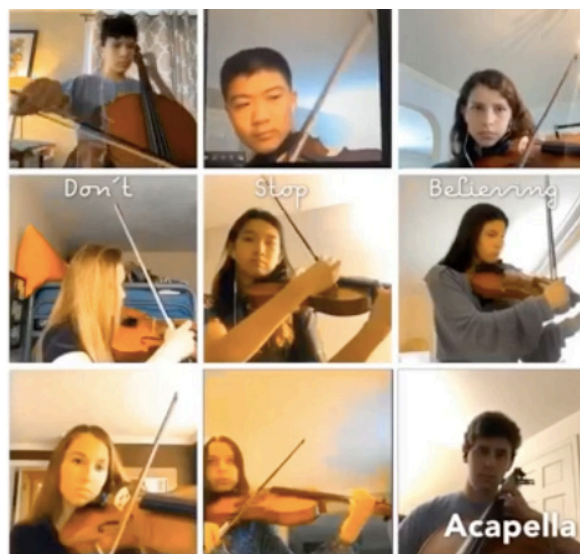
Throughout the summer and early fall, the Fox Chapel Area High School Orchestra has been adapting to the new adversities brought with Covid-19. With the help of the orchestra director, Mrs. Cooper, many student leaders stepped-up to help overcome the challenges that accompany online learning. Senior, Bella Krisky, played an important role in helping to unite the orchestra during the quarantine time period. Prior to Covid-19, the high school orchestra played “Pop Up Concerts” for different audiences. In the words of Bella Krisky, “Pop-Ups are outreach concerts where orchestra students play music within the community. The locations, which are chosen by the students, have included the Cooper Siegel Library, the VA, Lighthouse Pointe, Dinner for the Blind and even the Allegheny County Jail. These venues vary to support the orchestra’s four main principles: access, education, building a wider audience and the joy of playing”.

Students from all different grades of the orchestra came together to work on a way to be able to continue pop ups with the integration of online learning. With the collaboration of many students, “Virtual Pop Ups” began. For “Virtual Pop Ups,” there were three audiences that were focused on: elderly, children, and medical staff. Students were allowed to select the group with which they wanted to be involved. Each group created a video that contained different songs (depending on the audience). Some students chose to participate by recording themselves and sending it in to our editors. The editors of the videos were also students who took on the task of using different programs, such as Acapella, Imovie, and Garageband, to combine the videos into one video that would be pushed out to the public.

Additionally, the orchestra published a coming back to school video. It was pushed out to all the staff and district to help get everyone excited about

returning to school. The song played was “ We’re All In This Together” from the first movie of the High School Musical movie series.

The orchestra helps every single member feel



*Fox Chapel Area High School students perform "Don't Stop Believing" as part of a virtual pop-up concert to honor health care workers. This and other pop-up concerts are available to view at [fcsd.edu](http://fcsd.edu)*

adjusted and welcome. The students have been pushing through the past couple of months with a very positive attitude, including Senior Britta Lagerquist. Faced with the question about how she (and other members of the orchestra) have overcome the obstacles presented, Britta answered, “Some of the adversities that we’ve faced are not being able to play and practice new music like we usually do, because we don’t have a concert. Additionally, not being able to meet new people and friends is hard because we never get to have the whole orchestra together. I think Mrs. Cooper is doing a lot to help overcome those adversities by shifting our focus this fall to, instead of performing, working on our technique and scales, which will help us to perform better in the future.” Although it seems that the orchestra is striving so far, we wish the best of luck to them this year!



# Students Join Together in Fellowship

By Danielle Horne



*Bible club students gather around the high school's flag pole for a moment of unified prayer.*

With the start of the new school year, the Fearless Bible Club has continued to meet in person and online regularly, following physical distancing guidelines and always having an online Zoom option. One event the club recently participated in was See You At The Pole, an annual, school-wide day where students gather at their flagpole and pray for their schools and their nation. At this event, some participants came in-person while others joined online, and afterwards the students completed a prayer walk around the school. It was a great opportunity to come together in fellowship, and talk about school and other important issues.

In addition to events like these, the club also has weekly meetings, usually after school on Wednesdays at places such as coffee shops or local parks. The club is always looking for new members and would love for anyone to join! To join please email [dmhorne04@gmail.com](mailto:dmhorne04@gmail.com).

## FC Girls Tennis Celebrates Senior Day

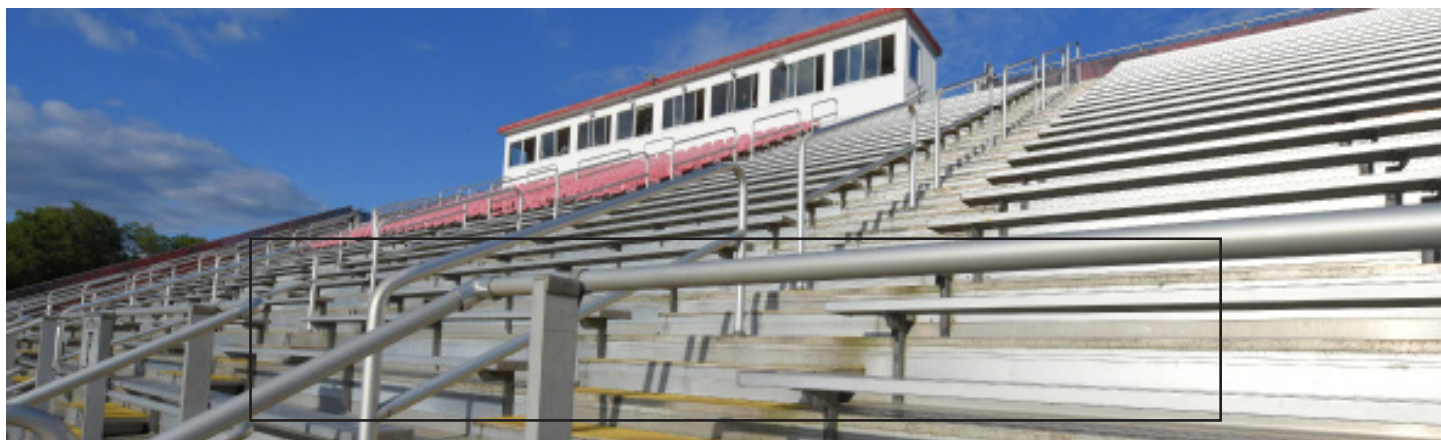
By Katie Voigt

Wednesday, September 23rd was the Girls Tennis Team's annual senior day match. What a spectacular day it was! The sun was beaming down on them and there was not a cloud in sight. The underclassmen arrived early, helping to decorate the fences which surround the courts with red and white streamers.

Personalized posters were created and displayed to honor each senior for their commitment to the team. Gold balloons spelling out "2021" were displayed above the center section of the courts. Senior day has always been such an important, special day to celebrate all of the seniors and their wonderful accomplishments throughout their time at Fox Chapel. Emotions arose as each senior entered the court. Although all were sad knowing that this would be their last year on the team, they were also simultaneously feeling happy while reminiscing on all of the memories and good times shared. We will miss you, seniors!



*Christine Thompson captures a moment with her parents to celebrate the Girls Tennis annual senior day celebration.*



# Tackling Challenges for Love of the Game

By Trevor Katz

Throughout the course of this hectic year, we have seen change in innumerable ways in our daily lives. As these potential changes arise, creative solutions must be put into place to hopefully continue activities that we may have taken for granted before the pandemic. Sports were no exception to this rule of change that we now face. In professional sports, billions of dollars in revenue allows leagues such as the NBA and NHL to go into a “bubble” to sequester all players and personnel playing from the outside world and potential exposure to COVID-19. Other leagues like the NFL, while not in a bubble, have players undergo daily COVID-19 testing and use GPS trackers to ensure players are adhering to social distancing guidelines. The public school system is not afforded billions of dollars, so they must be creative.

The boys soccer team, who is looking to improve on their loss in the WPIAL playoffs last season, has a set of restrictions in place. Notably in their locker rooms, only allowing players to enter in limited numbers, with masks on and only if the players need to change. Players are also required to wear a mask at all times when not on the field. Senior, Thirapat “Bank” Kanokangkoon says, “It can be hard sometimes, but it

necessary to playing games during the pandemic. Girls soccer, also looking to improve on their WPIAL playoff berth last season, reflect the changes of boys soccer. Although recent COVID-19 scares have put more pressure on the team to stay safe during these times, causing players to maintain six feet of distance at all times and completely eliminating huddles.

The Reigning PIAA State champion boys golf team is also facing changes due to COVID-19. Although golf as a game may be a socially distant sport by nature, they aren’t immune to the effects of the virus. Players, while not required to wear a mask while golfing, are required to be socially distant on the course. Chief among the most drastic changes in all sports, even in golf, is the lack of fans, at the beginning of the season that even included parents. Sophomore, Jack Delaney, recognizes the need for safety but felt, “All the precautions made everything feel weird”. The defending section champion girls golf team is also affected by many of the same issues. 2019 WPIAL individual runner up, Nina Busch conveyed concern over some courses not even having rakes to rake the bunkers as an attempt to limit contact, possibly affecting gameplay and leading to more confusion on the course.

Another 2019 PIAA Team Championship, girls tennis is also feeling the symptoms of COVID related restrictions. Like most sports, the tennis team is required to wear a mask at all times when possible, other than on the court. Similar to golf, during the start of the season, all fans, including parents were prohibited, although recently guidelines have come out with specific directions for fan attendance. Junior,



is what we have to do to play.” Bank’s sentiment was echoed by his teammates. Sophomore, George Tabor, when asked if the changes were difficult to adapt to said, “No. Not at all,” going on to say that the changes are



Bridget Kilmer, detailed experiences with other teams who would bring and use their own tennis balls rather than using the same balls in a match as a measure to limit contact. Bridget also expressed some frustration over rules preventing the whole team travelling to away matches, only those playing instead. Citing that the team has been together for practices and are all present at home matches, it would not be outlandish to suggest that the team that has been together all week may stay together at matches.

Even cross country, which is also socially distant by nature has seen many changes as a result of COVID-19. At practices the runners must wear masks when not running, fill out symptom check forms, and get their temperature taken before every practice. The race protocols have varied drastically as well when compared to previous years. For example, at the Kiski Invite, each team ran independently from other teams in thirty minute time slots, as opposed to teams running together only being divided by male, female, and varsity, J.V.. At these altered races most still have no spectators at all, and runners are required to wear a



*At the Kiski CC Invite, each team ran independently from other teams in thirty-minute time slots.*

in the locker rooms, players must wear their masks at all times, this also applies to practice. Players must have their masks on at practice outside of hard drills or other times when it would be difficult to wear a mask. Each team member is also limited to two tickets for spectators at the games. Sophomore, Caroline Bonidy, says that, "I really don't like it because it can become very hard to breathe," speaking of having to wear a mask during most of their practice time, going on to say that, "I don't think it should be as strict because we are together all the time".

The largest sport across the country has not been left alone by COVID-19 either; football faces many challenges during this season. The team, who made the WPIAL Playoffs last season, are required to get their temperature and symptoms checked every day. A common theme, the team is required to wear a mask at all times when not on the field, and they attempt to maintain social distance at all times as well. Provided meals have also been altered. Instead of everyone getting their food together, the food is portioned into individual servings, separate from others. One of the sports most affected by the lack of fans, it is not up to the school to make decisions regarding attendance, rather the state government makes all the decisions on the matter. Senior, Evan Kuhn, felt somewhat confused as the guidelines for fans are constantly changing, feeling that the lack of a real decision from the state government is emblematic of the leadership of the state. Evan also felt that the lack of fans really changed the environment and altered the way the team gets motivated on the field, having to get it from a source different than the impassioned student section, proud parents, and the exuberant marching band formerly in the stands.

This year has been defined by new developments and potential alterations to the way we live our daily lives, but as we continue through this year we hope to continue to adapt and become better people because of it. The pandemic has been a major factor throughout the events of this year and our school sports have not been left out of this change. We wish our athletes here in Fox Chapel the best of luck as their seasons come to an end and playoff hopes continue even through these new challenges they face.



*"The changes are necessary to playing games during the pandemic." – George Tabor*

mask up until the time of racing. Varsity runner, Jack Lorence, said, "It's definitely different than last year, for sure," but felt comfortable with the chemistry the team has built and their ability to compete in these modified races.

Field hockey players meanwhile are restricted from using the locker room unless they are coming directly after school and need to change, those coming from at home learning are expected to come dressed and should not need to use the locker rooms. When





# The Dorseyville Dilemma: Green Space vs. More Housing

By Shriya Krishnamurthy

*This small area of land, called Charles Street Parklet, has been used by residents of the Dorseyville area for many years. It will now be sold for residential plots.*

For as long as I can remember, there has been a parklet within a 5-minute walking distance of my house. It is only around 2 acres, housing nothing more than a few benches and a nondescript pavilion with picnic tables. This parklet may not sound like much, and some of the Indiana Township Board of Supervisors may agree with you. For many years, the township has been trying to sell this small plot of land called Charles Street Parklet. Each time, they did not have enough votes, so the parklet stayed put.

This year, three of the five board members voted yes to selling the parklet, so the township began to accept sealed bids. The bids were made public on October 13. According to the meeting minutes from the most recent board meeting, the reasons for the decision of selling the parklet were mainly because “In recent years the park had seen very little use if any at all.” This said, many of the citizens in the area disagreed. One citizen said, “I’ve seen people using [the park] all quarantine. There have been people throwing frisbees for their dogs, there have been people riding their horses here, I’ve seen a gentleman flying his drone...”. Many other citizens felt that even though people were not seen, and they did not see people when visiting the park, the garbage cans were gradually filling and emptying repeatedly, which shows that people were using the park. This goes to show

that the township does not have a rounded view of the usage of the park. I, myself, recall that there used to be a tennis court in the park, which was later torn down due to “poor condition” and because it “posed a safety hazard” (Meeting Minutes).

Several members of the community believe that the township is selling the park for money, something that perhaps, the community can fund. The only cost that the township faces is the maintenance of the lawn, which many citizens are glad to bear, through taxes or otherwise. The most important point people have brought up is that green space is extremely valuable and impossible to get back once it has been developed. Not only does it add to the property value in Dorseyville, but it also is home to numerous species of birds, not to mention small deer and rabbit populations. Many families that live near the park enjoy watching the fireflies light up the park on summer nights. A change.org petition to save the park has garnered 170 signatures so far.

Supervisors Sarah Hertweck, of District 4, and Paul Jorgenson, of District 1, where the park is located, both voted against selling the park and did the same at the Board Meeting on October 13. A large portion of the community gathered that night and fought to keep the park; however; the township board decided to sell the park with a vote of 3-2.

# MEET THE STAFF



Noah  
Bradley

Justine  
Eng

Russel  
Fenton

Amulya  
Garimella

Danielle  
Horne

Rachel  
Horne

Trevor  
Katz



Maggie  
Kelly

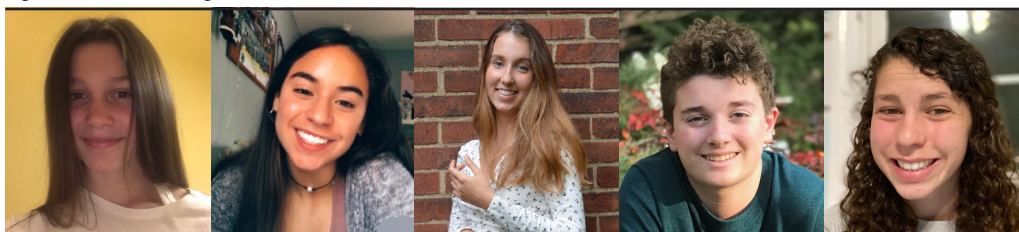
Ryan  
Kenyon

Shriya  
Krishnamurthy

Maddie  
Muller

Abigail  
Rickin-Marks

Beata  
Turnquist



Calla  
Truschel  
Jacobs

Kaylee  
Uribe

Katie  
Voigt

Abraham  
White

Ann  
Yonas

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## FOX TALES

Volume 6, Issue 1  
Fox Chapel Area High School  
First Quarter, 2020

Fox Tales is a quarterly news publication created by the students of Fox Chapel Area High School. The mission of this publication is to showcase the many positive happenings in the Fox Chapel Area School District and surrounding community. Fox Chapel Area School District is comprised of six municipalities: Aspinwall, Blawnox, Fox Chapel and Sharpsburg boroughs, and Indiana and O'Hara townships. To contribute articles, photographs, or letters, please contact the Fox Tales faculty sponsor, Lisa Gibson, at [Lisa\\_Gibson@fcsd.edu](mailto:Lisa_Gibson@fcsd.edu) or 412-967-2479. Letters should not exceed 350 words.

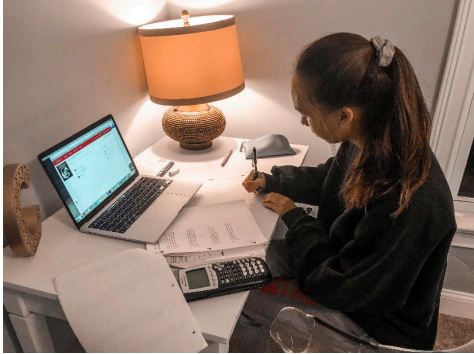


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Daniel Lentz, Ph.D., Program Principal (A-L)  
John McGee, Ph.D., Program Principal (M-Z)



# WHAT DO YOU MOST ENJOY ABOUT HOME LEARNING?

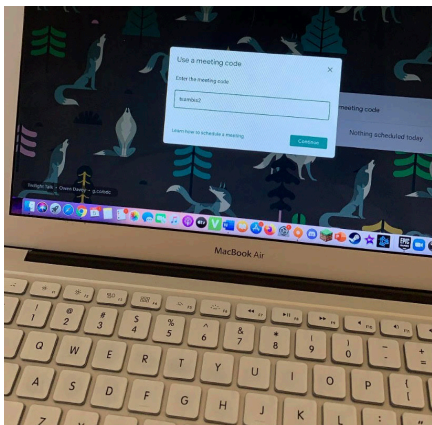
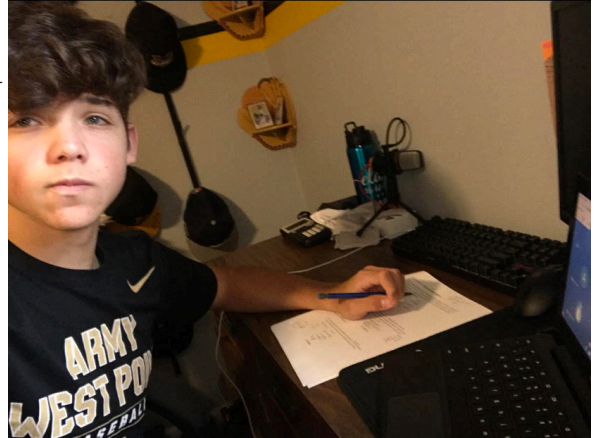


*I'm so glad I get to sleep in longer now.*

– Carlie Barnett, 11th grade

*Hybrid schooling was definitely rough at first, but I have started to really get back into the swing of things. I'm glad that FCASD was able to get back to school quickly without putting people in danger. It's truly impressive..*

– Brett Kaufman, 11th grade



*I like times between classes because I can get some work done.*

– Katie Sipe, 11th grade



*I love all the breaks in between calls.*

– Ashley Barnett, 9th grade



*Online learning is definitely different, but if you put the effort in it's not that bad.*

– Rei Sperry, 11th grade

*Virtual learning brings a new way to learn while not being in person.*

– Nathan Moore, 10th grade

