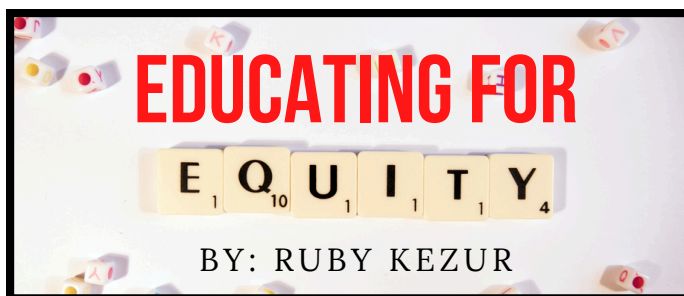


HOOFPRINTS

Sleepy Hollow High School's Student Newspaper



In today's world, teenagers are more aware of current events and social issues than ever before. Yet, it seems that school curriculums are lagging behind. At Sleepy Hollow High School, discussions about race are often confined to English class character analyses and social studies lessons. However, given our diverse student body, it is crucial that educators actively teach their students to be anti-racist and to understand the complexities of race in America and the world.

Nationwide, there has been heated debate about the inclusion of critical race theory in school curriculums. This discussion gained significant momentum in 2020 when the Black Lives Matter movement - a series of peaceful protests against police brutality against Black people - gained national attention. But racially motivated violence is not a new development, and throughout American history violence has been a tool of white supremacy, from the genocide of Native Americans to the lynching of Black Americans in the Jim Crow South. This movement, coupled with the rise in racial inequality, highlights the urgent need for education that addresses and challenges racism. The consequences of not educating people about their biases can be seen in the numerous instances of police brutality and the recent resurgence of white supremacy in our country. However, this kind of education often faces resistance. Recent legislation banning critical race theory, especially in states like



Florida under Governor Ron DeSantis, reflects a fear of openly discussing controversial topics. But this kind of education is not about creating division. Instead, it aims to encourage students to think critically about their actions and to be more accepting of differences.

Efforts to combat systemic racism through education can and should start right here at Sleepy Hollow High School. Properly educating students about this delicate topic involves studying the history of racism in the United States and global colonization. To combat racist ideologies effectively, the truth about American and global histories must be taught to young people. This includes understanding how racism has shaped and continues to impact our health systems, educational institutions, and criminal justice policies. Students of all ages need to learn about the history of racism and its present-day implications. But even more important is (continued on page 5)



SHHS CARES: SERVING THOSE IN NEED

BY: JULIET LOFFREDO

With its close proximity to New York City, Westchester County has a lot to offer residents: good schools, access to the Hudson River Valley, and most notably, high taxes. With Westchester being one of the most affluent areas of the United States, many residents lead luxurious lives. However, close to 33% of babies are born to families on Medicaid, 39% of children grades K-12 receive free and reduced lunch, over 2,100 children and youth grades Pre-K-12 have experienced homelessness, 22% of children and youth are considered poor or low income, and 24% of youth are food insecure (stats from Westchester County Community Health Assessment, NYS department of Education, Westchester Children's Association 2023).

Humans can not live without the basic necessities, including food, water, and shelter; however, clothing and hygiene products are also necessities. With the daily struggles of a person grappling with poverty, clothing may seem superficial, however it represents one's identity. A person's hygiene and clothing may determine the outcome of a job interview, cause a child to get bullied, diminish a person's self-confidence and pride, and protect a person from harsh weather. To one person, a t-shirt is just another item in their closet; to another person, it is their livelihood. The need that exists among us cannot be ignored, however it can be supported. This is the idea that the nonprofit organization 914 Cares was founded upon: "For everyone in Westchester to live a full, healthy, and happy life free from the hardship of poverty" and working towards that mission every day by supplying people in Westchester with these essentials. The organization is composed of community members, educators, mothers, and volunteers of all ages who are fiercely devoted to the mission. The environment of 914 Cares is a testament to this sentiment. Upon entering the office, one will hear laughter, impassioned phone calls, and the constant shuffling of feet.



Whether one is sorting through donations, packing orders, doing diaper inventory, or organizing books, every job feels important. Throughout the day, one finds themselves saying "Imagine this onesie on a little baby!" or "Ooo, I would love this sweater!" Such feelings make it an enjoyable place to be because without fail, work that is done in the office will change a person's life. This feeling translates to the motivation that comes with working at 914 Cares. When combatting a time sensitive issue such as poverty, every day feels like a race. Tasks are given in a frantic shout, and it is a challenge to see how much one can get done in a day. The drive to help others is intoxicating and it is easy to be enraptured into the bustling group of mostly women who are intensely devoted to their work

That being said, everything is done with care, honoring the namesake: every order packed has been thoughtfully put together, individualized, triple checked, and meets the recipients needs. All work is done honoring the 914 Cares' philosophy of giving recipients what they need and deserve. It is understood that confidence and motivation to succeed starts with an exterior one can be proud of.

(continued on page 5)

SATURDAY ACADEMY

BY: MIA RIVERA



Tarrytown and Sleepy Hollow: the two communities brought together through our school district. Yet, what defines the Public Schools of the Tarrytowns? What makes our district distinct? What is a factor that the district wants to be recognized for? Hundreds of students enter the schools that makeup our district with a smiling face, ready to learn. Hundreds of students from different cultures and ethnicities fill the classrooms and enrich the school culture. The Public Schools of the Tarrytowns is a mirror of different nationalities from around the world and reflects the diversity that the district celebrates.

The Saturday Academy is one of the many ways this district provides an area of learning, celebration, and diversity. This event was made possible by Dr. Sanchez, Superintendent of the Public Schools of the Tarrytowns, and Dr. Brutus, Supervisor of Social Emotional Learning and Community Engagement. The Saturday Academy is a new opportunity in which young minds are encouraged to explore and expand their learning, and in this case, through culture and diversity. Students from John Paulding to Sleepy Hollow High either participate in these events or volunteer to run them. The Saturday Academy promotes togetherness among our schools and our community; it is an opportunity to unite as a family of learners and celebrate the cultures within our schools.

To celebrate the theme of diversity, families and students were fed tacos cooked by Mr. Dorn, the

Assistant Superintendent of Pupil Services, to commemorate different foods from other cultures. Throughout the event there were different sponsors who brought many smiles to the childrens' faces. From finding one's ethnic flag, to making an origami cup, to receiving stamps in their Passport Booklet, students gained a road map to exploring the theme of diversity and culture. However, what truly portrays the beauty and richness of our district's diversity were the fifth grade dual language presentations based on different countries. Not only was this an opportunity for students to showcase their hard work, but it was also an opportunity for families to learn more about countries and the roots of ethnicities that we see in both school and society. One of the presentations was made by fifth grader, Maya Rivera. Through her project, she expressed her love for the culture, music, and food celebrated by Ecuadorians. She shared her passion for Ecuador by wearing traditional clothing and sharing their customs.

Dr. Sanchez expressed his views on culture and diversity within our community, especially with the Saturday Academy. He states, "Our focus on culture and diversity is really important, it's one of the greatest assets we have here as a community is our diversity. What we want to do through the Saturday Program is provide space for folks and students to celebrate their identities, cultures and tell their stories; there are some really great stories that we all have and we just need the space to tell them."

(continued on page 5)



HOOFPRINTS'S HISTORY: THREE DECADES



BY: KAIA WHITE

Stacked in a file folder and stored in a cabinet in Mr. Rogers's classroom lays the archive of Sleepy Hollow High School's newspaper. The masthead of the newspapers - many of which are from the mid and late 1960s - reads, Sunnyside. Other than the name, not much has changed in the past sixty years when it comes to the business of running and writing for a high school newspaper.

After student interest in a school newspaper deteriorated in the late 1970s, Sunnyside vanished. In the early 1990s, Mrs. Conklin - the principal at the time - restored the school newspaper. Legend has it that Mr. Choi helped provide the new name of Sleepy Hollow High's newspaper: Hoofprints.

Ms. Langston, Hoofprints's layout editor and advisor, shares that in her twenty-one years working on the newspaper, it won four journalism awards. She adds, "We attended Columbia University's Scholastic Press Association conventions a number of times, and we submitted our paper for competitions and were recognized for our journalistic standards, creativity, and integrity when reporting."

Mr. Rogers joined the Hoofprints team in 2011. At that time, Mr. Baxter was an English teacher and the text editor and advisor of the newspaper. Mr. Rogers moved from the middle school to the high school and replaced Mr. Baxter in his roles as English teacher and text editor.

At that time, journalism was a course offered to students as an English elective and one of the stipulations of that class was to publish at least one article in an issue of Hoofprints. At its zenith, the newspaper was publishing four to five issues a year and had a dedicated staff of writers and a layout team.

In the collection of newspapers that make up the archive is a typed letter from Paul K. Schwarz, the advisor of Sunnyside. In the letter dated October 16, 1967, Schwarz laments, "I find it hard to understand why it's so difficult to sell a student newspaper at Sleepy Hollow." Since the pandemic, Hoofprints has struggled to revive student engagement in the paper. Student interest in reading and writing for the newspaper has plummeted, and if the trend continues Hoofprints may very well follow the fate of Sunnyside.

For over thirty years, Hoofprints has provided the Sleepy Hollow community with student reported articles and features, movie and music reviews, comic strips, horoscopes, and debates. It has provided countless students an opportunity to have their voices heard; to write with conviction and journalistic integrity about topics that they are passionate about. As Mr. Rogers states, "Hoofprints is a student-led paper, written by the students for the students." The staff at Hoofprints hopes you will consider contributing to your school newspaper next year. Keep your eyes peeled for our sign up sheet during the club presentation in September!

PLEASE JOIN HOOFPRINTS AND SHARE YOUR TALENTS!

GOODBYE MS. LANGSTON

MOTHER OF WAKE UP SLEEPY, MEDIA ARTS TEACHER, DEPARTMENT CHAIR AND LOVED HOOFPRINTS CO-LEADER



During her tenure at Sleepy Hollow High School, Ms. Angela Langston left an indelible mark on countless programs and students within the art department. She is the fearless co-leader of Hoofprints and has supervised layout for twenty-one years, helping the newspaper get its digital footing and guiding it to its look and feel today. She inspires students in media arts and layout design, whether they're filming Wake Up Sleepy or being welcomed into one of her classes. As Ms. Langston embarks on the next chapter of her journey, her impact will continue to resonate, inspiring generations to come. We extend out heartfelt wishes for her continued success and fulfillment in all her future endeavors.

914 CARES CONTINUED

Every volunteer who becomes involved in the 914 Cares community is brought into the family. This fact, in concordance with the immense purpose I gained when working with 914 Cares, led me to bring the work of the organization to Sleepy Hollow High School. SHHS Cares is a club that I founded this year to educate students about poverty in Westchester and the work of 914 Cares. Students at Sleepy Hollow can see the impact of this work in helping their neighbors as well as the generosity and philanthropy of their community. For example, this year 914 Cares gained a new community partner: Horseman's Harvest Neighborhood Food Pantry. Now, thanks to this partnership, hundreds of women and girls in Sleepy Hollow have free access to menstrual products, which are essential to personal hygiene.

This school year, SHHS Cares has run three successful donation drives at Sleepy Hollow High School. We have observed the selflessness of our community, whether they are buying brand new packages of underwear and socks, or going through old sneakers and clothes to donate. The items collected have been redistributed throughout Westchester. Importantly, members of SHHS Cares have gained invaluable knowledge of both the presence of poverty in our community, as well as our ability to help fight it. They have gained skills in advertising, organization, creativity, and collaboration. SHHS Cares hopes to expand beyond just the High School in the future and spread our mission throughout the entire Sleepy Hollow and Tarrytown community. I hope to establish a long lasting sentiment of altruism and action towards change in our school community, in which students can aid their neighbors and friends while gaining valuable skills that they will carry beyond high school.

MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR IN CHIEF

We are proud to put forth our final issue of the 2023-2024 school year. Thank you to our staff who have worked tirelessly in writing and layout to produce this work. Thank you to our advisors Mr. Rogers and Ms. Langston for all of their hard work and guidance. We wish Ms. Langston all the best in her retirement and will miss her dearly. Congratulations to the class of 2024, and happy summer Sleepy!

-Juliet Loffredo



SATURDAY ACADEMY CONTINUED

The languages and cultures that flow through the hallways of the Sleepy Hollow schools - all of which enrich our community and society in many ways - are part of one's identity, values, and traditions. These cultures are woven together within our district, a weave that can never be broken nor dismantled. The tree of the Sleepy Hollow community has roots containing a myriad of cultures, and the Saturday Academy is another way for our school district to celebrate the differences that unite us.

EDUCATING FOR EQUITY CONT.

that open discussions about these complex topics are encouraged at school. It is important to create a classroom culture that values students' multiple social identities, including race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and gender. AP English Language teacher, Dina Lopez, says, "We all could work towards hosting more discussion because having respectful dialogue is the only way to get past and through conflict. People should be allowed to ask questions, work through ideas, discuss how they feel, and not be afraid."

By taking time to have more discussions, and allowing individuals to learn from the past, a more equitable and inclusive educational environment at Sleepy Hollow High School can be fostered. This can prepare students to be thoughtful, informed, and compassionate citizens, ready to engage with the world in a meaningful way. Educating about racism is not just an academic exercise; it is a necessary step towards building a more just and understanding society. Let's take that step together.

THANK YOU, COACH STARACE!

BY: QUINCY NEWLAND

At the end of the 2023-2024 Varsity basketball season, our beloved Coach Starace decided to step down as head coach so he could spend more time with his family and enjoy seeing his son play in his own basketball games.

Q: What is your best coaching memory?

A: Beating Eastchester at Eastchester when they were the number 1 seed to go to the Section Championship game in 2021 was pretty special and will forever be my favorite memory. The most memorable moment though was the time I ripped my pants in the middle of a playoff game. That is something that still comes up all the time.

Q: What aspect of coaching will you miss the most?

A: The relationships with the players. There is just something special about that and I know I will miss those. Also, that rush walking onto the court when the fans are going crazy. We had such awesome fans over the years and I am going to miss that a lot.

Q: What do you think are the best characteristics a coach should have?

A: Being understanding of players' needs. Not every player or student is the same. You have to get to know your players to really be able to get through to them.

Q: Favorite game you have coached?

A: All the games at the Barclays Center were pretty amazing, but we lost all of those! I think any time we played Ossining was also pretty special. Years ago we played them here in the championship of our tournament when Obi and Jacob Toppin were on the team who are both NBA players now. It was a pretty amazing game that we lost in the last 20 seconds. And of course, Eastchester.

Q: Favorite play you have drawn up?

A: Together! If you know you know. We scored a LOT of baskets on that one over the years.

Q: What was your main reason for stepping down?

A: The main reason was being there for my son Jaxon's games and being able to coach him. He was the most upset person when I stepped down. He loved being around the team. All of the players were like his big brothers, but I just didn't want to miss out on watching him play anymore.



Q: What is some advice you would give yourself when you first started coaching?

A: Always believe in yourself. If you don't believe in you, why would anyone else ever believe in you!

Q: What do you hope for the future of Sleepy Hollow Varsity Basketball?

A: Sleepy Hollow Basketball will always have a special place in my heart. I hope the program continues to grow with the new coach and continues to have such amazing young men in the program who continue to do great things off the court.

Q: What is an important lesson you have learned from coaching?

A: Control what you can control in life. I took a lot of pride in preparing myself and my teams for games, but once the game starts, I don't get to go out there and play. Also, even if you're the most prepared person on earth and give your all, there are times you are going to lose and that's okay. Life is more about the ride than the destination.

Q: What is a lesson that you have hoped to teach to your players?

A: Be where you are supposed to be, when you're supposed to be there, and when you get there, give it your all. That is something that we always preached and I hope that message always got through to the players.



GOODBYE MS. KELLY:

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT CHAIR, NATIONAL HONORS SOCIETY LEADER, UNION PRESIDENT, AND BELOVED ENGLISH TEACHER

AN INTERVIEW BY: LEONARDO MEJIA

I came to the Public Schools of the Tarrytowns in September of 1997 after teaching in New York City for three years. I was an English teacher at a middle school in Canarsie, Brooklyn. I loved my job there, but I did want to leave the city as it was always my aim not to remain in the city for my entire career. I was very fortunate to get a job at Sleepy Hollow. I remember very clearly meeting Mrs. Conklin for the first time; she was the principal, and I was hired to teach 7th, 8th, 9th, and 10th grade, which I did for my first two years at Sleepy.

After teaching 8th grade for twelve years, a position opened up for me in the high school, and I jumped at the opportunity. In 2006, I moved to the high school where I taught 10th grade and 12th grade English. When Mr. Allen, the English Department Chair for a very long time, announced his retirement, I applied for the job and have been in this position for the last 17 years. It has been a really wonderful experience because I feel that one of the most critical things is the hiring of teachers, so it has been nice to have a direct impact on who has been hired. I am proud of the teachers who have been hired under my leadership. So we have Mr. Rogers, Ms. Lopez, Ms. Donahue (who will be the next department chair), Ms. Larson, and Ms. Aragona who came up from middle school. I had a strong hand in all the hirings of the English department. I believe that if you have the right people who are committed to students and very well versed in the subject that they teach, you have a strong department.

I became the advisor of the National Honors Society when Mrs. Rosenwasser, the long serving advisor, retired in 2022. Honestly, I was very interested in working with the students of the honors society because in my role as a teacher, English Department Chair, and as the union's president, I felt a void in not having as much of an opportunity to work with students outside of the classroom. It has been a very rewarding experience working with the upperclassmen scholars.



My other role is the president of the teachers association. I have been the TAT president for the last 11 years. I was vice president for three years prior to that. Being the TAT president is a big job. I represent not only all the teachers at the high school, but also all the teachers in the district (over 330 teachers and TAs). I am responsible for helping to resolve any issues that arise between the teaching force and the administration. We have a contract, and if there are any violations of our contract, we need to address them. My term as the TAT president does not end until May of 2025, so although I am retiring this year, I will stay on in that capacity and train the next slate of officers who will take over the teacher association.

I am retiring, but I am not planning on kicking back and not working. I am planning to possibly work for the state union, which is the New York State United Teachers. I am at a crossroads now because technically this job ends June 30th, and I am applying for other jobs. My dream was just to take a little time off to decompress, spend time with my kids, and my family. My mother is 87 and she's having some struggles these days. My daughter is a junior and she will need a lot of help next year navigating the whole college application process. Although, she has made it very clear that she doesn't want me home during her senior year and that I need to get another job. If I don't get the job I ultimately want now, then I'll take some time, but I'd say within six months I'll be working somewhere.

Working in the Public Schools of the Tarrytowns for the past 27 years has been the best job on earth. The community, the families that we serve, and the students of Sleepy Hollow are the best. I have formed very strong friendships and relationships over the years that I plan to keep, but I also feel that in order to promote growth you need to try new things and challenge yourself. I wouldn't say that there are no more challenges here, but I also feel a strong responsibility, especially as a teacher, that it's a job for the young and there are a lot of very qualified young college graduates coming out who want to teach English and it's only right to move aside and let the next generation pick up the baton.

Congrats!

CLASS OF '24 SENIOR ACCEPTANCES



SENIOR SPOTLIGHTS

BY: CHRISTA BROMFELD

DMITRI WILD-ARON

I've had a lot of success in science research, partly due to the wonderful guidance by Mrs. Zielinski and Mr. Erenberg, as well as my mentor, Dr. Buckler. I've been able to compete at WESEF two years in a row with two different projects, both revolving around the antidepressive potential of psychedelics, which I am very proud of. I placed third my first year, and second my second year, and won a special award both times. I'm extremely grateful to have been given the opportunity to conduct this research, and I urge any incoming sophomores to take the class.

My favorite Sleepy memory is when we won our opening soccer match against Yorktown my senior year. It felt great to get a win against them in front of their fans, and I was named Lohud player of the day even though I definitely didn't deserve it.

I will be going to Union College to study Biochemistry, and after undergrad I hope to go for my Ph.D while conducting drug discovery research.

While at Sleepy, I loved being part of the Paw Club. I was honored to be its president since I was a junior, which allowed me to watch the club grow and help Paws Crossed Animal Rescue. I remember joining the club as a freshman and making blankets for the shelter; I can't believe how long it has been! The club has held bake sales and supply drives to gather money and cleaning goods for the animal shelter.

I loved being part of the school's food pantry, where I made many friends and my best memories of the school. I will never forget the joy of organizing the pantry's shelves with my friends and how much fun I had helping people in my community. I often looked forward to the Mondays I helped the pantry because it gave me a purpose and many laughs.

As my journey at Sleepy ends, I hope to begin a new one at NYU, where I will pursue pre-medical studies and hopefully attend medical school.

MARINA ORSINI

ELSA BLOCK

Freshman year I joined the varsity ski team just as something to do but it quickly became my favorite pastime. I loved to ski with my friends and meet other people in the school. Before the team I had never raced before but the upperclassmen helped me to quickly learn and that became my mission for the grades below me. I ended up winning all - league three years in a row and became captain. I will miss the team very much as I have seen so many skiers grow and watched the team bond whether on the mountain or not.

My favorite Sleepy memory is definitely Spirit Week. Although it can be stressful, it is a great time where our grade comes together to participate in so many activities. It's an opportunity for everyone to get creative and for people that normally wouldn't talk to each other, to work together.

Next year I will be attending Syracuse University to study public relations in the Newhouse School of Public Communications.