



STUDENT-RESEARCHERS PRESENT FINDINGS IN SLS

By **Teniola Obayomi '25**
Staff Reporter

Elman and Getz Auditoriums came alive on Tuesday, November 7, and Thursday, November 9, as students of the Science Research Program (SRP) presented at the annual Student Lecture Series (SLS). Each of the 16 student speakers delivered a 15-minute talk.

As one of the School's eight Signature Programs, SRP provides an opportunity for students to explore and immerse themselves in the world of scientific research. The program consists of two cohorts, biological sciences and quantitative sciences, and spans four terms. Throughout their fifth-form year, students analyze scientific articles, strengthen their scientific writing skills, and gain experience with common laboratory techniques. The following summer, students work as interns in a lab of their choice, where they experience the day-to-day life of a research scientist. SRP culminates in the fall term of students' sixth-form year, when students write a detailed research paper, create a professional poster, and present to the School about their learnings from their summer research experience.

The SLS presentations condense a summer's worth of high-level research into a short lecture. According to SRP Co-Director Dr. Chris Hogue, student presenters must consider the knowledge of those listening when preparing their talk. "We really ask the students to think about who their audience is and

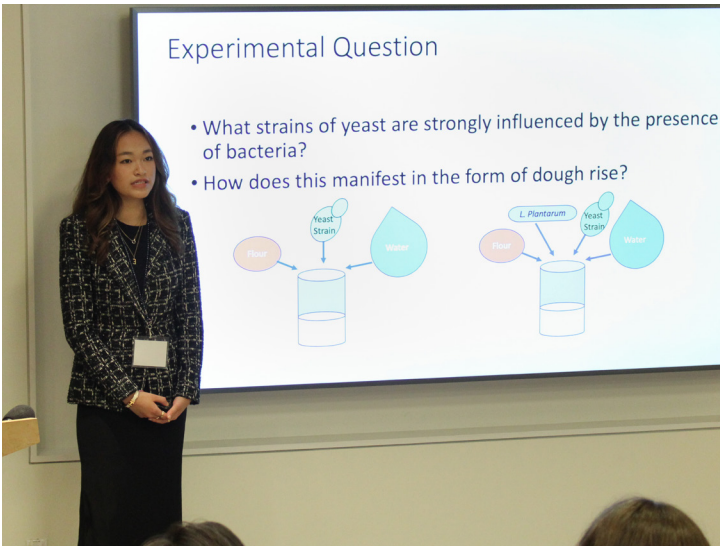


Photo by Emily Ma '25/The Choate News

Erin Li '24 presents on yeast genetic diversity in sourdough bread.

to try to come up with connections to scientific topics, theories, concepts, and vocabulary that the audience knows."

Amidst SLS preparations, sixth-form students reflected on their time in the SRP. Lorraine Hillgen-Santa '24, a member of the biological sciences cohort, presented on the mechanosensation of the elephant-nose fish. Her earliest challenge in the SRP was understanding dense scientific literature. "The first article you read is always the hardest because you're not at all fluent in scientific language. You're not going to understand the style of writing until you repeatedly learn more and more." She added, "I grew so much within SRP that it became so much easier over time."

Despite the rigorous nature of SRP, participants made fond memories with their peers. Claire Liu '24, another member of the biological sciences cohort, delivered a talk about a new genetic treatment for Rahman syndrome, a genetic syn-

drome with symptoms similar to Autism Spectrum Disorder.

Liu shared about the close relationships that she developed with her group. "I think one of the most memorable parts was being with my cohort and creating that bond, which I didn't really expect going into it. It's been such an amazing time. I've made so many new friendships through SRP," she said.

Danny Yoon '24, a member of the quantitative sciences cohort, presented on developing quantum computer algorithms. Over the course of the program, he also found himself growing close to his cohort. The group performed "The Scientist" by Coldplay to announce SLS at School Meeting on October 31. "We did a lot of science, but we also had fun doing music together. The fact that we put on that kind of performance in front of the whole school as an announcement for SLS meant a lot to our group," he said.

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COMMUNITY CONVERSATION SPOTLIGHTS FIRST-GENERATION VOICES

By **Reinah Lee '26**
Copy Editor

At Choate, a community that includes members from many different cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds, the nuances of a first-generation identity can easily be overlooked. Recognizing the need for discussion, Choate hosted its first Community Conversation of the year on October 27 in Colony Hall, focusing on the experiences of first-generation immigrants, college-bound students, and boarding students.

Dean of Equity and Inclusion Dr. Rachel Myers shared that the community had requested the topic through topic suggestion forms and spoken feedback, which made it an important conversation to have. "This tells me and my office that these first-generation identities are important to a number of our community members," she said.

The discussion differed from previous years in that it opened with pre-selected questions by the Equity and Inclusion team rather than random questions drawn by students in the audience. According to Dr. Myers, the team made the switch because "it came up through feedback collected from advisers last year that sometimes the first question selected felt 'too deep' to get the conversation started."

Among the speakers was Rodrigo Chon Him '25, a first-generation immigrant and boarding school student from El Salvador, who reflected on his academic journey at Choate and addressed the struggles of engaging in history courses with his first-generation

identities. Chon Him described feeling disconnected due to his unfamiliarity with American history, saying, "I saw my peers participate in the class, and I was just lost."

Despite the challenges he has faced, Chon Him has found support through clubs such as the Hispanic Latine Forum and Asian Student Association on campus. "It's nice to have a sense of being home even though I was miles away from it. Those are sources that have helped me out," Chon Him said. By sharing his experiences with the School, Chon Him hopes to support his fellow first-generation community members and foster an inclusive environment.

Rella Wang '26, a first-generation international boarding student, spoke at the conversation about feeling distant from her culture and family while being away from home. "A lot of people were trying to say the positivity of being the first generation, like how many opportunities they get. [But], I feel like I've missed a lot of parts of being at home," she said.

Wang felt there was a need to clarify topic-specific terms at the beginning of the conversation.

She highlighted the ambiguity surrounding the term "first-generation immigrant," saying, "I feel like people had confusion about first-generation immigrants. It was kind of blurry." Still, Wang valued the broad nature of the talk's topic as she felt "that it gives more students a chance to share their experience."

Wang suggested that rather than solely asking members to share their experiences, future Community Conversations could benefit from narrower questions that delve into specific challenges and the ways to approach them.

Community Conversations aim to keep the School body educated and heard. These events are evolving, with each one striving to enhance the inclusivity and understanding of the School's diverse body. Upcoming Community Conversations this year include Political Identity, Racial Identity, and Arab and Middle Eastern Identity. "This is our community, and everyone's voice does matter and deserves to be heard if one is moved to share," Dr. Myers said.

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Photo by Emily Ma '25/The Choate News

Students discuss first generation identities at Choate.

World of Wonders Author Ms. Aimee Nezhukumatathil Visits Choate

By **Jolie Zhang '26**
Reporter

Colony Hall was filled with the sounds of bird calls last Tuesday morning from Professor Aimee Nezhukumatathil, the author of the New York Times best-selling book *World of Wonders: In Praise of Fireflies, Whale Sharks, and Other Astonishments*. On November 7, she visited Choate to discuss this year's summer reading, sharing insights and reflections from her book of nature essays.

World of Wonders reflects Ms. Nezhukumatathil's deep fascination with the natural world. Inspired by her own experiences and observations, her essays reveal the magic in everyday creatures and natural phenomena, from the showy feathers of the superb bird of paradise to the axolotl's timid smile. Her writing, informed by both her scientific curiosity and upbringing as an Asian American, celebrates diversity in nature and human culture and encourages readers to find wonder in the ordinary.

Her sharing began with a reading of "Potoo." In the chapter, Ms. Nezhukumatathil described her connection to birds, reflecting on the stillness and tranquility she found in their presence. She shared stories of encounters with birds in her backyard and communicating with them through bird



Photo by Kino Liu '26/The Choate News

Aimee Nezhukumatathil speaks to student body.

calls. As she read, she performed the "BUAAaa" potoo call and the "hurdy-gurdy" cardinal call.

Ms. Nezhukumatathil then read "Vampire Squid" and shared her experiences of feeling like an outsider in high school. She moved frequently and so, had to navigate the challenges of finding her place among her peers. She spoke about how her "cephalopod year," when she spent a school year in solitude, helped her learn about understanding and connecting with others, a lesson she carries with her to this day as a teacher and writer.

After her sharing, Zainab Khokha '24 and Danny Yoon '24 took the lead in a question and

answer session. "Having Prof. Nezhukumatathil on campus is such a wonderful opportunity to learn from her experience outside of what we get in her book or online," Khokha said.

Speaking about how the book came about, she revealed that she considered writing nature essays for around 200 different plants and animals. Through passionate curation, she distilled her selection to 28 species that most piqued her interest and left her with countless unanswered questions. She wrote her early drafts for her sons, who were ages six and nine at the time. Later on, she revised the draft with her close friends in mind. For her upcoming

editions, she has chosen not to update the scientific information cited in the book to capture her initial journey of writing through wonder and discovery.

"Her writing process resonated with me because I feel that the ideas worth talking about are the ones you don't have answer to or ones you are curious about," Khokha said. "It's all about diving into the deep end and being vulnerable in your thought."

After the all-school meeting, Ms. Nezhukumatathil also met with Choate's Advanced Creative Writing classes, where she answered questions from aspiring writers.

A member of the class, Victoria Layden '24 shared, "Ms. Nezhukumatathil was vibrant and engaging. She oozes passion for nonfiction prose, and through hearing about her writing experience, I gained an entirely new perspective on *World of Wonders*. It was wonderful to hear about her discovery of poetry and her process as a writer."

For Yoon, Ms. Nezhukumatathil's visit was inspiring and eye-opening. "I was very impressed by her well-versedness and courage to make bird-chirping noises in front of the whole school," he said. "I hope to be able to write like her one day."

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GEOENGINEER VISITS CHOATE

By **Sarina Fernandez-Grinshpun '25**
Staff Reporter

Yale University lecturer Mr. Wake Smith '79 visited Choate last month to speak about his experience with and expertise in social geoengineering. At Yale, Mr. Smith teaches an innovative course on climate intervention, a novel industry that involves deliberately modifying elements of the Earth's physical, chemical, and biological systems to lessen the effects of climate change. Members of the Environmental Immersion Signature Program (EIP) and the students of Choate's Environmental Science classes met

with Mr. Smith to discuss his experimental field of study.

Solar geoengineering, Mr. Smith's field of research, is the process of scattering sulfur dioxide into the stratosphere to reflect a small amount of sunlight back into space, which reduces the amount of heat that enters the Earth's atmosphere. This process helps to mitigate some of the effects of global warming by modifying Earth's physical systems.

"He is a person who has had experience in the aero[space] industry ... [and] has been working on determining the feasibility of doing this geoengineering. See MR. SMITH, Page 2



Photo courtesy of Mr. Joseph Scania

Students engage in geoengineer Mr. Wake Smith's lecture.

Rapid Responders

On the job with Wallingford's Firefighters
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On-Campus Fun

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Never too Niche

Greek, Astrophysics, and everything in between
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The Boars are Back!

Choate teams showcase their school spirit
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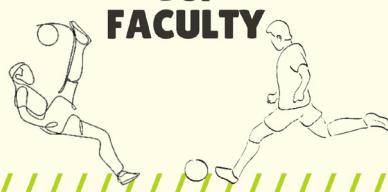
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Read it, then recycle it.

Visuals by Joe Yan '26, Jacqueline Yan '24, Melody Qian '24, and Choate Flicker.

SENIOR SOCCER VS. FACULTY



Monday, November 13
6:30 P.M. at Harteveldt Family Field

MR. SMITH INSPIRES STUDENTS

Continued from Page 1

ineering,” Director of the EIP Mr. Joseph Scanio said. “It made a lot of sense to have him speak to students in the EIP since one of our goals is to have our students be aware of what is going on in the real world.”

Students who attended the lecture enjoyed the presentation and felt they learned from Mr. Smith’s insights. Daneel Polakoff ’25 shared, “His presentation brought a new perspective that I hadn’t thought about in terms of solutions to the climate crisis.”

“Something that Mr. Smith really emphasized was that climate change is real, and it’s coming,” Zein Kabbani ’25 said.

“We need to resort to more innovative solutions, and solar geo-engineering is one of [them].”

Acknowledging the dire state of global warming, Mr. Smith emphasized that his field of study is an opportunity for humans to develop carbon-capturing and geoengineering technologies that will reduce the effects of global warming. Mr. Smith provided insight into innovative solutions to students passionate about the topic of climate change, inspiring the next generation of climate scientists.

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STUDENTS SHOW RESEARCH IN SLS

Continued from Page 1

As this sixth-form SRP group’s SRP experience comes to a close, Dr. Hogue hopes that students will transfer the skills they learned, whether it be working in a group, interacting with adults, or making professional deliverables, into whatever future careers they choose to pursue. He said, “Another goal is that even if they don’t go into science, they will always have an appreciation for what’s happening in the lab behind the scenes.”

Dr. Selena Gell, SRP Co-Director and leader of the bio-

logical science cohort, hopes that audiences are impressed with the students’ hard work: “They’re all doing things that are new. They’re at the cutting edge of science. Being prepared to do that kind of work takes a lot of preparation, in understanding the material, in learning the techniques, and thinking about how to do the experiment.” She explained that each lecture is more than a short talk, saying, “It really represents thousands of hours of preparation to get them to this time.”

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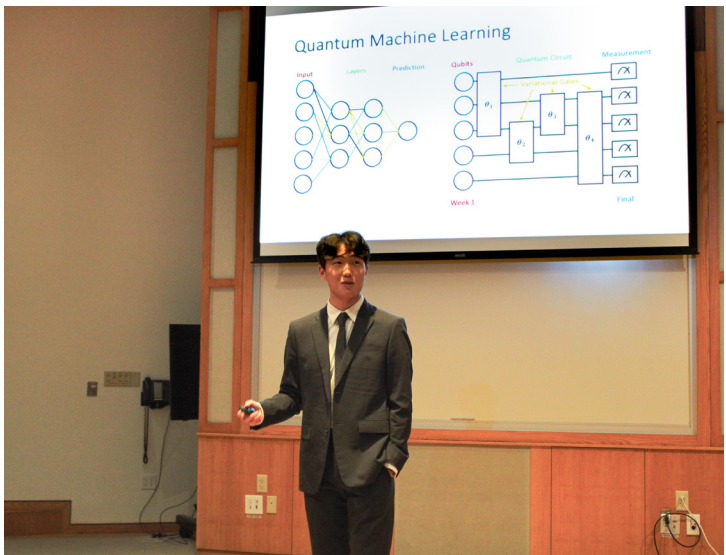


Photo by Emily Ma '25/The Choate News
Danny Yoon '24 presents on quantum computing.

Silent Vigil Offers Reflection and Support to the Community

By **Annelie Hang '25**
Reporter

On October 13, the Choate community gathered inside the Seymour St. John Chapel to call for peace amidst recent events in the Middle East. Choate Spiritual Life and the Department of Equity and Inclusion held the silent vigil to acknowledge those affected by the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which escalated into war earlier that month.

Since its founding, the School has held vigils for the community after significant world events, such as 9/11. These gatherings are designed for community members, whether personally affected by these events or not, to stand in solidarity with those who are struggling.

The vigil, open to anyone at Choate, was a chance to honor, mourn, and grieve the lives of the innocent. A few of the words shared from faculty and teachers included Rabbi Barabara Paris who read a hebrew prayer for peace, Reverend Aaron Rathbun who read a prayer for peace from The Book of Com-

mon Prayer, and Mr. Benzinane who read a peaceful prayer from the Qur'an, and Mr. James Davidson who read words of peace from a famous Buddhist scholar.

According to Rev. Rathbun, the chaplains, which included himself, Rabbi Barabara, and Chaplain Matt Collins, “collaborated together on different prayers and scriptures from [their] respective traditions that speak in one voice in the midst of [their] diversity.”

In between passages, the attendees were invited to participate in moments of silence and self-reflection. Participants were encouraged to use this time in any way that would benefit their healing process the most. Many stayed in the Chapel long after the vigil had ended, praying and worshiping.

The theme for this vigil was “Wish for Peace and Protection of the Innocent” which leaders of the vigil hoped would help students find unity within the Choate community. “Despite our different backgrounds and religions, there were so many shared overlapping



Graphic by Evelyn Kim '25/The Choate News

themes of unity and peace,” said Reverend Rathbun.

Mr. Davidson, one of the organizers of the event, hoped that the 45 students and faculty who attended the vigil would find “peace in numbers.” He said, “Not that having a silent vigil changes anything directly in the Middle East, but it might be able to change the hearts and minds of some community members.”

There was support for all religious and student-life groups who have been affected by the tragedies. “People could feel that there was a safe sanctuary for them to feel what they felt. That was probably the biggest takeaway,” Mr. Davidson said.

According to Rev. Aaron, “This was a great opportunity to see the strength and solidarity that comes from diversity, and how even amidst differences from one another, these things can mutually reinforce us and unite us together.”

Tav Assaf '24, a cabinet member of Hillel who attended the vigil, agreed with Rev. Aaron’s sentiments, saying, “It was a powerful moment to bring students of different faiths together in a moment of hardship, I think it’s important for people to unite and stand strong together.”

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CLASS MODEL CONGRESS FACILITATES STUDENT GROWTH

By **Nilan Kathir '25**
Staff Reporter

Carrying on a tradition of over 50 years, Choate’s United States Government and Politics 1 classes have begun their Model Congress simulation.

To foster student involvement in the operation, a group of students who have already taken the class are tasked with revising the Model Congress handbook each year, chairing committee hearings, and aiding students with bills. Using a procedure that mimics the actual workings of the U.S. government, the simulation works to reflect the U.S. House of Representatives.

Each student is a representative, either a Democrat or Republican, and proposes bills. The teachers and heads of Model Congress come together to decide which bills get put onto the committee session dockets, where they are debated

and voted on by the representatives within their committees. The bills that pass the committee sessions are considered for the floor session dockets and are debated by the entire model congress cohort. Everything is done to simulate the real House of Representatives, with each of the three class blocks acting as a different committee: science, space, technology, foreign affairs, and homeland security.

The course’s teacher, Mr. Ned Gallagher, said, “It’s good to inject a little bit of real-world experiential activity rather than just reading out of textbooks or documents and talking about how Congress works.”

Student reception of this experience has been positive. Owen Sessine '25 said, “It’s important because it allows us to imagine possible scenarios later on in life and play that out, ... and it helps you improve a lot of the skills you need throughout life.”

While providing students with crucial skills like public speaking, Model Congress also pushes students to challenge their preconceived notions about policy-related topics. Sofia Schmidt '25 said, “I learned a lot about current issues and their complexities, and I was able to reassess a lot of my previous beliefs.”

Furthermore, the exercise allowed students to better understand the inner workings of politics. Its realism enabled students to “understand how the actual House of Representatives functions and the premise of bipartisanship and collaboration,” Schmidt said.

Mr. Gallagher emphasized the important lessons, applicable to real life, that students get from “outside the classroom politicking, the backroom deals” and how some students “can’t get things passed just because they don’t have the votes; that’s the real world lesson about politics.” American politics is

highly convoluted, and these complexities pose some difficulties in grading the students. “We don’t see a lot of the backroom deals, ... trading votes, or coordinating amendments,” Mr. Gallgher explained.

Still, students can be sufficiently assessed through the bills they wrote and their participation in committee and floor sessions. The Model Congress simulation is an integral part of the Government and Politics 1 course, providing students with the essential opportunity to practice what they have learned in class through an intricate field. Its long history and student-centered approach enable the exercise to provide hands-on experience, preparing them for the real-world workings of government and politics. Sessine said, “We kind of got out of control, which I think is like real life.”

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American Studies Visits the Museum of the American Indian

By **Maia Shah '27**
Reporter

Students in American Studies classes had the opportunity to dive into their required summer reading book *An Indigenous People’s History of the United States* by Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz this October 26. About 40 students visited the National Museum of the American Indian and explored themes of the book such as the Native American struggle and settler colonialism. Students were able to apply their knowledge of indigenous history while viewing modern art and installations.

The students saw four main exhibits, all showcasing different aspects of indigenous culture, including religion, settler colonialism, and warfare. Ms. Amy Salot, who teaches both English and History for American Studies described the exhibits as “a multifaceted view of Native American culture.”

Ms. Salot wanted her students to notice that “there is a strength and a vibrance in Native American culture alive today, despite settler colonialism.” She also described how the museum dismantled a misconception that people have of Native Americans: “A lot of Americans tend to think of Native Americans in the past tense ... that they were oppressed, they only



Photo courtesy of Fiona Fu '25

Students visited the National Museum of the American Indian.

live on reservations, basically that they’re gone. This museum really celebrates that that is not the case at all.”

Through this field trip, students were able to learn about not only Native American culture, but also about Native American history. Jei Han Hall '25 said, “I found the fact that Native Americans fought in World Wars I and II [to be] very interesting.” Similarly, Annelie Hang '25 shared, “I learned a lot that I wouldn’t necessarily have learned through a classroom.”

While students were able to experience learning outside of their average classroom setting, the long commutes to and from New York were a challenge. “We’ll definitely have to look at it again to see if we will do it next year. We spent more time on the bus than we did in the museum, and that seems a little crazy,” Ms. Salot said.

The trip, despite its time commitment, offered students a new way to learn more about the Native American experience, one different from what they had received reading through textbooks and sources. Students and faculty chaperones were able to recognize the importance of celebrating the culture of historically oppressed voices and deepen their own understanding of those cultures.

“I think the whole experience was focused on reframing Native American history as not just a historical problem but a modern day problem,” Quinn Farmer '25 said. “I learned that history is never fully past and is always impacting the present in one way or another, which is why learning about it is so important.”

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BLEEDING BLUE & GOLD: INTRODUCING COLOR WARS

By **Ellie Porter '25**
Staff Reporter

There is nothing like athletic competitions and Deerfield Day to awaken the competitive spirit of the Choate community. Color Wars is a new initiative seeking to expand upon that school spirit.

Starting this year, the entire student body will be split into four colors: gold, white, dark blue, and Rosemary blue (the former school color of Rosemary Hall). Director of Student Activities Ms. Alex Long said, “I believe that school spirit is about lifting up the School, and in Color Wars, you’re lifting your team up using Choate colors.”

Color Wars aims to bring school spirit beyond just athletic competitions. Athletic teams, the Student Committee on Programming and Engagement (SCOPE), and the Student Activity Center (SAC) will be hosting events to give each team opportunities to accumulate points and gain a victory over the other color teams.

During Spirit Week, students who dressed up according to the theme of the day were awarded points for their participation, contributing to their team’s score. Themes included Dress Like Barbie/Ken Monday, Twin



Graphic by Evelyn Kim '25/The Choate News

Tuesday, Western Wednesday, Decades Thursday, and Dress Like Deerfield Friday.

Brecken Cullinan '24, SCOPE Events Chair, spearheaded the Color Wars initiative. She described it as “a way to foster a little healthy competition and to encourage people to show up for the School.”

Initially, Cullinan had hoped to plan a Field Day, an athletic event held at many schools across the United States. However, because the event takes up a full day, scheduling it into the already-packed school year calendar isn’t feasible. And so, Cullinan hopes to host more smaller-scale events, such as inter-dorm bowling competitions and Powderpuff, instead.

A relatively new initiative with many logistical details still being discussed by organizers, Color Wars has not received much school-wide attention. Students are often caught up in athletic and academic interests and commitments, which limits their ability and time to participate in larger, full-day spirit events. Ms. Long said, “I think the biggest challenge will be getting buy-in from students.”

Color Wars seeks to encourage students to engage more with school spirit events and create a long-lasting tradition that fosters camaraderie and friendly competition.

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THANK YOU, WALLINGFORD FIRE DEPARTMENT!

By **Rachel Fan '27**
Reporter

The echo of fire alarms has become a familiar sound at Choate, blaring through learning and living facilities alike. With each incident, Wallingford's firefighters have swiftly arrived on campus, ensuring the safety of students and faculty.

The Wallingford Fire Department handles about 8,000 calls annually. They actively respond to incidents across town, covering fire alarms, fire calls, and medical calls.

The Wallingford Fire Department has a minimum of 17 firefighters, paramedics, and Emergency Medical Technicians on duty for each of the four shifts of the 24-hour day. They also operate three fire engines dispersed throughout the town.

"Depending on the location of an incident, a fire engine, our ladder truck, and the battalion chief in his own vehicle will respond to fire alarms," Battalion Chief Mr. Jeff Dingler said. "In the case of a confirmed fire, such as a structure or house fire, all our engines and apparatus respond."

Boarding schools like Choate have fire alarms triggered for a myriad of reasons. A common cause is the activation of heating systems during the transition into colder months. According to Mr. Dingler, the fire alarms are set off frequently because switching on heating systems in late autumn disturbs the accumulated



Wallingford Fire Department responds to a call on the Choate campus.



Photos by Toffy Prakittiphoom '24 and Erin Li '24/The Choate News

Appliance malfunctions and microwave mishaps set off fire alarms in freshman dorms Logan Munroe (left) and Nichols (right) this year.

dust in the ductwork, setting off the fire alarms. During this period in between seasons, the fire department often sees a spike in such false alarms, which still require a thorough check to ensure that no harm is brought to the students and staff.

Because of the residential nature of Choate, culinary blunders have also become an issue that frequently invites the fire department to campus. "Students residing on campus sometimes experience cooking mis-

haps like burnt popcorn, which trigger the alarms," Mr. Dingler shared with a laugh.

The intentional yet non-malicious triggering of alarms is also quite common, but more so in schools for younger students. "Curious kids often pull the fire alarms, leading to false alerts," he said. Although these are false alarms, the fire department still responds to ensure that there is no real danger.

When dealing with fire alarm rings in Choate dorms, the Wall-



Wallingford Fire Department awaits for emergency calls to ensure safety of town residents.

ingford Fire Department has a systematic protocol. Mr. Dingler described that their first engine, stationed nearby on North Main Street, will respond first. Upon arrival, firefighters coordinate with Choate's Community Safety personnel, who guide them through the campus to the affected building. Once they ensure that everyone is safe, they access the building's alarm panel to pinpoint the source of the alarm. As crews investigate the issue, they communicate with the battalion

chief, signaling whether they need further aid.

Mr. Dingler recalled one incident that occurred a few winters back, now passed around as a humorous story within the fire department. "This occurred around or just after Christmas in a residence hall," he said. A staff member at Choate decided to burn their Christmas tree in the fireplace. However, the fireplace was non-functional, and this attempt filled the entire building with smoke.

Recent events at Choate have also shown the challenges of dorm life regarding fire safety. Kaylin Lam '27, a resident of Nichols House, was in the midst of preparing for her orchestra concert when a malfunctioning hairdryer in her dorm triggered the fire alarm. "One of the dorm's resident's hairdryers became smoky ... it just set off the alarm," she recounted.

Lam and the other Nichols residents had to evacuate the building, which she found frustrating: "It was loud, it took so long waiting outside, and I had somewhere to be."

On a different occasion, a fire alarm triggered by a microwave mishap interrupted Logan Munroe House resident Ethan Sun '27's nighttime study session. However, Sun saw this mishap as an opportunity for growth, suggesting the need for better appliance usage instructions to prevent such occurrences in the future. "We should teach students how to use the microwaves properly and have clearer instructions," he said.

At a boarding school like Choate, having fire alarm incidents is inevitable. Thankfully, Mr. Dingler and the Wallingford Fire Department are always ready to ensure students' safety and shut down those alarms, whether they are real or not.

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MEET THE NEW WALLINGFORD TOWN COUNCIL MEMBERS



Campaign signs of Wallingford Town Council candidates were visible all over the town in anticipation of the November 7 elections.



Photos by Finn Wikstrom '26/The Choate News

By **Calvin Moon '24**
Staff Reporter

All over Wallingford, election campaign signs decorate residents' front lawns. On November 7, Wallingford citizens cast their votes for the town's first new mayor in 40 years after Mr. William Dickinson, who had been mayor since 1984, decided not to run for another term in office. They also voted for seats on the Town Council and Board of Education.

The polls on Election Day were open from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m., and in-person voters who were in line by 8 p.m. were allowed to vote. The Connecticut Secretary of State's website contained services such as Voter Registration Lookup and Polling Place Locator for voters' convenience.

Connecticut also allowed for Election Day registration at designated centers in each town. Residents had to be registered by 8 p.m. in order to vote using Election Day registration. To receive absentee ballots, voters needed to complete and sign an application and return it to their Town Clerk, or request an absentee ballot online.

After the results were counted, Republican candidate Mr. Vincent Cervoni was announced as the new Mayor. The winning candidates for Town Council, which retained a 6-3 majority for Republicans, included Ms. Christina Tatta, Mr. Craig Fishbein, Ms. Autumn Allinson, Mr. Joe Marrone III, Mr. Tom Laffin, Mr. Christopher Regan, Mr. Samuel Carmody, Mr. Vincent Testa Jr., and Mr. Jesse Reynolds.

Mayor Mr. Vincent Cervoni:

This 55-year-old Republican candidate boasts 29 years of attorney experience and 14 years on the Wallingford Town Council, including the past five terms as Chairman.

Some of his key initiatives are strengthening public safety through investing in a new, state-of-the-art Police Command Center and updating the town's information technology, including creating a complete overhaul of town websites.

Mr. Cervoni also plans on initiating a multi-year plan for deferred town property maintenance, as well as working with the Board of Education to solve issues around the town's two high schools. As evidence of his ability to handle the

job, Mr. Cervoni cited his achievement in coordinating with the administration to host public meetings via a web platform during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Town Council members:

Republicans:

Ms. Christina Tatta

Ms. Tatta is the Chief Financial Officer at Value Auto Sales & Leasing and is serving her second term on the Town Council. She was previously the Commissioner of the Zoning Board of Appeals, Vice Chair of the Charter Revision Commission, and Vice Chair of the Wallingford Republican Town Committee. She hopes to focus on finances by ensuring that taxes are spent efficiently without affecting services to keep Wallingford affordable and reasonable to small businesses.

Mr. Craig Fishbein

Mr. Fishbein has been a trial attorney for 22 years, and has also served as a State Representative for the 90th General Assembly District for four terms and a member of the Wallingford Town Council for seven terms. He hopes to continue his

quest for lower taxes, improved infrastructure, and a better daily life for Wallingford citizens in general.

Ms. Autumn Allinson

Ms. Allinson seeks to bring her knowledge of warehousing, transportation, and process improvement to the office. With skills in analytics and building operations, she hopes to tackle issues in education such as secondary school operational assessments and test scores. She believes that collecting more data will allow for change within the education system.

Mr. Joe Marrone III

Mr. Marrone has worked as a claims adjuster for 23 years and has served three terms on the Wallingford Board of Education. He wishes to focus on Wallingford's infrastructure, including fighting for better maintenance of roads, sidewalks, and town buildings. In addition, he hopes to improve the technology in the police and fire departments.

Mr. Tom Laffin

Mr. Laffin, who has lived in Wallingford his entire life, has served on the Inland Wetlands and

Watercourses Commission and was elected to be a member on the Board of Education for two terms. In addition, he was elected to Town Council in 2011, later becoming the Vice-Chairman in 2013, and is currently serving his sixth term. Mr. Laffin seeks to renew the infrastructure in the police station, community pool, and train station.

Mr. Christopher Regan

Though he has not held public office, Mr. Regan believes his experiences as the CEO of an Information Technology services company have given him the leadership and technology skills he will utilize in office. His priorities lie in maintaining low taxes and modernizing the town's technology infrastructure.

Democrats:

Mr. Samuel Carmody

Mr. Carmody is a sixth-generation Wallingford native who brings extensive experience as a senior adviser to Connecticut Lieutenant Governor Susan Bysiewicz and as Deputy Registrar of Voters for two years. His priorities include implementing economic development policies that will help recruit businesses and in-

crease tax base as well as ensuring a first-rate education system.

Vincent Testa Jr.

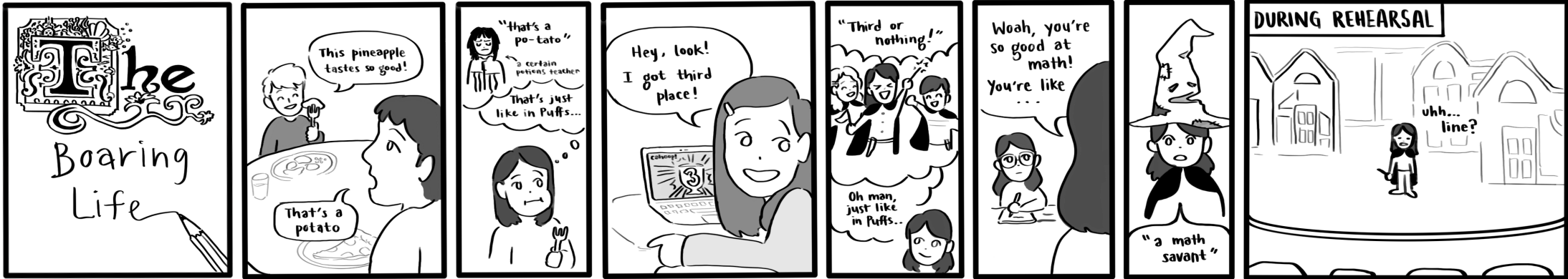
Mr. Testa has spent two years on the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission and eight years on the Board of Education. He is currently serving his ninth term on the Town Council. His priorities lie in public facilities and services, such as the Community Pool project, a skate park, and infrastructure in general.

Mr. Jesse Reynolds

Mr. Reynolds has been a biostatistician and the Director of the Clinical Trials Team at Yale University for 11 years. He has served Wallingford as a volunteer in many capacities and hopes to address the town's issues, primarily its infrastructure. He wishes to do so by fixing the town's roads, sidewalks, buildings, and other facilities.

Wallingford residents can look forward to the changes these elected candidates will implement over the course of their terms.

Calvin Moon may be reached at cmoon24@choate.edu.



Graphic by Evelyn Kim '25/The Choate News

THE CHOATE NEWS



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AN ODE TO LONG WEEKENDS ON CAMPUS

By **Fiona Fu '25**

Copy Editor

Coming to Choate as an international student, long weekends did not excite me. After all, I couldn't go home, and I didn't have any family nearby. My friends would pack and go one by one, leaving me to languish in the empty halls of my dorm alone for the next few days. However, after spending so many of my long weekends at Choate, I've come to appreciate the restorative peace and quiet that comes with staying on campus.

Long weekends, despite their name, are not actually that long. The thought of having to pack for a trip, no matter how short, while also taking a bunch of midterms the week before is a daunting prospect. Not to mention the time it takes to travel anywhere and the hours I might have to spend in a car when I could be hanging out with friends, watching TV, or resting.

On long weekends when I do go off-campus, the sun has usually

set by the time I arrive at my destination, and I'm lethargic from the stuffy smell of vehicles and hours of sitting down. I've found that staying on campus maximizes the opportunity to rest, recuperate, and lounge. I don't have to worry about packing or getting anywhere but my bed. My break commences the moment my last commitment ends. I get to prioritize sleep, and sometimes, even go on adventures throughout Wallingford.

Whereas the busyness of Choate life prevents me from venturing out too much during school, long weekends are the perfect opportunity to explore the community around us. I can zip up my jacket, take a morning stroll down Main Street, and stop by Green Kettle to pick up a warm coffee. In the afternoons or evenings, the Student Activities Center (SAC) organizes gratuitous trips to bowling, shopping, and the movies — activities I didn't even realize were so within reach.

Long weekends are also my chance to explore restaurants I haven't been to before or take a day

trip to New Haven without worrying about whether such a luxury would prevent me from finishing my homework. From bubble waffle ice cream at Milkcraft and umami wagyu curry at Hachiroku to a library of board games at Elm City Games, New Haven and its amenities are boundless. For once, I get to appreciate the areas surrounding the School through the lens of an explorer.

There's also something magical about seeing the Choate campus, usually so busy and full of life, turn into a tranquil canvas. You can hear the echoes of your own voice against the empty dining hall and slide across the waxed wooden floor of the senior section without anyone stopping to judge you. It's liberating. The sense of wonder I used to have walking on the paths as a new freshman that gradually eroded with time and stress returns with full force during these quiet long weekends.

With the population reduced so drastically, it's also inevitable to feel a sense of camaraderie

with those hunkered down on campus with me.

I talked to people I'd known only tangentially, establishing friendships in record time. With close friends, I found myself enjoying deeply intimate and unfettered conversations, quality time that is impossible to find in our otherwise busy Choate lives. I collect these moments. They are precious core memories and cornerstones of my most genuine relationships.

The idea of being "left behind" on campus might seem depressing, but, dear reader, I promise there is so much to love. I invite you to remain with us on campus one long weekend and see for yourself the myriad of small joys there are to experience. You might even discover some other pleasant surprises in this short duration. (If you find any good restaurants, I'd love to hear about them!)

Fiona Fu is a fifth-former from Hong Kong. She may be reached at ffu25@choate.edu.

A LETTER
TO THE EDITOR

A response to an article covering dorm basements on campus (October 25, 2023: Vol. CXVII, Issue 7, Page 6):

As an avid reader of *The Choate News* and supporter of any student publication, you can count on me to take pleasure in reading each issue of your esteemed publication. However, I must admit I was a bit surprised to see that Pitman was not considered in your article about the underground rooms/basements of note on campus.

As the new Head of House for Pitman, I can speak to the changes that Pitman has gone through this year — in particular, the shift away from the basement triple into a very large common room. Furthermore, with support from the School, we were able to get new furniture and decorations in this space as well. I believe that

the Pitman residents (Lauren Hsu included) can attest to the comfort this space provides after a long day at Choate.

While I know that covering every aspect of the School can be tough, I am curious how the selections were made since it feels as though there may not have been a full and fair investigation. I politely push back on your article and provide some photo evidence for your consideration. As a small dorm, Pitman may fly a bit under the radar, but we hope to not be overlooked. Thanks for your consideration and keep on writing great news!

Sincerely,
Mr. Jenkins

If you would like to submit a Letter to the Editor to be considered for publication, send it to thechoatenews@choate.edu



Photo courtesy of Mr. Wes Jenkins

The newly renovated basement of Pitman house.

INTENT VS. IMPACT:
THE NO-HOMEWORK NIGHT HOAX

By **Francesca Howard '26**

Opinions Staff Writer

To emulate the days off from school that students in several school districts in Connecticut get on holidays such as Yom Kippur and Diwali, Choate implemented no-homework-nights into the yearly calendar. For the most part, these nights fall on various religious and cultural holidays throughout the year. They are designed to be a well-earned reprieve from quadratic equations, Shakespearean soliloquies, and electron configurations, as well as a designated time for students to engage with their family, faith, and other pursuits.

As the clock struck 8:00 p.m. in Memorial House's (Mem's) common room on our most recent no-homework night, one might have expected students to be on the phone with their families or celebrating their holidays with one another. Yet, the activities in the room were no different than any other school night. Students were either scribbling or typing furiously away at their screens. That same ticking of the clock was drowned out by the tapping of keyboards, flipping of a page, and occasional sighs.

For a night designated to be one without homework, the ambiance of Mem's common room seemed anything but. The residents were unquestionably not celebrating their respective holidays and were in fact doing homework.

I was baffled as to why this was the case; teachers are not

allowed to assign homework on these nights, so why are all these students still buried in their schoolwork?

That night, I realized that no-homework nights are in fact, a hoax. I, along with several of my peers, feel like many teachers who claim to follow the policy wind up assigning twice as much homework the following day. "My teachers cram everything due to the night after so I have to spread out my work and start it the night before," Genesis Torres '26 said.

Suleika Sandi '26 agreed, explaining that "they assign extra work for the next time we have class, assuming the no homework night will give us time to do it, so that the class won't get left behind."

Instead of spending time with their families and observing their religious traditions, students are slammed with late-night cramming before their upcoming calculus test, article on the history of U.S. foreign policy, and French essay, all of which require a concerning amount of time, coffee, and Celsius.

Students have received optional homework on these nights to consolidate their understanding of the material they cover in class; not completing these assignments would leave a gap in their knowledge. All in all, delaying work does not lessen its burden. But, this was no shock to me as a second-year student at Choate who has had her fair share of not-so-no-homework nights. I recall the first of these alleged nights without work during my fresh-



Graphic by Carolyn Chen '25/The Choate News

man year: I had nestled into my favorite reading nook with a new novel, appreciative of the Administration's attentiveness to the needs of the student body. This was my chance to finally catch up on sleep, grab dinner in town with friends, and write my grandmother the letter I had promised her. But the Canvas assignments that loomed on my dashboard told a different story — a deluge of assignments awaited.

Ever since that day, I have spent my no-homework nights — like those in the Mem common room the other night — working. Ironical, isn't it? The few nights a year when Choate tries to give no homework to observe religious holidays, my peers and I have just as much work to do.

This policy was instituted to allow students to fully engage in their communities and cultures without the pressure of assignments, but obligations

don't disappear if they are just shifted to a different day. Students will complete the work one way or another.

With this in mind, it is imperative that teachers abide by the intentions of no-homework nights. It's time for Choate to recalibrate its approach to this initiative to ensure students have the balance they deserve. This issue is one we can no longer ignore; the flaws in this policy's implementation should be addressed and amended.

If Choate truly wants to give its students time off on these occasions, it must set aside time in more than name only. Conceptually, no-homework nights are a policy most of our community can support, but it needs adjusting to be as beneficial as it intends to be.

Francesca Howard is a fourth-former from New York City, NY. She may be reached at fhoward26@choate.edu.

Breakfast for Dinner: Egg-static or (W)awful?

By **Sky Hinton '26**

Opinions Writer

Do you wish for breakfast for dinner in the dining hall every night? I sincerely hope not, because breakfast is not dinner; it is breakfast. Consuming breakfast for dinner is neither healthy nor practical and should be abolished in the dining hall.

After long gruesome days filled with classes, sports, rehearsals, and followed by an entire night of homework, a nutritious, balanced meal is imperative. A nice dinner including protein such as chicken, a healthy carb such as rice, and some veggies is the perfect way to replenish your energy levels. Breakfast foods, generally, are far less healthy than dinner foods. Think about it: fried bacon vs. baked chicken, Cinnamon Toast Crunch vs. steamed rice, hash browns vs. roasted sweet potatoes. Breakfast sim-

ply does not provide enough nutrients needed to refuel our bodies after a tiring day.

I understand the appeal of breakfast for dinner. Certain food connoisseurs have a passion for syrupy pancakes or fluffy waffles, and there is nothing wrong with breakfast food as a whole. However, it will get old if we continue to have breakfast foods for both breakfast and dinner.

While I feel hesitant about breakfast for dinner, there are ways to improve this meal to a point where I could approve. The addition of more nutrient-dense foods such as avocados to breakfast sandwiches, smoothies made with real fruits, or even breakfast burritos could make breakfast for dinner a well-rounded meal.

Sky Hinton is a fourth-former from North Haven, CT. She may be reached at shinton26@choate.edu.



Graphic by Melody Qian '24/The Choate News

By **Eva Swanson '25**

Copy Editor

Some say breakfast is the most important meal of the day. For those of us who appreciate our sleep-ins and refuse to get up earlier than necessary to eat breakfast, breakfast for dinner is a blessing.

Though I have three sleep-ins, I generally refrain from pulling myself out of bed until I have to, i.e., 20 minutes before class. As I don't go to the dining hall in the mornings, I generally resort to a couple spoonfuls of yogurt, some slightly stale granola, or a cookie in the mornings. Thus, at dinner-time, when I have the opportunity to sit down and fill my plate with SAGE's offerings, I LOVE seeing the trays of perfectly-scrambled eggs and impressive selection of waffle toppings.

Breakfast is the best meal at Choate. Unlike at dinner or lunch, when some stations may not al-

ways have good offerings, every station is delicious at breakfast. Choate's hash browns rival those of McDonald's, and the omelets are absolutely scrumptious.

Even for those who are not big fans of breakfast for dinner, there are options, such as the salad and sandwich bar. There is still something for everyone on breakfast for dinner nights, which means that you will never find yourself going back to your room hangry.

Moreover, as many students (myself included) don't have much time on the weekdays to eat every meal, a guarantee to grab delicious filling food is exactly what we need.

Breakfast for dinner is the most delicious meal at Choate, and therefore, it is my favorite.

Eva Swanson is a fifth-former from London, England. She may be reached at eswanson25@choate.edu.

OZEMPIC: A CATCHY JINGLE, A WEIGHTY PROBLEM

By **Sophia Liao '25**
Copy Editor

I remember watching my first Ozempic advertisement on TV as a kid. I barely remembered the content of the advertisement, but for some reason, the famous Ozempic jingle that went along with the commercial stuck with me. Fast forward to now: celebrities all over social media, from the Kardashians to Amy Schumer, are making headlines with their usage of Ozempic. Ozempic went from being just another medication to a nationwide trend with broad ethics and aesthetic obsession.

In 2017, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved the drug Ozempic to treat Type 2 diabetes. Just a year later, in 2018, the Ozempic craze began — not fueled by diabetic patients whom the medication was designed for, but instead by ordinary people with the sole goal of exploiting one of Ozempic’s side effects: weight loss. Since then, people have become so attached to the weight loss aspect of Ozempic that they have gone to extreme lengths to obtain it, even if that meant taking it out of the hands of people the medication was originally intended for.

Ozempic is an injection of an active ingredient called semaglutide, which regulates insulin, a

naturally occurring hormone that controls the amount of glucose in the blood. By imitating this hormone in our bodies, semaglutide is able to quell our appetites by telling our bodies that we feel full. A weekly injection into the arm, thigh, or stomach is all it takes for patients to begin managing their obesity and lose weight.

The New England Journal of Medicine published a 2021 study stating that weekly injections of semaglutide over 68 weeks could cause a 14.9% weight loss in overweight and obese people.

The stunning effect of Ozempic has made it the go-to drug for anybody — no longer just diabetic people — searching for an easy way to lose weight. Celebrities like Elon Musk have publicized their usage of a semaglutide drug nearly identical to Ozempic called Wegovy, tweeting how Wegovy helped him to get “fit, ripped, and healthy.”

While Wegovy has been approved by the FDA for weight loss, long-lasting shortages have caused people to view Ozempic as an alternative capable of fulfilling their weight loss goals. Regardless, both Wegovy and Ozempic’s surge in demand indicates consumers’ lack of accountability for managing their weight loss without the drug. Rather than develop healthy eating and exercise habits, Ozempic users take the easy way out.

It is crucial that people recognize Ozempic does not cause long-term weight loss, so they must make actual lifestyle changes to achieve and maintain the weight lost from the drug. If a patient does not make these key lifestyle adjustments, they are at risk of developing a dependence on the drug, which can have major health implications further down the line.

Anybody looking to start taking Wegovy or Ozempic must have a prescription from a doctor first. Those who do not fall under the diabetic category and are seeking the medication have most often resort to finding doctors who will prescribe Ozempic to them off-label, meaning the medicine is prescribed for a different function than what it was intended for. This is often the avenue celebrities will take to get their hands on Ozempic when they do not qualify for a prescription.

Off-label prescriptions are problematic because the side effects of the drug in individuals who did not meet the criteria of the target user have not been investigated. Thus, when a non-diabetic patient takes Ozempic, they are at risk of suffering from understudied and potentially dangerous unknown side effects.

Additionally, doctors are susceptible to prescribing Ozempic purely out of motivation for prof-



Graphic by Evelyn Kim '25/The Choate News

it rather than the actual needs of the client. Every off-label prescription takes crucial, sometimes life-saving medication away from somebody in need. For instance, 57-year-old mechanic Shane Anthony, who was diagnosed with diabetes, could not get his hands on his Ozempic medication for four whole months. “It infuriates me,” he said. “It’s like, you people don’t need it. The diabetics, we need it to stay alive.” Other patients in Anthony’s shoes must either take a lower dosage of what’s available, drive to a different pharmacy that has it in stock, or stop taking the medication altogether. Consider-

ing these factors, doctors have to be more selective with whom they are prescribing Ozempic to, and they should never leave somebody like Anthony, a person in need of the medication, without it.

The Ozempic craze has revealed the destructive nature of society’s tendency to pursue quick fixes. So many people are enticed by the weight loss effect of Ozempic that they have lost sight of its intended purpose and are no longer taking accountability for managing weight loss without depending on the drug. While there are exceptions to those who are able to lose weight through the traditional

methods of healthy dieting and exercise, such as those with genetic predispositions and medical complications, no one should be using Ozempic except people with Type 2 diabetes. Doctors who engage in off-label prescriptions worsen this issue, by giving non-diabetic patients the opportunity to obtain Ozempic. The Ozempic crisis, immoral and unethical, is indicative of society’s desire for quick-fixes and doctors’ complicity in perpetuating the problem.

Sophia Liao is a fifth-former from Acton, MA. She may be reached at sliao25@choate.edu.

FORGIVING STUDENT DEBT IS A BAND-AID SOLUTION TO A LOOMING ISSUE



Graphic by Grace Ju '27/The Choate News

By **Arjun Pathy '25**
Copy Editor

At the beginning of October, President Biden announced a new \$9 billion round of student loan forgiveness. This news accompanies the previous debt write-offs that have taken place during Biden’s administration, affecting 3.6 million borrowers and totaling \$127 billion. These actions, on the surface, seem to be a part of a reasonable, populist agenda put forward to help relieve the financial burden of the middle class. While this is partially true, by authorizing student loan forgiveness, President Biden has set a dangerous ideological precedent.

Tuition at American colleges and universities has increased by over 169% since 1980, despite relatively stagnant wage growth of 19%. Such a jarring gap has resulted in U.S.’s education-related debt skyrocketing to \$1.77 trillion. Burdened by sometimes lifelong debt, millions of U.S. borrowers have raised grievances about this growing issue, citing government inaction.

However, proponents of loan forgiveness often neglect to consider another culprit. Colleges, as the sole beneficiary of unaffordable tuition, bear much of the blame for this crisis. Many educational institutions in the U.S. boast endowments larger than some countries’ GDP and, in most cases, receive swaths of federal funding. Despite such a large inflow, new revenue is always seen being invested in a new football stadium or a flashy student center, not reducing growing tuition costs. This conundrum is caused by the U.S. government’s inadequate regulation of universities.

As long as a college degree is expected for most jobs and no cap on tuition persists, universities have no incentive to keep tuition affordable.

With an endowment of \$40.7 billion, Yale University could fund its yearly operating expenses with millions left over only using the interest on their investments. But without a real incentive to do so, they charge over \$80,000 per year and generate tuition revenue exceeding \$450 million in the process. Such a predicament isn’t specific to Yale, and it will only become more acute without effective legislative action. However, the current proposed loan forgiveness laws lack such regulations, and fail to address indebtedness.

Loan forgiveness, as proposed, would only encompass writing off current debts. With no provisions on limiting tuition or any mention of future loans, the legislation is, at best, an ineffective band-aid solution. As universities, underterred by regulators, continue to raise their tuition, future students’ debts will only rise.

Furthermore, this entire forgiveness program comes at the expense of taxpayers. In the current system, citizens indirectly subsidize the excess of universities by footing the bill for past tuition payments. Contrary to popular belief, wealthy students are more likely to take out debt to fund their education. And so, unlike the progressive tax structures in the U.S., paying off student loans would disproportionately benefit those with a higher socioeconomic status. Canceling these loans would, therefore, distribute tax revenue to a cause that benefits a highly educated and wealthy subset of the population.

However, the most pressing problem related to loan forgiveness has to do with setting an ethical precedent. Pursuing a college education is ultimately a personal choice, and the accompanying debt one might incur is an individual decision. By making the ramifications of one group’s choice the burden of all, the U.S. government crosses a dangerous ideological line. An inevitable question arises: if the government pays for the debts that one willingly takes on, what other responsibilities can they absolve one of?

This ideological misstep is the biggest slap in the face to taxpayers who made financially prudent decisions when going to college. Whether it is pursuing college in-state or earning scholarships, millions of students give up admission offers to save money and incur less debt. This sacrificial decision can be life-altering and close off valuable opportunities — all in the name of avoiding student loans. For these people, when the government clears the debts of those who decided to take out six-figure loans, a seemingly common-sense act becomes deeply inequitable.

This is not to say that we shouldn’t address the looming student debt crisis. Rather, I am suggesting that we take a nuanced, more long-term approach to a multilateral issue. Instead of only holding the government accountable, we must understand the incentives of universities and cap their tuition accordingly. Most importantly, we must not continue assuming that one person’s decision is the responsibility of all.

Arjun Pathy is a fifth-former from Denver, CO. He may be reached at apathy25@choate.edu.

THE DYING AMERICAN DREAM AND HOW TO REVIVE IT

By **Darren Lin '26**
Opinions Writer

Everyone loves a good “rags to riches” story. A journey from rock bottom to a penthouse overlooking Central Park is always captivating. However, this type of story is no longer just an exciting fantasy; it’s an outdated fairytale.

Although I didn’t know it by name, I’ve been familiar with the American Dream for most of my life. I was often served the core ethos of the American Dream: the classic “anything is possible if you put in the effort” with an occasional side of “work hard in silence, let your success be the noise.” In other words, the American Dream enables the gold standard for social mobility.

But this lifestyle isn’t universally accessible; the American Dream seems attainable to me solely because I’m a spoiled prep-school student attending classes 12,000 kilometers from home, and it would be an understatement to say that my life would be harder if my parents earned the median household income.

While I can see myself living according to the American Dream, it’s not supposed to be limited to students at privileged private schools. The dream was meant for any American, encouraging them to reap their riches through determination even if they started off with nothing. But, as we move into a period some call postmodern, only dwindling embers remain of what used to be a fiery dream. The American Dream is becom-

ing less and less attainable to the vast majority of Americans. So, how did we get here?

Humans have traditionally divided socioeconomic status into the upper class and the working class. The primary difference is that the upper class owns the means of production, the tools, resources, and facilities needed for production to take place, while the working class works for those means of production.

While both classes are necessary for the existence of a functional economy, the interests of the classes are irreconcilably opposed. In the end, the capitalist wants to extract value from the labor of each worker while the worker wants to retain the value of their labor. This means that if we are to assign an arbitrary “labor point” that directly translates to revenue, a worker who provides five labor points would produce five points of revenue. However, the worker would never be able to keep all five points of revenue because the capitalist would want to extract as many possible revenue points for themselves. The “surplus value” extracted can then be denoted as the difference between the costs of production and the sum of sales; this variable can ensure that the worker’s wage matches the value of their labor. And yet, this correlation tends to discourage individuals from working harder, since they wouldn’t be able to earn the full value of their labor. As long as the upper class is allowed to extract surplus value from the

labor of the workers, the American Dream cannot survive.

I believe that in order to revive the dream, the issue of surplus value must be addressed. Unless a full-scale revolution takes place, it is unlikely that surplus value can be removed. Still, federal laws can be put in place to cap surplus value. Laws regarding price gouging are traditionally enforced by state governments but rarely in situations other than an emergency. If we introduce federal regulations on surplus value, businesses will be forced to comply. We would provide workers with an incentive to make an effort and, thus, to chase a more realistic American Dream.

The best way to introduce this change is to vote locally, in the hopes of regulating surplus value and price gouging. While presidential elections are important, local government directly affects an individual and their community. Legal intervention can help to compel large businesses to give workers more ownership and control of the means of production. To take part in this change, people can research candidates who advocate for radical change or who align with their values and voice their thoughts online.

The American Dream is the ideal. While it is accessible to some, it is unobtainable by most. If nothing changes, the dream will only fade as future generations neglect and give up on its existence.

Darren Lin is a fourth-former from Newton, MA. He may be reached at dlin26@choate.edu.



Graphic by David Glover-Barr '25/The Choate News

BUSSIN’ BATHROOMS: CHOATE’S TOP TOILETS

By **Steven Kee ’27**
Reporter

No matter how strong your bladder is, everyone has used a bathroom on campus. There is a wide variety of restrooms for members of the Choate community to choose from, each providing students and faculty alike with a unique experience of dealing with natural bodily functions. Though they all serve the same purpose, community members have formed opinions and preferences for certain locations based on privacy, cleanliness, and spaciousness.

Kohler Environmental Center (KEC)

Marco Alataris ’25 said his favorite bathroom is the guest bathroom in the KEC. “It’s spacious, and there’s a fan,” he said. “It’s very calm, it’s quiet, has a clean sink there, and it’s simple to use.”

Ernie Mok ’25 also appreciates the design of the KEC bathrooms. He noted how he feels connected with nature

when he uses the bathroom, which makes the experience uniquely enjoyable.

“There’s a ground-level window that you can open. On nice days, you can open the window, and it feels very ‘nature-y,’” Mok said.

Colony Hall

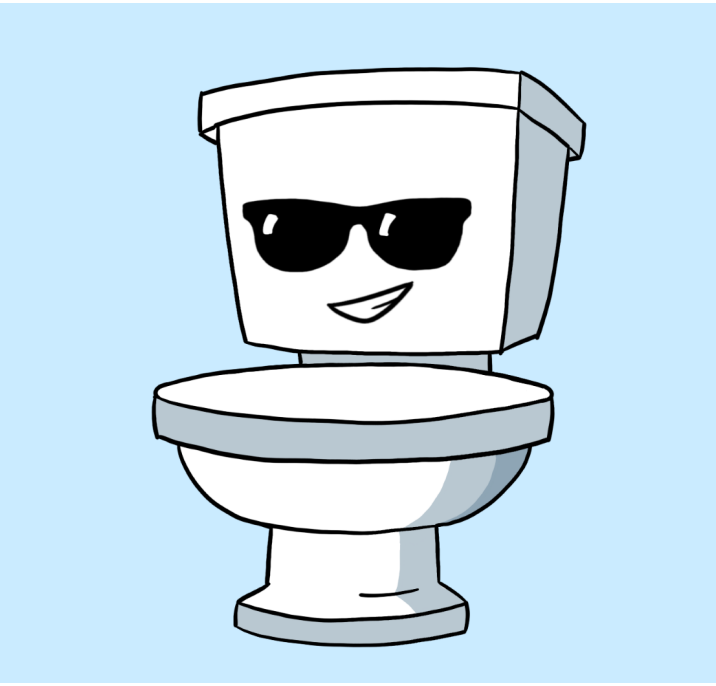
The Colony Hall single-stall bathrooms received praise for their cleanliness and spaciousness.

Arts Concentration student Aria Ramnath ’24 said, “No one really thinks to go to that bathroom, so fewer bums have touched the rim, and it’s usually freshly cleaned.”

Pianist Christian Madon ’24 shared a similar opinion, having observed that the Colony Hall bathrooms are some of the biggest and cleanest on campus. “It’s big, and the toilets flush by themselves,” he said.

The Student Activities Center (SAC)

An alternative choice would be the single-stall SAC bathrooms for their privacy.



Graphic by Carolyn Chen ’25/The Choate News

“There’s no gap in between the door and the wall,” Proud Tang-karavakoon ’27 said.

The third-floor SAC bathrooms also have the perks of being in an isolated location. Tariq El Mammann ’24 said, “It’s nice and isolated, peaceful, quiet, and I get some nice alone time and really take care of business there.”

Dorms and Other Areas

It’s not only academic buildings that have received compliments. Andrew Watcharananan ’26, a former resident of Logan Munroe House, spoke of the fond memories he had in the dorm’s bathrooms and his appreciation of “the space, the vibe, and how dim it is.”

Wesley Walker ’24 appreciates the interior design of the bathrooms at the Remsen Arena and Hockey Rink, saying that they are underrated. “I’ve taken [out]fit pics there. The architecture is really nice, the mirrors are huge, and the granite is fire,” he said.

Arabic teacher Mr. Yassine Benzinane complimented the Hill House faculty lounge bathroom for its cleanliness and privacy. “I think it’s kind of private and always very clean,” he said.

Regardless of individual choices, one thing is true: bathrooms at Choate provide a space for members of the community to retreat and relax. Every bathroom offers a unique vibe with differing levels of privacy and cleanliness. The next time you go into a bathroom, stop and look around. Take a moment to appreciate the space and how the different features could make your experience more pleasant.

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HIDDEN HISTORIES: WHAT’S IN A (NICK)NAME?

By **Eva Swanson ’25**
Copy Editor

If you weren’t a member of the Choate community and came for a visit to the School, you might start to wonder whether the students here speak a different language. “Is there a SoHo in Wallingford?” “What’s a Lanphy?”

Many buildings on campus have been given nicknames used exclusively by the Choate community, each one with its own rich history spanning decades.

Bernhard House, a.k.a. “SoHo,” and Tenney House (just “Tenney”)

Before “Tenney House” became the dorm’s official name in 2008, it was referred to as “North House” as a counterpart to its neighboring building “South House.” The new name was formally adopted to acknowledge the gift of Mrs. Rebecca Tenney Agnew, a member of Rosemary Hall’s Class of 1927, who also helped create the design plan for the building.

As for South House, the donor requested their name not be revealed or acknowledged until later. During this time, students referred to the dorm as “SoHo,” short for South House, until the official name was revealed.

On June 4, 2012, the building was officially named for Arnold and Janet Bernhard, parents to Jean Buttner, a member of Rosemary Hall’s Class of 1953. By this time, however, students and faculty had grown accustomed to calling the dorm “SoHo,” and from then on, the nickname has stuck around.

Even though the official name of Bernhard House is widely in use now, students adore the name “SoHo” and persist with its use today. Resident Tashi Bista ’26 said, “Personally, I like the nickname because it’s cute and short.”



Graphic by Evelyn Kim ’25/The Choate News

Resident Kristie Lu ’26 also added, “I like the name SoHo because I’m from New York, and it reminds me of SoHo, New York.”

Cameron & Edward Lanphier Center For Math And Computer Science, a.k.a. “Lanphy”

Named after Cameron and Edward Lanphier ’74, Lanphier Center is known across campus as “Lanphy.” However, since its opening on February 9, 2015, the nickname has been hotly debated.

In a 2015 edition of *The Choate News*, students voted on the nickname for Lanphier Center. In first place, with nearly 30 percent of the total votes was “The Cel,” standing for Cameron & Edward Lanphier. In second place was “Lanphy,” holding 15.3 percent of the votes. In third place with 14.4 percent of the votes was “Macs,” an abbreviation of Math and Computer Science. Though students voted for other names, such as “Cel-C,” “Math 2.0,” and “LanCen,” only “Lanphy” reigns victorious today.

Controversy continues with the spelling of “Lanphy,” with its variants being “Lanphie,” “Lanphi,” and even “Lanf.”

Pratt House, a.k.a. “The Health Center”

For many, Pratt House is synonymous with all things health and counseling-related. Yet, this was not always the case. From the 1890s to the 1910s, the School’s infirmary was in Sub Rosa, which is currently a faculty house. Sub Rosa was nicknamed “Snug Harbor,” “Mother House,” or most plainly, “Infirmary.”

In 1928, the Archbold Infirmary was established as the largest school infirmary in the United States. Archbold accommodated Choate’s sick population for nearly 70 years. However, in 1997, the infirmary moved from Archbold to Pratt, where it got the nickname “The Health Center.”

The nicknames of Choate buildings are an intangible piece of history that can be passed down to generations of students. “I think it’s fun the way it is; I think it adds that charm to the school,” Micole Makau ’24 said. “I don’t think I’d change that.” Whether the current nicknames will continue to live on for decades, only time will tell.

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A PEEK INTO NICHE CLASSES AT CHOATE

By **Adrian Torres ’25**
Copy Editor

Any student who stumbles upon the wrong classroom by chance may be surprised to hear recitations of ancient Greek text or discussions on the spectroscopic analysis of galaxies. With over 200 courses available at Choate, it’s no wonder that students can dive deeply into their interests regardless of how “niche” they may be.

Astrophysics:

Open to students who have completed a year of physics, Astrophysics includes a wide range of topics in the field, from stellar evolution to the origins of the universe.

“I want the students to be in awe of our universe, to see the beauty in it, and also be able to apply some of the math and science that they previously learned to those things,” said Ms. Kimberly Finn Bolster, the instructor of the course.

Students in the class often work together in problem sets and research projects. “I think a big takeaway was collaboration,” Kay Lee ’25 said. “In terms of general engagement, passion, and willingness to come to class, those levels are a lot higher in this class compared to others.”

Another important aspect of the course is the opportunity for students to personalize their learning by choosing topics for their research projects and focusing on what interests them the most. “I’m hoping to develop a robust series of resources that I can call upon to really target where my students are and where they want to go,” said Ms. Finn Bolster.

Independent Theater and Film Workshop:

Led by English and Theater teacher Mrs. Kate Doak, Inde-

pendent Theater and Film Workshop is in its second year as a course. Alternating weekly between individual meetings with Mrs. Doak and group meetings as a class, students in the class have the unique opportunity to complete an independent project, whether it be a short film or a dramatic play. This specialized structure offers a constructive environment for students to delve deep into their craft while learning from one another.

Having that time to work by yourself, get feedback from an adult, and then get feedback with everyone — you can’t really get that anywhere else,” said Grace Walters ’24, who is working on a full-length screenplay. She also said reading her work aloud and receiving feedback from peers has been helpful “after spending so much time just writing by yourself and having all this just in your head and on the page.”

Bouncing ideas off of one another is crucial to the creative process of any theatrical production, from ideation to final presentation. Mrs. Doak said, “They show up for each other outside of the classroom on these projects, which is part of the goal.”

Max Leventon ’25, who is writing the beginning episodes of a TV show, agreed. “What I’ve found is that when people come into the class, they come in because they want to write, and they want to learn. They’re showing up not because they have to, but because they want to,” he said.

Classical Greek:

Over the course of the school year, students in the Classical Greek intensive course build their foundation with the alphabet and grammar of the language. The course culminates in translating and memorizing *The Odyssey*, in addition to a potential School Meeting performance with students reading or singing the beginning of the epic.

“It’s just incredible to me to be able to actually read some of the primary documents and stories that were told back then,” said John Reach ’24, a student in the class.

As a companion language to Latin, many upper-division Latin students chose to take Greek to advance their study of the classics. “I’ve been taking Latin since I started freshman year, and then I was given the

opportunity to switch to Greek, and I just thought, ‘Why not?’” Celia Glover ’24 said.

“There’s no one here that didn’t want to sign up for the class, so it’s a really dynamic and engaging environment,” instructor Dr. Scott Davis said. “It’s a more fun class for me to show up to because I know that there’s going to be a lot of good engagement from the students.”

Dance and Social Justice:

Every other winter, students explore the historical connection between equity and the arts in the Dance and Social Justice course. Finding its roots in a directed study, this class expands on material taught in the Dance History class and made its debut in the course curriculum last year.

In the class, students learn about artists who have connected with communities through dance and brought attention to issues like women’s rights and the judicial system.

“My feeling is for students to see the broad reach of dance. That it’s not just a form of entertainment or a diversion, but it’s an active communicative tool for

social change,” said Dance Program Head Ms. Pamela Newell, who teaches the class. “You do not have to be a trained dancer at all. It’s really for someone interested in social justice and the arts and the reach of the arts as a vehicle for communication.”

After watching various examples of social activism through dance, students create their own studies and collaborate to choreograph a performative work as a culminating project.

“It was just a great experience, seeing how they view dance in a different way than I did,” Rodrigo Chon Him ’25, a student who took the class, said. “I don’t think I would have gotten the same experience in other classes ... we went over topics that really stood out to me that caught my interest.”

Ms. Newell appreciated the students’ contributions to the course. “I feel like [the class] was engaged and [had] spirited, great conversations. And sometimes, it surprised me the things that they connected to,” she said.

Monetary Theory

Created in 2004 to help students prepare for the Fed Chal-



Graphic by Melody Qian ’24/The Choate News

Next time you’re perusing the course catalogue for electives to take, consider that special title that catches your eye. In taking one of Choate’s niche classes, you might just find yourself a new favorite subject.

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SRP SHOWS THEY'RE MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE



Photo by Emiy Ma '25/The Choate News

The quantitative sciences cohort of SRP performs “The Scientist” by Coldplay at School Meeting.

By **Reinah Lee '26** and **Eva Swanson '25**
Copy Editors

Following months of research in their chosen fields, students in the Science Research Program (SRP) compiled their studies into their Student Lecture Series (SLS) presentations, which took place on November 7 and 9. This year, the SRP students in the quantitative sciences cohort announced the dates for SLS in a musical way, forming a temporary band to perform “The Scientist” by Coldplay for SLS during School Meeting on October 31.

Lead vocalist and guitarist Danny Yoon '24, who researched quantum computing over the summer, said the group initially came up with the idea in the spring and had been practicing since early September. Speaking about the song choice, Yoon said, “We were all scientists ... [so] I thought it would be a good idea to sing ‘The Scientist’ by Coldplay.”

The group’s pianist, Bill Shen '24, arranged the parts for each instrument. Over the summer, he worked to score the music for violin, piano, drums, and more. “I think that was really impressive. He did so much work to prepare for this,” guitarist Yuki Zhang '24 said.

Shen’s work was central to the band’s success as they began the rehearsal process. “We met as a group to practice and to get each part together. We just had to co-

ordinate everything to make sure that it sounds good,” he said.

Many members of the band picked up their instruments exclusively for this performance. Yoyo Zhang '24, Henry Ding '24, and Yuki Zhang learned the drums, bass guitar, and guitar respectively for the School Meeting announcement.

Yuki Zhang, who dedicated her SRP studies to researching particle physics, said, “I’ve always wanted to play the guitar.” Due to the minimal chords needed, she found the instrument easy to learn and would “love to continue it further.”

David Wang '24, whose SRP work focused on the ways chemical structures of various biofuel compounds affect specific types of emission called soot, has been a violinist for over ten years. “I think most of us have some musical experience, but kudos to the people who had to pick up a new instrument for this,” he said.

Through this presentation, the quantitative cohort wanted to showcase the multifaceted quality of their group. “We’re not just nerds, reading papers, writing papers,” Wang said.

Yoon agreed, saying, “I wanted to show the School that a lot of kids are talented in various areas. Even though you’re passionate about science, you can also be talented in music.”

A protagonist in last year’s musical, *Mamma Mia!*, Yoon hoped the performance helped

dismantle stereotypes surrounding cohort members. “Don’t frame SRP [students] as just science nerds,” Yoon said.

The group also aimed to increase excitement and engagement with the SRP program and lecture series. Yuki Zhang hoped that the band would help “get [the community] interested, so they watch some of the talks.”

Through their performance, the group was not only able to increase awareness about SLS but also bond with one another. “Especially since it’s our last term together as a cohort, I think it’s nice to be able to interact with the ... quant[itative] cohort, especially in a space outside of the SRP classroom,” Wang said.

Having dedicated more than a year of their Choate careers to SRP, the quantitative cohort wanted to leave their mark on the School with a musical touch. Will Garcia '27 applauded their dedication and commitment, shouting out his Atwater prefect, Yoon. “Especially as one of his prefectees, you see him balancing a lot of work in the dorm. It’s very impressive to see him also do this [performance]. His voice is wonderful.”

Dr. Chris Hogue, the director of the quantitative cohort, was moved by the performance. “That was really really really incredible. I will remember that forever,” he said.

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DANCE COMPANY ATTENDS PERFORMANCE OF *(A)WAY OUT OF MY BODY*



Graphic by Melody Qian '24/The Choate News

By **Eliana Li '26**
Staff Reporter

“Dance is made to be experienced live,” Choate Dance Program Head Ms. Pamela Newell said. On Saturday, November 4, Ms. Newell and eight members of the Choate Dance Company traveled to Connecticut College in New London to watch Mr. David Dorfman’s *(A)Way out of My Body*, a story depicting life and death; fragility and joy; and trauma and resilience. Through this experience, students had the opportunity to learn from professional dancers during both the behind-the-scenes rehearsal and live performance.

Ms. Newell and several students sat in on one of Mr. Dorfman’s rehearsals for the production on October 18. “It’s really neat to be able to see all the professional dancers work. It’s so much different from what we [do] at Choate,” Choate dancer Arissa Lee '25 said. “I come from a ballet background where there’s very much a right and a wrong, but in David Dorfman’s more contemporary and modern style, he let them have

their own way of working out the movement.”

Having been a professional dancer, Ms. Newell enjoyed the opportunity to be back in a professional studio and observe someone else’s process. “He really dives into his own life and experiences and at the same time. It doesn’t feel self-indulgent; it doesn’t feel like it’s all about him,” she said. “He’s able to use his own experiences and make it connect to our universal struggles or joys or successes.” Ms. Newell aims to incorporate this way of forming connections with others in the studio in her own work.

A week after the trip to observe the rehearsal, students returned to watch the live performance. The 1.5-hour long production left a lasting impression on many students.

Addy Hawthorne '27 was particularly struck by the innovative use of lighting, music, and different colors. “I don’t think I’ve ever seen a performance with that kind of lighting before,” she said.

Ms. Newell agreed, adding that “the lighting was very striking and very specific, which made the performance very magical.

It wasn’t overpowering and it was very much integrated well with the performance.” The use of lighting and music shaped the mood and tone of each moment, complementing performers’ efforts to tell an emotional story.

Dance Company Co-President Marissa Jacobs '24 said her favorite part of the performance was the music. “It was super dynamic, super well integrated, and along with the little elements in the piece, like the lighting and vocal aspects, I think that the music added so much [to the piece.]”

The performance provided a glimpse into the intricacies of professional dance and exposed audiences to the depths of expression and connection that dance has to offer. “I’m just so grateful that I got to bring them to watch live dance again,” Ms. Newell said. “I think since the pandemic, being able to see live dance, the explosiveness of the dancers’ movement, and the raw physicality and interdependence of all the dancers really just made me happy.”

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Melody’s Magic: Designing Deerfield Day Merchandise

By **Steven Kee '27**
Reporter

On November 11, the Wild Boars descended on the campus of Deerfield Academy, ready to dominate the field in various athletic competitions. When the athletes looked at the bleachers packed with Choaties, they found many of them sporting T-shirts, sweatshirts, and hoodies representing the Blue and Gold spirit. The artist who captured this school spirit in ink is Melody Qian '24, winner of the Deerfield Day merchandise competition.

Creating the merchandise design required thoughtful and careful consideration. “I was thinking about how I can toe the line between competitiveness and drive while still managing to not be overly negative,” Qian said. “I wanted to make it clear that it’s all about supporting Choate.”

Some of the elements Qian used to create a more aggressive look included blocky font and sharp color contrasts between the blue and gold, along with Thrasher-style flames. On the other hand, she incorporated the phrase “something’s burning,” which was meant to be a subtle jab at Deerfield to ensure that the design communicated a respectful message.

When writing the slogan, Qian took inspiration from Deerfield. “‘Something’s burning’ is our response to Deerfield for calling us ‘bacon.’ I took the fire element and flipped it back at them,” Qian said.

Designing the shirts did not come without challenges. Creating a design for merchandise was much different than her other works. Referring to her role as Graphics Editor for *The Choate News*, Qian said, “I have a lot more creative freedom to do whatever styles I want. If you look at my graphics, there are sketchier ones,



Graphic by Melody Qian '24/The Choate News

and there are ones that are more painterly brushes with refined edges.” However, when designing for apparel, “it’s harder to carry out nuanced changes in color or texture, even if it’s really nice to look at on a device,” she said.

Qian mentioned that one of the things that she feels differentiated her design from the three other submissions for the competition was its simplicity. “The other designs were really beautiful, but I did notice that some of the elements were a little bit too intricate, which would’ve made them harder to see on a shirt,” Qian said.

By placing everything around one focal point and refraining from embellishments in the background, her design not only draws the attention of viewers but is kept clean and simple. Qian also appreciated the feedback she re-

ceived from students and faculty during the design process, which helped her ensure that her design was something everyone would be satisfied with.

While the fire on the design can be interpreted as Choate roasting Deerfield, it also embodies the spirit of Deerfield Day. It encapsulates the fiery passion that Choaties have when they support the athletic teams, whether it be as athletes or spectators.

“I went to Deerfield Day last year. I knew nothing about football before attending the game, but I was screaming just as loud as everyone else,” Qian said. “I think that’s the beauty of Deerfield Day. Even if you’re not an athlete, you’re fueled by unconditional camaraderie.”

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METHOD BEHIND THE MADNESS: JORDAN DODD '25’S COMMITMENT TO THE ARTS

By **Zoe Dieringer '25**
Staff Reporter

Perhaps you’ve been taken aback by a sudden, beautifully sung rendition of Radiohead’s “Creep” while walking down Choate’s paths, or perhaps, as you made your way through the Paul Mellon Arts Center, you saw someone dropping into a jazz split. Likely, these groovy moves and pitch-perfect notes are courtesy of Jordan Dodd '25.

Dodd is well-known in the Choate arts community as a jack-of-all-trades. He has acted in six Choate productions (*Xanadu*, *Fringe Festival*, *Footloose*, *She Kills Monsters*, *Mamma Mia!*, and *Songs for a New World*), stage-managed the fall musical, danced with Hip Hop and Step Squad, sang with Chamber Choir, and is the leader of the Melatones a cappella group.

Despite these successes, Dodd did not always know the

arts would be his passion, and he used to have a very different perspective on it. “Fun fact: I actually hated theater so, so much. I didn’t like the attention of being watched. It became overwhelming, and then for a while, theater was a dry spot for me,” Dodd said.

It was not until his second-grade production of *The Lion King*, in which he played Young Simba, that his love for the arts blossomed. There, he felt the support of the theater community and realized the feeling of performing far outweighed his fear of judgment.

Dodd also neither planned to attend Choate nor expected to find himself so involved in the the School’s arts community. Dodd was initially most excited about the science opportunities offered at Choate. However, after taking physics as a third-former, he realized that science was not the path for him. Now, Dodd is a

member of the theater Arts Concentration program.

Dodd said his favorite part of theater is its community, which he described as accepting while consistently pushing him to improve.

For Dodd, improvement involves constantly reminding himself of his artistic inspirations. “Whitney Houston has always been a symbol of hope and spunk for me,” he said. “She had this longevity that other people just did not have, so she’s always been my baseline.” Recently, some of his inspirations include Jordan Fisher, Daniel Caesar, and René Rapp.

Dodd’s effortless performances onstage are a result of his hard work behind the scenes. “It’s trying to connect with your body,” he said. “When you are trying to find that high note to sing or get to an emotional or comedic place, it’s hard. It’s a lot of stamina.” Dodd explained that the energy he has on stage comes from a duty he has to the script.

Dodd hopes his legacy at Choate will inspire future theater students. “I want to be the person who defied all vocal challenges: the actor, singer, and dancer that they still talk about when I’m gone. I don’t want to leave a legacy where people think I am better than them, but one where I push the new generation of actors to be better than me,” he said.

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Photo courtesy of Choate Flickr

Jordan Dodd '25 shines in the spotlight in *Songs for a New World*.

FIELD
REPORT

Choate Fall Record
112 - 54 - 13

Varsity Games

Football (7-0)
vs. Avon Old Farms, 17-14

Girls' Volleyball (8-5)
vs. Hotchkiss, 3-2

Boys' Water Polo (13-4)
vs. Suffield, 17-5

Girls' Cross Country (2-4)
vs. NMH, 26-29

Field Hockey (7-8)
vs. Hopkins, 5-1

Boys' Soccer (10-5-2)
vs. Avon Old Farms, 1-1

Girls' Soccer (12-2)
vs. Miss Porters, 1-2

Boys' Cross Country (1-6)
vs. NMH, 17-41

J.V. Games

Field Hockey (4-4-2)
vs. Kent, 3-0

Football (5-1)
vs. Taft, 41-6

Boys' Soccer (8-3-1)
vs. Avon Old Farms, 5-1

Boys' Water Polo (7-1)
vs. Suffield, 17-5

SPORTS TEAMS PREPARE FOR PEP RALLY

By **Grace LaPlaca '25**
Copy Editor

Music and school spirit shake the walls of Colony Hall each year during the Deerfield Day Pep Rally. The Pep Rally cultivates school spirit and allows athletic teams to demonstrative their creative sides through performances, featuring varsity athletic teams lip-syncing, dancing, and acting.

This year, Girls' Varsity Volleyball lip-synced to "I've Got the Magic in Me" by the Treblemakers (from the movie *Pitch Perfect*). The performance featured six soloists while the rest of the team contributed as backup dancers. Dance Company Co-President Marissa Jacobs '24 assisted the team in choreographing a dance routine. "She helped us immensely," said Co-Captain Em DeGrand '24.

Although the team only began rehearsing in the last week of October, DeGrand was confident in their ability to perform. "We picked it up pretty fast, so we didn't have to do much preparing," she said. "We're just that good."

Choreographed by Libby Dai '25 and Nao Murata '25, Boys' Varsity Soccer executed a dance routine to "SexyBack" by Justin Timberlake, "What Makes You Beautiful" by One Direction, and "Shake it Off" by Taylor Swift.



Photo by Toffy Prakittiphoom '24/The Choate News

Class of 2024 Senior Soccer players rehearse for Pep Rally.

Both Dai and Murata are Dance Company choreographers. Reflecting on the different experience of instructing a team of relatively inexperienced dancers, Dai said, "You really have to change up your vocabulary."

The two dancers worked collaboratively with the team to achieve their vision. "Shoutout to Juliano [Masella '26]," Murata said. "He brought up a lot of good ideas and energy."

In addition to the rewarding nature of putting a performance together, the experience has brought the Boys' Varsity Soc-

cer team closer. "It's a very good way to connect with your team even more," Kevin Paladines '25 said. "It also amps up the rivalry between Deerfield and Choate."

After multiple rehearsals and lots of hard work, the team was inspired to match their performance from last fall. "I thought last year we had one of the best performances," Lukas Parapatt '24 said. "I'm hoping that this year, we can replicate that success."

All of the performances at Pep Rally were put on by varsity sports, with one exception —

Senior Soccer, who performed "Best I Ever Had" by Drake. "I would like to thank Amanda Benneh '24 for arranging the dance," Danny Yoon '24 said. "She tried to simplify a lot of dance moves so that the whole team can follow the dance easily in a short amount of time."

As Co-Captain of Step Squad, Benneh shared her expertise with the team. Although finding time to rehearse was a struggle amidst college applications, the team was excited to close out the season with their performance.

Boys' Cross Country elected to share a video instead of performing live. Co-Captains John Reach '24 and Luciano Morizio '24 produced a video consisting of photos from the season and accounts of why team members enjoy running.

Girls' Varsity Field Hockey's performance was a dance routine to both "It's a Hard Knock Life" from the musical *Annie* and "Boy's a Liar" by PinkPantheress and Ice Spice. The songs were intentionally paired together because both Annie and Ice Spice have ginger hair. To emphasize this connection, Ellie Silva '26 wore a ginger wig.

Co-Captain Sophia Berdon '24, who is also a member of Hip Hop Club, choreographed the dance. One challenge was balancing the varying levels of dance experience of the members of the team. "Finding that middle ground where all of us can push each other, but at the same time, feel comfortable, can be a challenge," Co-Captain Lily Hrazdira '24 said.

The Pep Rally performance was also a celebration of Field Hockey's improved record this season. "We definitely want to prove ourselves, not just on the field, but also off the field," Hrazdira said. "We are a force to be reckoned with."

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Revisiting the Fall Sports Season



Photo by Toffy Prakittiphoom '24/The Choate News

Varsity Field Hockey plays Frederick Gunn on Senior Day.



Photo courtesy of Ethan Cheung '27

Varsity Football in action against Lawrenceville.



Photo courtesy of Ethan Cheung '27

Antonio Giraldez Greco '25 passes the ball.

By **Ethan Zhang '26** and **Addy Hawthorne '27**
Reporters

Choate's athletic teams fought hard this season on fields, trails, courts, and pools to represent the School in competition. Here is a look at the fall sports season thus far.

Football

Varsity Football has been undefeated all season with a 7-0 record. The team's dedication and efforts earned them the 2023-2024 Founders League champion title.

One notable game was the team's 34-6 victory against The Taft School in the pouring rain on October 14. Another was the highly anticipated blackout home game matchup. On November 4, Choate narrowly won a 17-14 victory over Avon Old Farms School, who also came into the game undefeated.

Despite their impressive record and extensive margins of victory, the team still had to overcome unforeseen challenges this season.

"We definitely have gone through ups and downs — kids getting hurt and sick. A lot of people have had to step up and take on roles that they may not have been ready to take," Co-Captain Matt Diaz said.

Girls' Soccer

Girls' Varsity Soccer has an impressive 13-2 record. Notable games include a 10-3 win over Cheshire Academy on September 22 and 5-0 wins over both Greenwich Academy and Kent School on September 20 and November 1, respectively.

After losing to Loomis Chaffee last year, the team came back strong with a 3-1 win this year on September 27.

Led by Co-Captains Ella Crerar '24 and Gianna Peracchio '24 — who were named on the 2022 New England Preparatory School Athletic Council (NEPSAC) Junior All-Star Team — the team will compete in the New England Playoffs on November 15.

Boys' Soccer

Boys' Varsity Soccer boasts a 10-6-2 record, with 6-0 wins over both Trinity-Pawling School and Westminster School on October 4 and September 27, respectively. The team maintained their winning record this year despite graduating eight seniors from their previous season.

Co-Captains Andrew Jean Baptiste '24 and Jacob Federowicz '24 ensured the team was laser-focused on making the playoffs for the New England Championships. Nine of the 11 current starters are either ju-

niors or underclassmen, giving way to a bright future for Choate soccer in the coming years.

Girls' Cross Country

Led by Co-Captains Kara Wang '24, Gabi White '24, and Emily Mito '24, Girls' Varsity Cross Country beat Deerfield Academy on October 14 and Northfield Mount Hermon (NMH) on October 28.

The race at NMH, whose cross country course consists of rolling hills, was especially memorable for the team. "People say it's the hardest course in New England. It was a very challenging course, but I think it was one of the best races for us for this season," Mito said.

The team competed at the New England Championships on November 11 at Loomis Chaffee.

Boys' Cross Country

With Co-Captains John Reach '24 and Luciano Morizio '24 at the helm, Boys' Varsity Cross Country had a big 38-22 win on September 30 against the Trinity-Pawling School. On October 14, nearly every runner on the team improved upon their personal best at a meet against Loomis Chaffee.

The team competed at the Founders League Championships on November 4 at The Hotchkiss School. On November 11, the team went to Loomis Chaffee

to compete in the New England Cross Country Championships.

When asked about favorite team traditions, Reach shared how much he enjoys "Neditation," where the team lies on the grass every Friday as Head Coach Mr. Ned Gallagher leads a meditation session. According to Reach, the team bonds over their challenging Tuesday afternoon practices, which entails either sprinting or a running a loop on the cross country course that houses Mount Doom, the steepest part of the trail.

Boys' Water Polo

Boys' Varsity Water Polo had a strong season, standing at a 13-4 record.

Led by Co-Captains Garrett Curtis '24 and Chris Childs '24, the team won hard-fought games against Hopkins School and Hamden Hall. Despite missing several key players, the team triumphed over Deerfield Academy on October 11, going overtime to win 11-9. On November 11, the team competed at the New England Championships, which was hosted by Phillips Academy.

Curtis's favorite memory from the season was the team's traditional Speedo run, where players jog outside in their swimwear.

Volleyball

With wins against Taft, Hotchkiss, Kent, and NMH, Girls'

Varsity Volleyball's record stands at 9-5. The team is led by Co-Captains Emma Liedke '24, Em DeGrand '24, and Cait Ahn '25.

During warm-ups on game days, each player shares what skill they want to focus on during the match, such as hitting, passing, or communication. Ahn's favorite traditions are the team's secret pregame rituals.

Field Hockey

Girls' Varsity Field Hockey had wins against Green Farms Academy, The Hotchkiss School, and NMH. After losing against Canterbury School last season, the team beat them this year in a nail-biting overtime game. "We worked more as a unit this season, and we're better with keeping our heads up after we get a goal scored on us," Co-Captain Sophia Berdon '24 said.

Berdon's favorite team tradition is Halloween practice, when each grade level within the team dresses according to a chosen theme. This year, the seniors on the team dressed up as frat boys.

All team records were last updated on November 8, 2023.

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