



# THE STANNER

— MOLLOY'S HOME FOR STUDENT NEWS & OPINION —

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## The Bookstore Is Back! Molloy (Finally) Drops New Merch

by Brendan Twomey '25



For the first time in three years, Molloy's in-house bookstore has reopened! After the 2021-2022 school year, Br. James Vagan moved on to another Marist school in Massachusetts, leaving the bookstore he ran for many years vacant. The space sat unused, and the school community felt its absence. Now, thanks to the efforts of the senior elective Virtual Enterprise class, Molloy's Bookstore has come back to life.

The idea to revive the bookstore started in the Stanner Alumni Center. After hearing from students who missed the store, members of the staff decided to explore how to reintegrate it into the everyday life of the school. The process began with Ms. Basone '15, of Molloy's Communications Department, designing a new lineup of Molloy-branded apparel, including the classic sweatshirts, t-shirts, sweatpants, a hoodie, and the beloved pajama pants. As the designs came together, the team quickly realized that opening the bookstore would be more complex than expected. Questions about timing, staffing, and inventory management needed to be answered before they could proceed.

The biggest challenge, however, was figuring out who would operate the store. With so many logistics to consider, the project seemed overwhelming. Just when it seemed like it might be too much to handle,

Ms. Wagner '14 from the Alumni Center had an idea. Instead of trying to find a group of people to run the bookstore, why not turn the operation into a real-world business experience?

Ms. Wagner's idea was to involve the Virtual Enterprise class, a group of students who are already familiar with business principles. This class focuses on giving students the tools to design and run their own businesses from the ground up. By utilizing their skills, the bookstore could become a learning opportunity, allowing students to gain hands-on experience in marketing, sales, and business operations. When asked about her idea to incorporate Virtual Enterprise into the bookstore, Ms. Wagner explained, "It seemed like the perfect match. We have a class where students design their own businesses from the ground up. Why not give them the chance to get some real-world experience with marketing, sales, and other business-related tasks?"

The Virtual Enterprise students eagerly embraced the opportunity. They began by creating fliers to promote the grand reopening, spreading excitement about the new Molloy merchandise. On the day of the reopening, a large crowd gathered, and the line stretched all the way down the first-floor hallway. Although the situation was chaotic at times, the Virtual Enterprise students

were well prepared. They had carefully assigned roles to everyone involved, ensuring that everyone knew exactly what to do. The team worked seamlessly together, managing the rush of customers efficiently and ensuring that the store ran smoothly.

The reopening of Molloy's Bookstore was a huge success. Not only did it have a significant impact on school spirit, but it also provided valuable experience for the students involved in managing the store. The Virtual Enterprise class learned firsthand how to stock inventory, interact with customers, handle sales, and manage a business in real time. These are all skills that go beyond what could be taught in a classroom setting, providing students with lessons they will carry with them into their future careers.

In the end, the reopening of the bookstore was a triumph in more ways than one. It helped boost school pride and unity, and it empowered the Virtual Enterprise students with practical business experience. The project gave them the chance to put their knowledge into practice and connect with their peers in a meaningful way. The success of the bookstore's reopening will have a lasting impact, not just on the school's spirit, but on the students who took part in making it happen.

## Molloy's New Robotics Team Set To Innovate & Compete

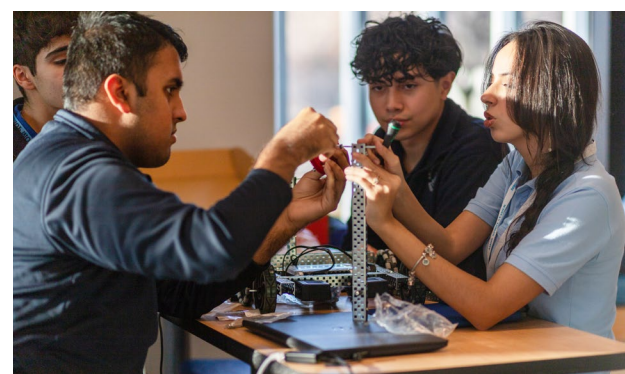
by Sydney Pullo '26 & Yosef Naser '26

This year, Molloy proudly launched a brand new Robotics Team! With the new developments in the computer labs and the addition of new classes, the school decided it was time to start entering robotics competitions. This led to the development of a Robotics Team; this is different from the Robotics Club as this new addition will be emerging as a new opportunity to explore the fascinating world of robotics, engineering, and technology through competition.

The purpose of the team is to use VEX Robotics machinery alongside complex code to create unique robots to compete in high skill competitions against schools across the state. This team needs to work together to tackle challenges in the creation of the robot, develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills, and determine solutions using cutting-edge technology provided in the new Innovation Centers. According to Westen Lipan '26, the current head of the Robotics Team, "The team is creating a robot to compete in the February VEX High Stakes Robotics Competition, where this cutting-edge robot will use high-powered tank treads to grab large rings and skillfully stack them on a towering post, all in a race against time to rack up points against other teams. This

highly advanced robot could only be developed by the team's highly advanced and experienced members." Westen has used advanced design software systems to create the blueprint for the robot, Avinash Hemraj '26, Francesco Hila '26, and Megan Chelius '26 have taken those designs and built them in real life, and Alex Bazenikas '26 has been creating custom 3D models and printing them out for the benefit of testing the robot. Yosef Naser '26, alongside Sydney Pullo '26, have been the heads of the overall organization of the team. They are in charge of maintaining a proper budget, making sure the team stays on task and is on schedule with orders and purchases, and ensuring that the robot operates by the proper guidelines. Lastly, Rocco Fasanello '28 has been leading the coding of the robot to make sure it runs smoothly.

Together, this energetic team has been successfully creating a robot that can fiercely compete against other teams with double the members of Molloy's team. If this all sounds exciting to you, then you can apply to join the team next fall and help bring the Molloy Robotics Team to victory!



Pictured: Robotics students in IC-3.



# Debate Is Our “Sport”

by Kristina Raevsky '28

Molloy is known for many things, such as its many triumphant athletic teams. However, one lesser known and talked about gem of our school is the Speech and Debate team. Let's dive deeper into Speech and Debate!

First, you'll notice that the name has two parts and might wonder what the difference is. Speech is more about the performance side while debate is more about the argumentative side and refuting others' arguments. As Speech Captain Juliette Bonello '27 put it, "Speech is about passionately delivering and speaking about a topic and carefully using tone and body language to develop an impactful speech to a judge or audience." Speech includes seven different subcategories, so there's something for everyone!

On the other hand, debate is split into three distinct subcategories—Public Forum, Lincoln-Douglas, and Congressional Debate. In Public Forum, teams of two compete against each other on various national and international issues, ranging from border security and student loan forgiveness to supporting Taiwan. Each partner has a role to play, with one presenting the team's arguments and the second refuting their opponents' arguments. Both must be able to think on the spot and adapt to what is said in the debate round as no amount of preparation can prepare one for every eventuality and curveball.

As for Lincoln-Douglas Debate, the name comes from the historic 1858 debates between Abraham Lincoln and Stephen Douglas during their race for a US Senate seat to represent Illinois. Just as they did over one hundred fifty years ago, students debate each other one-on-one exploring various issues of ethics, philosophy, and morals. Since debaters have to be able to argue both sides over the course of the day-long tournament, Lincoln-Douglas captain Sofia Maroulis '25 says, "I love how LD (Lincoln-Douglas) forces you to



build perspective. It challenges you to think deeply and defend an argument you may not agree with."

In Congressional Debate, each student competes individually in a "chamber" of other students to debate various bills as if they are senators trying to pass or fail legislation. Unlike the other two styles of debate, Congressional involves preparing for an average of 10 topics before each competition. Topics primarily cover domestic policy, such as birthright citizenship and banning social media for teens, but also include foreign policy, such as arms sales to Saudi Arabia. Another aspect that many congressional debaters enjoy is the ability to choose which side of the legislation they argue and to argue for the side they agree with. Being a good senator requires a lot of planning, researching, and hard work, but taking part in Congressional Debate is certainly worth it. As Congressional Co-Captain Lizeth Suarez '27 explains, "All congressional debaters are well-versed politically and are more aware of current problems our nation faces."

Molloy's Speech and Debate team has evolved greatly since it returned in 2019 after a hiatus of over

25 years. Back in 2019, the team was very small due to few resources and experience. Since then, dozens of students have qualified for the State and National Championships as the team has expanded and improved, becoming "one of the top performing teams in the Queens-Brooklyn area," according to Mr. Ryan Curran '22, who now coaches the very team he once competed in. "We have the most amount of underclassmen ever since 2020. We already have about 10 students who received half-qualifications to the NY State Championships in April...I'm proud to say we have a whopping nine captains who dedicated a lot already to challenge and motivate our members to not only compete on the local level, but on a national scale as well." At our

most recent Brooklyn-Queens tournament, Molloy placed first as a school in debate (Public Forum and Lincoln-Douglas), a historic second in Congressional, and second all around among fifteen schools in what was Molloy's most successful tournament yet!

Speech and Debate is not only for Stanners who aspire to have careers in law or politics—it is a great experience for everyone! Public Forum captain Moises Bien Nunag '25 believes debate "teaches you valuable life skills like public speaking, teamwork, and analytical reasoning. It even helped me in class. It's time-consuming and requires a lot of effort, but it's been one of the most rewarding experiences of my life."

The Speech and Debate team encourages anyone interested to join by contacting one of the three fantastic coaches: Coach Ryan at rcurran@molloyhs.org, Dr. Mangar at jmangar@molloyhs.org, or Mr. Reed at greed@molloyhs.org.

*\*Editorial Note: Kristina Raevsky is Molloy's 1st Congressional debater and 3rd person on the Speech and Debate team to qualify for the NY State Championship.*

## Celebrating Black History Month

by Marilena Fillos '28 & Ryan Ladd '25, Editor-In-Chief

In 1926, a small organization called the Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH) founded "Negro History Week," which was devoted to shedding light on the accomplishments of African Americans. They chose to celebrate in the second week of February, which contains the birthdays of Abraham Lincoln, the U.S. president who outlawed slavery by passing the 13th Amendment, and Frederick Douglass, a prominent figure who supported the African American Civil Rights movement in the 1800s. As the years went on, this celebration was recognized by virtually all of the governments of major U.S. cities.

To expand the week beyond, students and teachers of African American descent at Kent State University transformed the celebration from being only a week long into a full month. The first celebration by Kent State University occurred in February of 1970. By the 1970s, it was time for the month to be recognized by the United States Government. In 1976, President Gerald Ford transformed the month into a nationally recognized holiday. In an address to the American public, Ford stated for citizens to, "...seize the opportunity to honor the too-often neglected accomplishments of Black Americans in every area of endeavor throughout our history."

Black History Month recognizes the historical figures who were important to the Civil Rights Movement. Some individuals of great influence include Martin Luther King Jr, Frederick Douglass, Malcolm X, Rosa Parks, W. E. B. Du Bois, and the 44th U.S. President, Barack Obama. To add on, each year, there is a special and unique theme dedicated to the month. The goal

of this is to bring focus to a specific part of African American history. According to ASALH.org, the 2024 Black History Month theme was "African Americans and the Arts," which aimed to share the impacts that African Americans had on music, visual art, and more. According to the Smithsonian Institute, the theme for 2025 is "African Americans and Labor," with "a focus on the various and profound ways that work of all kinds intersects with the collective experiences of Black people."

Molloy has a large Afro-Caribbean student body, and subsequently has an Afro-Caribbean Club. Ms. Barbery, a computer science teacher and moderator for the club, shared information about the celebrations that the group would participate in. For the whole month, Stanners will be able to stop by the bulletin board on the first floor (pictured), which was meaningfully decorated by leaders of the club. The board features a calendar of Black History Month, with each day describing a significant event in Black History or accomplishment by prominent Black figures. For example, the first day on the calendar, February 1st, marks the day Barack Obama announced that he would run for US President. The Afro-Caribbean Club is also selling hoodies with a design that includes a globe diagram and the words "Culture in Unity" embroidered on the hood, as well as other graphic elements to create a stylish club hoodie.

On February 3rd, the club hosted Family Feud, a



spin on the popular TV show hosted by Steve Harvey. The questions asked were about African Americans and Black History Month. Afro-Caribbean Club will also be holding a Rap Bracket event in the next week. Members of the club will nominate their favorite artists and debate them until one artist wins. This activity will take place in rounds like a tournament, which will make for some fun competition! On February 24th, the club will go head-to-head in the Afro-Caribbean Olympics, where students can participate in various competitions. Finally, a Black History Month Party will be hosted on February 27th, where there will be food and beverages for those attending. Caitlyn Wiafe '25, an e-board member of the Afro-Caribbean Club, remarks, "I am super excited about our Black History Month celebrations because it is a reflection of how much we care about this club and our cultures. I hope everyone at Molloy can learn about the contributions of Black people in the U.S. and gain some insight into how special this month is!" Be sure to check out the exciting activities presented by the club!



# This Spring: Come See The Stanner Players Perform

## *The Lightning Thief: The Percy Jackson Musical*

by Anya Satyanarayana '27

With the third quarter underway, the Stanner Players have been busy with the production of their spring musical: *The Lightning Thief: The Percy Jackson Musical*! This fast-paced adventure filled with suspenseful scenes, comedy, and a catchy soundtrack is sure to keep the whole audience on their toes and excited for the show. The musical, running from April 10th to April 13th, is a must see! Don't miss this opportunity to see the Stanner Players rock out to Percy Jackson in this highly anticipated, upbeat musical!

The premise of the musical begins as Percy Jackson discovers his status as a demigod and faces many challenges as he deals with his new reality. Along with his friends, Percy must stop the gods from starting a war that could lead to destruction. The suspense and comedy is sure to keep the audience eagerly interested in what happens next!

Director of the Stanner Players, Ms. Winters '06, has been putting a lot of hard work and dedication into making this show what it is. She says, "Percy Jackson is incredibly entertaining and a can't miss musical!" She says to "expect lots of dancing in the aisles, colors, props, and lighting effects as the show is very visually interesting."

Cast and crew are also incredibly excited for this musical and can't wait to perform! Michael O'Neill '25, who is playing Percy Jackson, says, "This high-energy musical is sure to have the whole audience having fun! We have lots of fun as a cast and I am excited to see how this translates on stage!" Isabella Fortunato '26, who is playing Annabeth in this musical, adds, "The acting for this show has been lots of fun and I love the community we have gained from this. Our enthusiasm



is sure to shine on stage and make *The Lightning Thief* an unforgettable show!"

Cast members meet multiple times a week and rehearse outside of school to make this musical what it is, and as Christina Sbano '25 notes, "The cast puts so much hard work into this show outside of school, and it will show on stage with the end result!"

*The Lightning Thief: The Percy Jackson Musical* is a can't miss, high-energy musical that everyone will love! From the interesting visuals to the catchy songs, it will definitely be a memorable show, so make sure to come out and support the Stanner Players in their new musical! Keep an eye out for ticket announcements.

## Review: The Stanner Players Take On The *Deadline* Challenge

by Isabella Fortunato '26 | Photos by Krystal Valentin '25



The Stanner Players started off the 2024-25 year well with their fall play, *Deadline: A Murder Mystery Comedy*! There were four performances of the play, one each day from November 21st to November 24th. Director Ms. Winters '06, assistant directors Joanna Troyanos '15 and Erin Mardenborough '20, and the cast and crew dedicated many hours to rehearsals to make the play a success.

*Deadline: A Murder Mystery Comedy* by Don Zolidis follows the journey of eight mystery writers as they arrive at a mansion on an island in the North Atlantic for the Deadline Challenge. They think that they will have twenty-four hours to write a new murder mystery novel, however, the challenge is nothing of the sort. The writers are instructed to craft the perfect murder, kill one of their fellow guests, and get away with it in order to win the one million dollar prize. As the story unfolds, the secrets of the mansion become more visible, eventually leading mystery writer Penelope Bain to solve the mystery.

Ava Genna '25 played Penelope Bain in *Deadline: A Murder Mystery Comedy*. She felt accomplished to complete her final fall play as a Stanner Player. "Portraying this character was such a new and daunting experience, but it was so fulfilling." Ava dedicated countless hours to embodying the role of Penelope. Ava considers all of the rehearsal time to be "worth it" after "finally seeing Penelope brought to life and the audience's reactions to her character." She was honored to portray this character and this experience is something that will remain with her. Ava felt that she had a "connection to Penelope on a deeper level" because her "personality mirrored Penelope's character so well."

Jacqueline Capra '25 was excited to play the role of Deborah Haskins in her final play as a Stanner Player. She is grateful for such an "incredible experience" to bring the essence of Deborah to life. "I truly loved playing her character and appreciated the comedic aspect she brought to the play." Jacqueline dedicated

her time to ensure the comedic timing of her character's lines was perfect. It was important to her to make the audience relate to her character by allowing them to laugh as much as possible. "Deadline was one of my favorite shows I've done with the Stanner Players. I am so glad I had the opportunity to form stronger bonds with my peers in theater by partaking in it." Jacqueline finds comfort in her Stanner Players family and is grateful for the amazing experiences she has had.

Audiences enjoyed the production of *Deadline: A Murder Mystery Comedy* because it provided them with the opportunity to escape from their everyday lives. Audiences were able to draw parallels and find similarities between themselves and these characters. The play was relatable and comedic, leaving audiences fulfilled and satisfied with their overall experience.



# Introducing: Psychology Club

by Daphne Landi '26

Molloy often creates new clubs for its Stanners, and one new addition this year is the Psychology Club! The club began with a group of seniors - Gisele Habibulla '25, Maria Badalamenti '25, and Shiloh Lin '25 - who were looking to learn more about psychology than just textbook knowledge. These three Stanners shared a common interest and passion for psychology and neuroscience. "We really wanted to lead a club where we could have interesting discussions and show how fascinating our brains can be," stated Shiloh, club president. "Mr. Flemen, our psychology teacher, was the ideal mentor and demonstrated interest in being involved in the club."

The Psychology Club helps to create a community where students can explore psychological concepts beyond class, and the underclassmen have the chance to learn about topics in the field. "Our club values the relationship between intellectual discussion and real-world application, so we aim to hold interesting (and fun!) discussions that explore psychology through unique themes and perspectives," stated Gisele, vice president of the club. She continued, "We have open discussions amongst our members over a wide variety of topics, something I have yet to see in many other clubs." The club has gained popularity due to its discussion topics ranging from free will, to criminals, to games like Jeopardy and personality quizzes related to these concepts. "We aim to provide a wide variety of activities, whether you're interested in discussion, competition, or even some morbidly cool psychology facts, no matter your background or interest level. Psychology Club has something for everyone," stated Gisele.

As of February, the Psychology Club has many plans to expand its activities and impact for all



Stanners. "Once a month, we bring professionals in the psychology field to talk about their education, work life, and to share advice to inspire the high schoolers," added Shiloh. "We are planning the visit of child psychiatrists and researchers from NYU in the following month." Along with those plans, the club is also planning to host events for Brain Awareness Week and Mental Health Awareness Month in May. This will help to inform students about brain function, mental health, and the impact of neurological disorders. Shiloh continued, "These events would include guest speakers, interactive discussions, and fundraisers."

Psychology Club has many ambitious plans to help bring awareness to all Stanners about the study of the mind and behavior. This club meets two times a month in Room 226. For more information, email Shiloh Lin at [SLin2025@stanner.org](mailto:SLin2025@stanner.org).

## Stanners Help At The Ronald McDonald House

by DJ O'Keeffe '26 & Esme Kerr '26

For families with hospitalized children, finding support can be just as difficult as finding the right doctor. Many travel hundreds of miles for specialized care, only to face the added burden of expensive hotel bills. That's where the Ronald McDonald House steps in. Contrary to what its name might suggest, it is not an upscale fast-food restaurant. Instead, the Ronald McDonald House is a charitable program, largely funded by local McDonalds restaurants and run by volunteers, that provides free, comfortable accommodations for families right next to a hospital. These houses offer more than just a place to stay; they provide meals, sleeping arrangements, emotional support, and play areas for kids. By easing the daily burdens of food, cleaning, and accommodations, the Ronald McDonald House allows families to focus on what matters most: their child's health and well-being.

Over the past year, students at Molloy have had a special opportunity to take part in the work that Ronald McDonald House does. Several small groups of Stanners, accompanied by Campus Ministers Ms. Haslbauer and Mr. Costa, have visited the house to cook meals for the families staying there. In November, nine juniors and seniors traveled to the Ronald McDonald House location for patients of the Cohen Children's Medical Center on Long Island. They were given a tour of the house and shown how it was thoughtfully designed to provide a comforting environment for families staying there, whether it be for one year or just a few days. The students toured the building's many rooms: a large, open communal space, multiple kitchens with places for each family to store their food and cooking supplies, a meditation and prayer area, and several fun, themed rooms. They were taught about the history and mission of the Ronald McDonald Charity. They learned that the house, which has been around for nearly 40 years, and its many volunteers work to



create a sense of home, warmth, and welcoming for families with hospitalized children. After this tour, students were invited to prepare a breakfast of French toast, bacon, and eggs, that was then served to the guests of the Ronald McDonald House.

Serving at the house was a chance for Stanners to see how serving in our communities can directly benefit the lives of those around us. One act of service, which may seem insignificant to us, had a direct impact on those staying at the Ronald McDonald House. Through this, we can recognize the importance of service, and realize how necessary and fulfilling it is. In doing so, students live out the Marist Pillar of Love of Work: being generous, persevering in service through difficult times, and encouraging others to follow our example in doing so.

So, what can you do? To serve at the Ronald McDonald House, you can check InnerView, where all upcoming service opportunities are posted. Students are encouraged to become involved in service in their own community and within Molloy. You will find joy and comfort in helping those in your community who need it most.

# Self-Care is Not Selfish: The Club That Puts Well-Being 1st

by Dana Seo '26, Jeremy Criollo '26, and Nicholas Carbone '26

The Self-Care Club is now officially part of the SMILE Club! The idea was proposed by Dana Seo '26 in September 2024. Currently at 115 members, the club is moderated by Ms. Laureano and Ms. Bisceglia. The goal of the Self-Care Club is simple: to provide a safe space for those navigating coming of age. Whether you're struggling with confidence, want to help others overcome insecurities you once faced, or simply want to have fun while learning about skincare, hair care, fashion, and self-esteem, the Self-Care Club will gladly welcome you!

Ms. Bisceglia believes, "Self-Care is one of the most important skills to develop in order to maintain a healthy lifestyle. It is wonderful that Molloy has a club dedicated to learning about how to eat right, take care of your body, and improve self-esteem. This club is open to both boys and girls and we already had a dermatologist speak to students about skincare." Another take of the Self-Care Club, from an additional moderator that helps run the club, is "its incredible to see students explore and share their own self-care practices. It's both inspiring and helpful! Self-care isn't just about routines; it's about discovering what makes you feel your best, and this club has created a supportive space where we can all learn and grow together."

The Self-Care Club has been well received by many of its members! People love how open they can be in the club, and express their most sincere thoughts. One member, Rebecca Li '28 said, "The Self-Care Club is an amazing club that creates safe and comfortable environments for many students, like me at Molloy... It allows students to be open to talk about any troubles and concerns they may have." The club has truly become a haven for many. Another student, Bella Reyes '26 had much to say about what the club has personally done for her, saying, "I admire the judgment-free environment that encourages me to express myself, while processing through my own emotions and building my confidence... I love self-care because it allows me to be heard, understood, and valued." In its short time, the Self-Care Club has become beloved by Stanners, and it is only finding ways to grow and add to its current success.

The Self-Care Club currently meets once a month, alternating between fun activities and deep discussions. So far, the club has held a meeting focused on self-reward, where members made candy apples and enjoyed cold apple cider for Thanksgiving. Additionally, the club hosted a Zoom meeting with dermatologist Dr. Brooke Jeffy, giving members the opportunity to ask questions and receive expert feedback. A raffle was also held during this meeting, with two lucky winners taking home free dermatologist-recommended skincare products!

The Self-Care Club has many exciting ideas up its sleeve, so be sure to stay tuned! Contact one of the moderators or club members to learn more.



# Stanners Kick Off Winter Season With Annual Chorus And Band Concerts

by Sydney Pullo '26 | Photos by Ashley Tiwari '25



On December 17th, Molloy's Junior/Senior Chorus and the MultiQuire treated a packed Ralph DeChiaro Theater to an entertaining Christmas concert. The juniors and seniors, as well as students from other schools (St. Catherine's Academy, Fordham Prep, Fordham University), spent several months and weekly rehearsals to prepare for this festive event. The concert showcased lively holiday favorites, senior solos, and beautiful religious pieces about the birth of Jesus. Some of the stand out songs included: "O Antiphons," "Good King Wenceslas," "Rejoice With Joyful Song," and "Angels' Gloria." The chorus didn't forget the fan favorites like, "I'll be home for Christmas," "White Christmas," "The Christmas Song," and "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas!" Molloy's Chorus director, Mr. Sheehan '75, said, "It was a great time that we put together, to learn some music that brought the Christmas spirit to our audience and got kids singing and having fun and looking forward to the spring concert." Mr. Sheehan did an amazing job as director, accompanist, and lively storyteller. Make sure to check out the Junior/Senior Chorus spring concert!

On December 19th, the Molloy Band and Sophomore Chorus, led by the incomparable Mr. Jones, put the audience in the holiday spirit with a combined Christmas concert. Alba Dolengewicz '26 said, "The new band teacher has completely turned the music program around. The atmosphere Mr. Jones has created for the band has reignited our passion for music and brought the band together. For the first time, countless people from the audience came up to the stage after the Christmas concert to personally compliment us. The band is extremely thankful for Mr. Jones and we look forward to future concerts." Guests were entertained with popular songs like "Last Christmas," "Little Drummer Boy," "White Christmas," and many more. Make sure to check out the band at the Spring Concert!



# From Queens to Cali: Stanners Represent at NCYC

by Emily Mussalli '28

Every year, the National Catholic Youth Convention is held in either Indianapolis, Indiana or Long Beach, California. The National Catholic Youth Convention, or NCYC, brings thousands of people together from all over the country through their Catholicism. It is an opportunity for people to expand their faith and relationship with God, for prayer and service, and to meet other Catholic people the same age.

This year's convention, themed "El Camino, The Way," was all about the journey of faith and walking on Jesus's path. There were over 3,000 attendees this year from all across the country including Hawaii and Alaska. Eight students from Molloy were in attendance as well —Alyssa Bisono '25, Emmi Bisono '27, Domnick Cadore '25, Elizabeth Canty '26, Vanessa Guilfoyle '26, Emily Mussalli '28, Kristen Mussalli '25, and Johan Torres '25— as well as Campus Ministers Ms. Haslbauer and Mr. Costa. They left Molloy on November 13th, 2024 and spent 5 days in California for the conference.

The event began on November 14th with religious songs, bright strobe lights, and people from all over the country talking to each other and trading crazy hats and clothespins with bible verses, an NCYC tradition. Then, there was an opening prayer service with prayers said in several different languages to account for the many diverse groups at the conference. Kristen Mussalli helped lead in prayer for the English portion.

The rest of the days followed a pattern of music in the mornings, followed by a speaker addressing the whole group. These songs were different than the ones typically heard at our Marist school, but catchy and easy to pick up on. After listening to music, speakers shared deep, personal stories about their faith and how they stayed strong through struggles that challenged that faith, providing encouragement and support to others facing similar issues. These talks had special speakers and even special guests from the Catholic show "The Chosen." Afterwards, there were smaller group sessions, where attendees could find a talk more suited to their specific needs within their religion. These talks ranged among various topics. For example, "You are

not the sum of your weaknesses and failures" delved into the humility of being a good Catholic, while "I believe it, but don't feel it" was about believing in God but not knowing how to obtain a deep connection with Him. These talks were very interesting, personal, and engaging, and they even included a rapping bishop! With over 25 different options, there was a small group session for everyone.

During or in between small group sessions, there was time for the sacrament of reconciliation and to see vendors and tables for different religious groups in the convention center. These tables had games, service activities, free merch, and places to shop. Alyssa Bisono said that this was one of her favorite parts of the conference, specifically the Tiny Saints booth. This booth had small keychains of hundreds of saints. Finally, the day would end with more music, another large group speaker, and some more quiet time with Jesus. This time was used for Eucharistic Adoration and on the last day, a closing Mass, during which Alyssa Bisono offered one of the readings.

Overall, NCYC was a very positive experience that was both faith-based and allowed people to make new friends. It allowed people to see their religion in a new light and grow closer to God. When asked about the conference, Emmi Bisono said, "NCYC is all about living in the moment and going through different experiences with people who are on the same path as you. I honestly loved it. It felt very moving and it made me want to connect with my faith more and really experience it in different ways." For anyone thinking of attending in the future, she also said that although this may be different than what you are used to, it is important to keep an open mind and be open to the new opportunities you will experience. Campus Minister Ms. Haslbauer stated, "I think NCYC is a great new addition to the scope of trips Molloy has to offer. If anyone is on the fence about going, I'd say go for it and you never know what can happen or what will resonate with you on the trip!" For any students interested, Molloy will likely be attending the 2025 NCYC in Indianapolis, Indiana. For more information about the 2025 conference, please reach out to Molloy's Campus Ministry team or go to: <https://ncyc.us>





# The 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Stanner Games!

by Liliana Win '28

Loud cheers, proud coaches, and motivating teammates could be seen and heard around the Armory Track & Field Center as the Stanner Games marked its 30-year anniversary on January 12th! The Stanner Games is a huge meet that has been run by Molloy track coaches, alumni, teachers, and staff since 1995. According to Head Coach Mr. Power '84, the concept of Stanner Games originated when a group of Molloy coaches were having a conversation where they realized that, if any school could run a great and successful city-wide track meet, it was Molloy. 30 years later, Molloy continues running this meet for athletes all over the city and surrounding states to compete in. The most recent Stanner Games were a huge success as the combination of high performing athletes and dedicated coaches brought pride and enthusiasm to all. Senior distance runner Aoife Garvey '25 said she loves “the energy and competitive spirit among all the athletes,” and that “the mix of rivalry and support really makes Stanner Games such a special experience for me.”

Coaches were happy and content with the outcome of the Stanner Games. Former Stanner track athlete, Coach Lavelle '19 opened up about his days competing in the Stanner Games, saying, “Being able to run a hurdle relay with my teammates was always a great experience since there weren’t a lot of opportunities to run that race outside of Stanner Games.” He also mentioned the great success of the day by saying that he didn’t think they “could have asked for a better day.” Deacon Kramer, the Jump Coach, offered, “The meet went well. The level of competition is always very high, which contributes to the excitement of the meet.” Head Coach and Coordinator Mr. Power expressed the meet went “really well, and we had great performances from everyone.”

Many athletes were also very proud of their accomplishments at this meet, some of them coming in first place in their main events. Some of the events won by Molloy students include: Girls Triple Jump (Saige Swift '25), Boys Pole Vault Varsity (Travis Hui '26),



Boys High Jump Varsity (Antonio Hernandez '25), Girls Shuttle Hurdle Varsity, and more. Antonio Hernandez’s main events include High Jump and Hurdles, and he had won first place in High Jump with a jump of 6 feet 4 inches! He opened up about the meet sharing, “No matter what race or field event you’re competing in, there’s a Molloy student, athlete, or alum who is cheering you on. Without that, Stanner Games wouldn’t be Stanner Games.” Saige Swift’s main events include Triple Jump and Long Jump, and she won first place with a Triple Jump of 36-3. The student-athlete was happy with her consistency in her jumps, and feels that the meet itself is “always super fun,” but admitted that “it’s kind of sad that this Stanner Games meet was my last one.” Travis Hui’s main events include Pole Vault, and High Jump, getting first place at the meet for Pole Vault at 13 feet 6 inches. He also shared insight on this road to success, saying, “My road to success in pole vault was difficult since not only do you have to be strong and fast, but you have to have proper technique.” Camille Munoz '25 has been a Molloy track athlete since freshman year,



currently a competitor in the Heptathlon, where she competes in nearly every event. The senior shared one of her favorite things about Stanner Games, “I love that all of the alumni come back to help and it’s great to see some of my friends that have graduated.”

This meet is important to so many people not only because it’s a chance to compete against great schools, but also because of how it represents the true spirit of all participating Stanners. Coach Power voiced how the special thing about this meet is how “we get alumni back from the 60s, 70s, 80s, 90s, 00s, 10s, and even 20s, who are waiting along the finish line next to alumni from just last year. It’s really special to see all these people come back in support of Molloy.” Countless Molloy alumni have attended and supported Molloy at Stanner Games throughout the years, emphasizing their true love and support for the school.

All Molloy athletes, teachers, staff, and alumni involved with Stanner Games prove what it is to be a true Stanner, and are a testament to Molloy’s motto, *Non scholae sed vitae*.

# From Briarwood to Belize

by Nick Seibert '25

From the 4th to the 10th of December, Campus Ministry went on a service trip to Placencia, Belize, along with eight Stanners and Mr. Sam King, Director of Sustainability of U.S. Marist schools. This trip was actualized through Bold Hope, a Christian organization that works to connect and engage people in service projects throughout the world. During this trip, the students and Campus Ministers engaged in various acts of service to work toward making a difference and learning about the ecological systems in Belize.

One such act of service was volunteering at local farms. During this activity, the students learned about the effects that climate change has had on planting seasons, as well as the importance of bees to pollinate crops. One of those students, Kristen Mussalli '25, detailed how impactful climate change has been on the local farmers, pointing out how they “had to change what month they plant because of the increase in rainfall and other



environmental impacts,” as well as it being “no longer as abstract of an idea” for these farmers who have to work hard to counter the effects resulting from climate change in order for their crops to grow.

The students also participated in a beach clean up, during which they collected several full bags of trash. They then audited all the items they found and worked with Belize’s Southern Environmental Organization to notify the companies whose products made up a majority of the litter they cleaned. By doing this, they helped take action toward keeping the beaches clean. The students also helped build an outdoor auditorium for a local elementary and middle school, and put up a fence around a church. The students worked hard to dig and transport dirt to level the ground out. These acts meant a lot to the children who attend this school. According to Kristen, “every child hugged us and thanked us for what we did.” The Belizean students



even showed their gratitude by playing games with Molloy’s students after they finished their work.

Throughout the trip, students were able to make a positive impact on the world and learn life lessons that they could bring back with them to Briarwood. The students also got to practice the Marist Pillar of Presence through being present in the moment and spending time with each other and the local Belizeans, as well as the Pillar of Love of Work through all the hard work they put into their service projects. In addition, they were able to live out the Marist mission of making Jesus known and loved through the significant impacts they made in the lives of the people they helped in Belize.

Although the trip only lasted one week, the experiences the students were able to take away from it, and the effects they left on the community of Placencia through their dedication to service and the Marist pillars, will last far longer.



# Senior Spotlight: Thomas Barker ‘25

by RJ Mejia ‘25

Thomas Barker ‘25 is nothing short of multi-talented and passionately involved within and outside of the Stanner community. From his days of travel soccer as a wing midfielder, CYO basketball, and being a mathlete in middle school, this bright Stanner has made strides across multiple areas. Whether it’s leading the sophomore retreat or expressing his love of computer science by coding, Thomas is motivated to give back to his communities. He is determined to excel academically as well, wishing to grow alongside his peers while uplifting others through tutoring and guidance.



Within Molloy’s academics, Thomas has found an appreciation for the intertwined nature of physics and calculus. His favorite courses have been AP Calculus BC and AP Physics 1 with Mrs. Pizzo and Mr. Nadeau, respectively. “I find the material very interesting in these courses. My friends in those classes make it even more enjoyable. Mrs. Pizzo and Mr. Nadeau are excellent teachers.” He is also an active participant in many extracurricular activities. Thomas dedicates most of his time to cross country and track, specializing in middle-distance running. He is also the co-president of the Chess Club with Moises Bien Nunag ‘25. Thomas’s best memories of Chess Club are the occasional tournaments the club hosts, where he gets the opportunity to face a variety of Stanners with different play styles. He is an engaged member of the Greek Club and Math League as well. One of Thomas’s most enjoyable moments was attending the Overnight Cultural Retreat with the Greek Club. “There was great cultural food,” Thomas recalls, “and I thoroughly enjoyed the mini soccer game.” The most memorable experience he’s had at Molloy, however, was when he led the Sophomore Retreat last December, giving one of the talks about knowing and loving others. “It was an amazing experience,” he expresses, “I met new people and became friends with them. I also loved playing flag and ping pong.”

Outside of Molloy, Thomas has a love for the art of coding, and has delved into many projects within the field. “Some projects of mine include fractal generators, projectile simulation, physics-based collision renderer, Connections clone from NY Times, Perlin noise generator, and even my own programming language which I have eponymously dubbed TomLang,” Thomas states. He’s also an SAT tutor through the Schoolhouse organization, which is an online organization that allows students with high SAT scores to become certified in tutoring SAT Math and English to students who wish to improve their SAT scores. Thomas mainly tutors the math section, but is certified in teaching English as well. “I would also like to continue tutoring throughout my life,” he expresses. Thomas believes it’s important to bolster an educated society, and finds fulfillment in seeing others grow.

Thomas already has an idea of what he’s going to do after graduating Molloy, stepping into a new world of college life. “In college, I’ll be majoring in computer engineering and I plan on minor in applied mathematics,” he says. His top choice is Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (RPI), largely due to the Rensselaer Medal Scholarship he received at the end of his junior year. This scholarship is one of RPI’s premier academic scholarships worth \$160,000 for outstanding math and science students, which can alleviate a great amount of the financial strain that a university education may provide. Other than RPI, he also hopes to get into Georgia Tech. After college, Thomas states, “Ideally, I would like to be a software developer, but unfortunately it’s an oversaturated profession, so we’ll see.”

Thomas is a dynamic force both in the classroom and throughout the Stanner community. His unwavering dedication, from leading meaningful retreats and excelling in challenging courses to his coding projects and tutoring, demonstrates his commitment to making a real impact. As he prepares for the transition from high school to college, Thomas is ready to continue inspiring those around him. His journey is far from over, and wherever he goes next, there’s no doubt that his contributions will continue to uplift and empower others!

# Senior Spotlight: Saige Swift ‘25

by Seoul Otova ‘27

Saige Swift, a proud member of the Class of 2025, has not only succeeded academically at Molloy, but has also served as an excellent role model for her classmates. Saige is known for her strong work ethic, devotion, and love of learning, and she has constantly displayed the attributes of an exceptional student and athlete. Saige has spent her high school years creating unforgettable memories and making a lasting impact at Molloy. Saige, who is from Brooklyn and has now called



Briarwood home for the last four years, has always been interested in medicine, particularly orthopedics. Throughout her Molloy years, she learned the value of leadership, accountability, and community service. Whether she was sprinting on a track or conducting senior or junior Encounters, Saige gave her all to every project she took on. As she prepares to graduate, Saige is ready to take her talents to the next level. Let’s take a deeper look at her high school journey in her own words.

**Q: Is there anything you’d like to share about your involvement in clubs, sports teams, or other activities outside of school?**

**A:** This past summer, I completed an observership at Columbia Hospital, where I was able to shadow many doctors in various disciplines of medicine, and it was the best experience I’ve ever had. I was able to create a lot of connections and learn more about what I wanted to pursue. I’m definitely returning to intern there this year. In addition, I competed on an AAU track team over the summer.

**Q: Can you tell us a little about yourself and where you’re from?**

**A:** I grew up in Brooklyn my entire life and am Belizean and Jamaican. At Molloy, I am a Peer Group Leader as well as a member of the track team. Outside of school, I enjoy watching movies and talking with my friends.

**Q: What’s been your favorite memory from your time here at Molloy?**

**A:** This year, I had the privilege of leading the Junior Encounter and attending the Senior Encounter. Esopus is one of the best experiences Molloy offers. It has allowed me to bond with many people, including the faculty. I really value the relationships I’ve built with the teachers and staff, having those adult connections is comforting, especially as you transition into adulthood. It’s been an experience that has brought me closer to the Molloy community and left me with lasting memories.

**Q: What accomplishment are you most proud of during high school?**

**A:** I’m most proud of the progress I’ve made in my sport, as well as my ability to maintain good grades while balancing everything. It takes a lot of effort to stay focused, but being able to manage both academics and athletics has taught me valuable time-management and discipline skills.

**Q: What career path or profession are you most interested in?**

**A:** I’ve wanted to be a doctor since I was a child, but recently, I’ve narrowed my focus to sports orthopedics. I think it would be incredible to work with professional athletes while also pursuing something I’m genuinely passionate about. Being able to combine my love for medicine with my interest in sports is a perfect fit for me.

**Q: What advice would you give to underclassmen or incoming freshmen who might be nervous about high school?**

**A:** I believe that it is normal to be concerned about shifting situations. However, you should be willing to try new things. You don’t have to be extroverted or try to make friends immediately, just focus on being yourself, and the connections will come naturally over time. You will gradually understand that there is enough room for everyone, including yourself.

**Q: What advice would you give your freshman self?**

**A:** I would tell myself not to let other people’s opinions affect what I do or what I want to pursue. I also wish I had been more open to going to Esopus sooner. I didn’t fully realize how impactful that experience could be until later on.

**Q: What’s one thing you’d like to say to your classmates before you all go your separate ways?**

**A:** I know we’ve all spent a lot of time worrying about schoolwork and/or athletics. So, enjoy this summer and rest totally. We all deserve a break after all the hard work we’ve put in. I wish everyone the best of luck in college or wherever life takes you, and I’m excited to hear about your future successes!

**Final Thoughts**  
As Saige Swift prepares to graduate, her time at Molloy has been defined by her academic excellence, dedication to track, and growing passion for medicine. With a clear focus on a future in orthopedics, Saige’s leadership and commitment to her goals will continue to set her apart. We’re excited to see where her journey takes her and wish her nothing but success in the years ahead!

## The Stanner - Volume LXVIII - Issue No. II

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by Robert Shalhoub '27

## Track & Field

You may not think of track and field when you think of winter, but for many Molloy athletes, this is a big part of their winter season. They show incredible dedication practicing outside in cold weather while everyone else is bundled up inside. Molloy has a huge track and field team that is truly all one big family, and they have had some incredible accomplishments this winter season. The freshman boys recently came first in the Brooklyn-Queens Championship, with Jamel Rankine '28 being named Freshman MVP in BQ's. Molloy sophomore boys placed 2nd in BQ's with 49 total points. Matthias Collins '27 placed first in BQ's in 55 Meter Hurdles, Michael Mulhall '27 came first in BQ's for the 600 Meter Run, and Mauricio Sosa '27 came first in BQ's in both Pole Vault and Triple Jump. Senior Camille Munoz '25 recently broke Molloy's 200 Meter Dash record with a time of 26.87 seconds at the Steve Borbet Invitational. Girls indoor track and field recently won both BQ and City CHSAA championships. They were led by Kirstine Perez '26 with her outstanding performance in the Long Jump, Triple Jump, and 4x200 Meter Relay. Excitingly, Senior Antonio Hernandez '25 was awarded All-American status in the High Jump! Congratulations to all track and field athletes and good luck moving forward!

## Basketball

Basketball remains a cherished tradition at Molloy, whether it's a Friday night triple-header or just a normal weekday game. Stanners are always going to be there supporting and cheering on our players. Varsity Boys Basketball has been working incredibly hard this year, shown through a series of competitive games. Their recent wins against Bishop Loughlin and Kellenberg show their hard work is paying off. They are continuing to improve every game and are always persevering through the good and bad games. JV Boys Basketball has had a very successful season thus far, with their recent wins against Holy Cross and Bishop Loughlin led by Andrew Koumoullous '28 with 21 points and Michael Nembhard '28 with 12 points. They are in first place going into the playoffs with a 17-2 record at the time of publication. Freshman Boys Basketball has also had a great start this season, recently picking up a win against Bishop Loughlin. The Girls Varsity Basketball

team is saying farewell to two seniors on the team: Francesca DeSantis '25 and Olivia Tabeek '25. JV Girls Basketball have a 16-3 record and are in 1st place going into the playoffs. Freshman Boys Basketball are tied for 1st in BQ going into playoffs. We wish them good luck in the future and thank them for their dedication.

## Swimming

The boys and girls swim teams have had excellent seasons this year, and both aimed to close the season out strong. The boys swim team clinched a big win on January 21st, making them Division Champions. At the CHSAA Intersectional Championships, they finished 5th out of 19 in the city and state and came second in their division. Swimmer Sean Green '25 had a great season and will be participating in States while being cheered on by fellow Stanners. The girls swim team also came through with an amazing season, putting up 9 wins, 1 loss, and 1 tie. The girls had one of their biggest meets of the season against Notre Dame Academy on January 12th with a very close score, but Molloy pulled off the victory 86-84. They then placed second in City Champs and Dual Meets! We wish them all continued success and congratulate both teams on the great seasons they've put up this year.

## Bowling

JV and Varsity Bowling have had a very successful year alongside each other. Varsity Bowling defeated every team they faced this year. They were led through an undefeated season by M.J. Sim '27. They showed great dedication and ended the season by winning the City Championship with leading scores of 270 by M.J. Sim, 246 by Christian Schmidt '26, and 222 by Anthony Rella '27. JV Bowling was also excellent, with a 6-1 record, but still coming together to win the city championship alongside varsity. JV was led to this win by top scorer Aiden DeGuzman '28 with his score of 210. Overall, it was a great season for both teams. We wish farewell to seniors Nico Tolentino '25 and Nick Seibert '25, who helped the varsity team through a great season. Good luck at State Champs on 3/1/25!

*\*Editorial Note: All information in this article was up to date as The Stanner went to print.*



# Molloy Hosts Third Annual Pink Games

by Sandra Goncalves '27

The third annual Pink Games event was hosted at Archbishop Molloy High School on February 1st. This event was founded in 2023 by JoAnn Pinnock, Girls Basketball Chairperson of the Catholic High School Athletic Association (CHSAA).

Coach of Molloy's Girls Varsity Basketball team, Mr. Joseph Harnischfeger, voices, "The purpose is to bring awareness of the life-changing medical issues to those women who have suffered from breast cancer and to promote early breast cancer detection." The annual event is made up of six Junior Varsity games in the Capt. Anthony Marsloe Gymnasium and six Varsity games in the Jack Curran Gymnasium. Girls basketball teams from Catholic high schools all over New York joined together in support of breast cancer awareness. One player from each team was selected to dedicate their respective game to a loved one who has been affected by breast cancer. Before each game, the two girls from opposing teams joined together in the center of the gym to say a few heartfelt words about the loved one they were dedicating the game to.

In addition to this, there was a 50/50 raffle throughout each game, with the proceeds supporting



an organization for breast cancer awareness. Girls Varsity Basketball player Emma Chan '27 says, "Although all the teams participating in these games are here to compete, I think it's great that we're able to spread breast cancer awareness and raise money for



research through the game of basketball." The Pink Games are an opportunity for the girls basketball players of the CHSAA to come together with the common goal of promoting breast cancer awareness, while playing the sport they love.