

New health mentor ready to support students at Cooper

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The Quill

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Passing time is long enough to accommodate student needs

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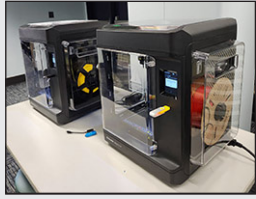
Robbinsdale Cooper High School

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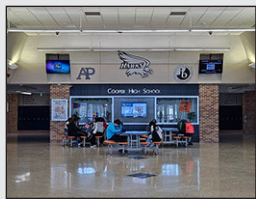


3D printers are open to Hawks

Mr. Seyb Ensman oversees the members of the 3D printing group, which meets in room 103 on Tuesdays and Fridays during HLL

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Opinion



Decision to keep IB is applauded

The potential elimination of the IB program would have done a huge disservice to students in all grades at Cooper

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Media Center adds new art collection

Media Specialist Mr. King said he is showcasing Hawk artwork in the Media Center to promote student expression at school

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Variety

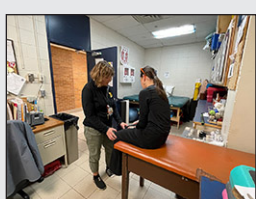


Artists start work on hallway murals

The annual mural assignment will bring art students into the hallways to work on their pieces during April, May

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Sports



Trainer supports Cooper athletes

Ms. Shelstad is available to student athletes in the Athletic Training Room Monday through Friday from 3:15-6 p.m.

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DECA GROUP COMPETES AT STATE TOURNAMENT

Five Hawks qualified for the competition, which took place March 2-4



Photo by ROSEMARY EVERS

The activities that make up DECA competitions include trying to sell a given object or solve a specific problem.

By SAM PETERSON
Quill staff writer

DECA, which stands for Distributive Education Clubs of America, is a Cooper group primarily focused on helping introduce students to the world of business. The students in the group are enjoying a successful 2024-2025 school year that has seen sev-

eral members make it to the state DECA competition.

DECA is a non-profit organization dedicated to teaching students how to understand the world of business. The group typically meets on Tuesdays and Thursdays in room 130 or 132 to prepare for competitions.

"Students meet oth-

er students, share ideas and make that connection that may be a great factor as these students progress through college and their careers," Ms. Evers, the advisor for DECA, said.

The competitions that DECA participates in are based on their ability to either sell an object or solve a problem. Students are given

fictional scenarios where they have to come up with a solution. For competitions, these presentations are done in front of a judge. The competitions have a district, state and national level.

This year, Cooper had five members who qualified for state. Those students were Melat Kiflu (12), Mario Martinez Morales (12), Pearl

Swift (11), Vision Wonken (11) and Catalina Montejó (10). The group's state competition happened on March 2-4 in downtown Minneapolis. Although no one advanced to the finals in the state tournament, Evers said she is glad the students had the chance to compete.

"Everyone in the club was participating in fundraising efforts as those going to state wanted to have the full experience of competing and connecting with others," Evers said.

Members in DECA also gain a lot of useful skills for life. Some examples are public speaking, problem solving and leadership skills.

"I used to have a hard time talking in front of a group of people, but it has been easier after I joined DECA," Maria Valenzuela Salazar (12) said.

Students also have opportunities to make connections with their peers. The experiences and skills they gain are a good resource to cite for resumes and college applications.

"Students can include this experience on their resume, which is an important marketing tool when getting a job," Evers said.

To be in DECA, students

DECA
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Budget cuts designed to offset \$21 million deficit

While the district recently decided not to cut the IB program, many other cuts are still on the table for 2025-2026

By MARIAH WASHINGTON
Quill staff writer

The Robbinsdale Area School District is proposing significant budget reductions in response to a projected \$21 million shortfall for the 2025-26 school year. While the school board has yet to formally approve the budget adjustments, several areas are being considered for cuts, which could affect staffing, programming, transportation and district operations.

Proposed reductions include decreasing both administrative and school-based staffing, restructuring the delivery of gifted and talented services and making adjustments to school bell schedules in an effort to reduce transportation costs. District leaders emphasize that these cuts are being considered with the goal of minimizing the impact on students and preserving essential services.

"We are working hard to make reductions that protect student learning as much as possible," Robbinsdale School District Superintendent Ms. Staloch said. "While some cuts will affect staffing and programming, our top priority is ensuring strong classroom instruction, vital student support services and valuable opportunities for students."

The budget shortfall stems from multiple financial challenges, and district leaders have been actively reviewing data and seeking input to find a solution. With the aim of balancing the budget while keeping student education at the forefront, the district is exploring various options to make necessary adjustments.

One program facing potential cuts was the district's International Baccalaureate (IB) program. The elimination of this program would have had a large impact at Cooper, which features multiple IB classes and the IB diploma program. On March 5, the district announced that it was not going forward with the plan to cut this program.

"After reviewing options, we will not be moving forward with a recommendation to eliminate the IB program at this time," Staloch said.



Photo by ROSE VANG-LOHNES

Students will see fewer teachers and larger class sizes next school year.

One program likely to be cut is fourth-grade orchestra. "This reduction is part of an effort to balance our budget while still maintaining opportunities for music education in later grades," Staloch said.

Also facing changes are the district's talent development services, which support gifted and talented students. The restructuring of these services could change the way students are identified and supported.

Finally, the district is evaluating middle and high school extracurricular

BUDGET CUTS continues on page 5

Concerns about ICE have impact on students, staff

While the school has not faced any direct action by ICE agents, processes are in place to address issues if they arise

By TESSA LENOCH
Quill staff writer

The United States has seen new policies introduced almost every day since the Trump administration took office. Some of these policies have raised concerns for students and teachers at Cooper, leading to some important questions about the safety of students who may be targeted due to their, or their family's, immigration status.

Historically, schools have been a space off limits for immigration enforcement. That was completely changed when President Trump took office. In the few days after Trump's inauguration, the Department of Homeland Security inaugurated a new policy stripping schools, places of worship and healthcare facilities from their previously safe status for those people who are undocumented in the United States. This change presents new challenges to Cooper

students and administrators alike.

Cooper Head Principal Ms. Smith began to address this problem by assuring students in January 2025 that their safety is, and will always be, the number one priority. After this new federal policy was announced, the district immediately sent out emails with the proper protocols and information needed for the administration to continue running the school day successfully in the event of an Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) incident.

"I want to make it very clear that Cooper will never give anyone access to students easily. In order for an immigration officer, or an officer of any kind, to be able to reach a Cooper student, they will require every single form and warrant necessary for such an action," Smith said.

Smith also encourages students worried about and unsure of their rights to come down to the office, where a student can access a Red Card, which is a small, lam-

inated card with all the information necessary for a student to understand their immigration rights. For any student who has further concerns about their safety, Smith recommends that they reach out to an adult in the building.

"Schools used to be a safe place [for students with certain immigration statuses]. It's new for all of us. Staff should be able to talk to students about their rights," Smith said.

One teacher who is seeing the impact of the federal policy change in her classroom is Ms. Foster, who works with English language (EL) students at Cooper. She echoes Smith's sentiments concerning the importance of protecting students.

"I wish there was more I could do to ease students' fears regarding the potential of ICE investigations," Foster said. "The fear of detention and/or deportation

CONCERNS continues on page 5

The Graduate

Former *Quill* editor-in-chief and member of the Class of 2024 Noah Plahn shares his insights about life after high school in the fifth installment of an ongoing series

Extracurriculars still important during college

The number of possible activities to take part in increases during college years

By NOAH PLAHN
Quill staff writer

Potentially one of the most impactful and motivating things a child can be a part of is extracurriculars. From clubs to sports, the environment created by these activities often changes lives. I for one, took part in basketball and football from elementary school all the way through high school.

When I graduated from Cooper, I longed for yet another opportunity to get my heartbeat elevated. Unfortunately, most colleges require you to be scouted through high school or be a tremendous athlete to participate in college athletics. Luckily for me, I attend a community college where the opportunities are surprisingly plentiful.

Although more of a rec-style sports league, many community colleges in the area, including mine, offer leagues for various sports. The sign-up process includes filling out waivers, which, for the most part, is stress-free and not very time-consuming.

In my first semester of college, I jumped at the opportunity to sign up for the football team and was once again given the adrenaline I was searching for. Now that my spring semester has started, I have joined basketball and have been equally relishing the opportunity to play this sport as well.

Of course, if you are not a sports addict like I am, you still have plenty of other things to get excited about at college. Although the opportunities for clubs and other activities are present in high school, they are more abundant in college. Every place you walk on campus, the walls of hallways and classrooms are littered with signs advertising clubs organized by staff and students alike. If you are looking for a specific activity, your college campus will likely have it.

In some instances, even if you are not looking, clubs will find you. According to 2024 Cooper graduate and *Quill* staff alumnus Leonardo Perez, he experienced first-hand the ease with which one can find club opportunities at the college level.

"I didn't know anyone yet, but I was randomly approached by another student and was offered to put my name down for a club that was made by Latino people for Latino people," he said.

Leo and I, along with countless other students, have quickly found vast communities to be part of in college, and so can you. Yes, even beyond high school, sports and clubs are abundant at the college level.

DECA

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have to be a junior or a senior. Once in the group, students get to decide what area they want to compete in. To do this, they must take a test. Although results are not known, it helps decide whether they qualify for state.

According to Kiflu, it is never too late to join DECA, as skills learned in one year can be used during the next year.

"No experience is needed for joining," Kiflu said. "DECA is always looking for more members and people to help with fundraising."

New club gives students 3D printer access

Mr. Seyb Ensman oversees the group, which meets in room 103 on Tuesdays and Fridays during HLL

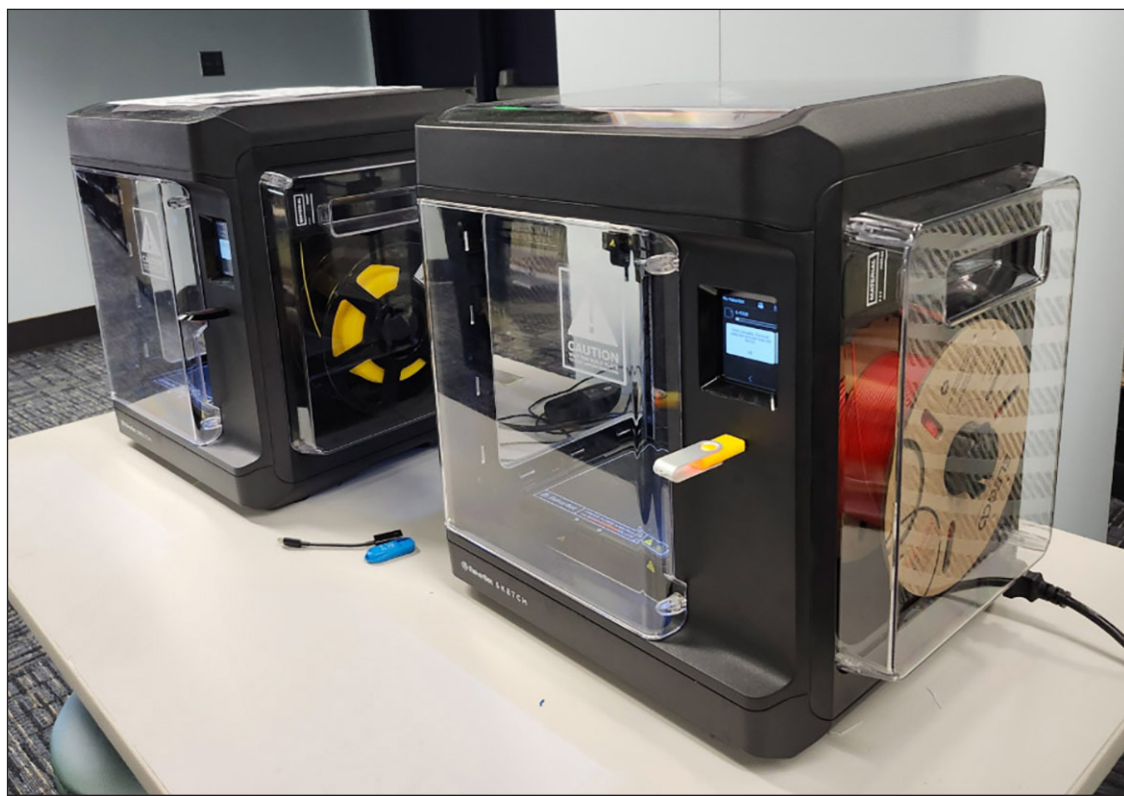


Photo by BEN KENYON

The 3D printers are located in the Media Center for students who make use of the new technology.

By BEN KENYON
Quill staff writer

If you are interested in participating in a new recreational activity or being introduced to a new skill set that is growing increasingly prominent in our ever-digitizing and fast-paced world, Cooper has a unique opportunity available to you. Run by engineering teacher Mr. Seyb Ensman, the 3D Printing Club offers a completely free-of-charge service for all students who want to learn about modeling and creating their own objects utilizing 3D printer technology.

"The best way to get involved would be to sign up for the club's HLL sessions," Seyb Ensman said.

These sessions, which take place in room 103, are hosted on Tuesdays during second lunch for sophomores and juniors, and on Fridays during first lunch for freshmen and seniors. Newcomers are especially recommended to attend to be briefed on the basics of using the printers, though those students who are more experienced are not required to.

When a student has been properly informed on the club's base workings, they are immediately able to jump into creating their first project. Other than the current model of printer's maximum print size being limited to a cubic five-inch area, the limit to what can be made is practically endless.

Students will be encouraged to make items with functional

aspects to them. They also can make something to be used in an assignment or project for another class. Additionally, creating personal items and trinkets is also entirely acceptable.

If there were to be trouble in deciding what to make, Seyb Ensman said that "creating a custom print with the purpose of fixing something else that is broken is the best use of a printer." This provides students with an opportunity to create something useful.

After a student has decided on what they want to have printed, the process starts with 3D modeling software. While more experienced students will prefer popular programs such as Blender or Adobe Substance, beginners

will be encouraged to use Tinkercad, an easy-to-use program that quickly familiarizes the user with modeling in a 3D environment. Students can gradually piece together and make adjustments to their print in the virtual workspace, receiving helpful tips and feedback along the way.

When a model on the software is ready to be created, it is time to export it into a readable set of instructions for the printers. This is done by exporting the model, usually with a tool built into the modeling software, and then converting it into a file. To send their file to the printers, the student must enter it into a Google form and wait for approval.

At this point, all that is left to do is wait. Unless the model has high priority, such as those items needed for a project or teacher, it will be entered into a queue. It will usually take a couple of hours to a day or two for the student's print to be created, although this timespan can sometimes fluctuate.

"If there's a large amount of prints waiting or some that are really big, it could take a while," Seyb Ensman said.

There is currently no way for a student to be notified when their print is completed. However, they are always free to check up on progress by visiting the printers themselves in the Media Center. If this is not done, the finished print is sure to be passed out to the student by their advisory teacher in the following week.

If the 3D Printing Club sounds appealing and has piqued your interest, do not hesitate to reach out to Seyb Ensman. He said the club is always happy to take in new members.

Mental health resources are available to all Hawks

One's teen years can be a time when people need the support, guidance a mental health professional can provide

By ROBIN JARMAN
Quill staff writer

High school can be a huge weight on a student's mental health. Between upcoming tests, lack of sleep and constant homework, many students wonder how they will make it through second semester. This is where Cooper's different mental health resources can be helpful.

There are different resources that Cooper students can access for mental health support. However, many students do not know where to find them or how to contact them. The key resources at Cooper are the grade-level counselors, the school social workers and the school psychologists. While some students are nervous about going to an unfamiliar adult with their mental health issues, Ms. Weiers, one of the school psychologists, said it is important for students to be proactive about their mental health.

"In the last several years, it seems to me that the number of students dealing with ADHD, anx-

ety and depression has increased significantly. I also find that since COVID, many students are experiencing a general apathy towards school that was not so prevalent in the past," Weiers said.

According to Weiers, Cooper administrators and staff make an effort to ensure that students know where to get help.

"We ensure students know we are here to support them through announcements. For example, if some sort of crisis or traumatic event has happened, students are informed that they can come to the counseling office for support. [We also promote these resources] through various advisory lessons, introductions during grade-level meetings, teacher referrals and signs outside of the guidance office."

Weiers said that she and the other school counselors and social workers take many steps to make students more comfortable so they will reach out for help more often.

"I try to meet students where they are at and give them the chance to share what they are com-

fortable sharing. If a student is really upset, I will ask them if they want some time to just sit and process, if they want a listening ear or if they want me to ask questions and help them come to a solution. I try to make sure my office is a comfortable place for students; fidgets and coloring books can be really helpful as they can minimize the need for eye contact, which can be hard for someone just meeting support staff for the first time," Weiers said.

When it comes to teachers and the rest of the school's staff, Weiers said there are many ways to destigmatize mental health resources and make students more aware of their availability.

"I think that teachers do a lot of this work. When they refer a student to support staff, they almost always normalize what the student may be experiencing and reinforce that we are here to help. I think our student groups and student leaders also do an excellent job of talking about mental health and sharing places to get support if needed," she said.

At the same time, Weiers said

there are some big barriers and restrictions in school when it comes to mental health resources.

"I think it can sometimes be difficult for students to see that school is a place for academics and a place where they can work on mental wellbeing. Sometimes, students would rather keep their problems to themselves because they don't want the school involved. But, unfortunately, those problems then impact academics and school performance, so it is important that students see school as a place where they can receive support for academics and emotional wellbeing," Weiers said.

Another barrier Weiers hopes to address is the limited number of mental health resources at Cooper and other high schools.

"I would say one other barrier is just the lack of resources. We have many more students who could benefit from therapy than are able to access it due to the number of therapists placed at Cooper as well as the requirement for therapy to be billed through the students' health insurance," Weiers said.

New sexual health mentor starts position at Cooper

Ms. Alamilla, who works with the Annex Teen Clinic, said she looks forward to getting to know Cooper students

By ROBIN JARMAN
Quill staff writer

A new sexual health mentor started at Cooper on March 3. Her name is Ms. Alamilla and she is located in room 145B on the first floor near the main foyer staircase.

Many students might be confused about what a school health mentor does. Alamilla said there are many aspects to her job.

"I help students access their sexual health needs by providing education, supplies and resources. In my office, I have free supplies such as pads, tampons, condoms, pregnancy tests, emergency contraceptives, lube and more," Alamilla said.

One important aspect of her job is helping provide students with factual information about sexual health.

"I answer questions, doubts or concerns relating to sexual health by giving students factual information and pointing them to articles, websites or pamphlets where they can gain more knowledge around the subject they are curious about," Alamilla said. "I also help students set up appointments at the Annex Teen Clinic, where we provide services such as birth control, STI testing and treatment."

Alamilla said that all conversations and meetings are confidential.

"If my door is open, anyone is welcome to come in for supplies or questions. My email and contact information, drop-in hours and appointment request form can be found on my door as well," she said.

According to Alamilla, each day at her job can look different depending on the needs of students who visit her.

"Throughout the day, I leave my door open and students routinely pop in to say hi or make appointments. Meeting with students can look very different: some just stop by to grab free supplies, some stay for their full class period when they have an appointment, others just have a quick question to ask before heading off to class. I do my best to accommodate everyone," she said.

While she is often busy, Alamilla said there are slow times to her job as well. During these times, she said she likes to get out into the school.

"I will walk around school and introduce myself to teachers I still haven't met. Sometimes, I also visit classrooms to introduce myself to students who may not know about the Annex and our services. While the health mentor position has been at Cooper for many years, I am still new to the role and know that each

health mentor does things a little differently," she said.

According to Alamilla, her role as a sexual health mentor benefits Cooper students in many ways.

"My role at Cooper is to increase access to safe sex education and services. I believe that when students have the proper information and resources, they become equipped and capable of making smarter choices for their bodies. I hope that students benefit from this resource by becoming healthier, more confident and knowledgeable," she said.

Although her focus is on sexual health, Alamilla shared that many students go to her for guidance on their relationships.

"Students enjoy coming to me for

HEALTH MENTOR
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Passing time is long enough for students

The idea that the transition between classes should be longer will just lead to more wasted time during the school day



Photo by ROSE VANG-LOHNES

The crowds at the second-floor Y make getting to class in five minutes difficult but not impossible.

From the Editors

Many students feel that passing time is too short. For students who need to travel from the top floor to the bottom floor of the school while going through the clutter of all the other students, five minutes may not be enough time. Of course, students are also guilty of using up their passing time to socialize. If you walk around the school, you can see a lot of people standing in the halls, chilling with some friends, during passing time. This raises the question of whether the problem with the length of passing time is more about the amount of time available or how students

are using that time.

One obvious issue at Cooper is that the hallways are crowded and that can affect how much flexibility you have during passing

standing around in the hallways doing nothing during passing time. This can cause some major problems in terms of tardiness. In this case, the concern that

One way students can make it to class in five minutes is by walking and talking instead of standing around during passing time. By walking and talking, you can socialize with your friends and get to wherever you need to be on time.

time. Traveling from one part of the building to another, stopping at a locker and using the restroom can be difficult to do in just five minutes when there are people

passing time is too short can be legitimate.

However, it is more often the case that passing time seems too short because people are more

focused on their friends than on making it to class on time. Most people talk to their friends during passing time because they feel that they do not have time to chit-chat during other parts of the school day. However, if we were to extend the passing time to accommodate socializing, students would merely use the extra time to socialize more and still get to their next class after the final bell rings.

In addition, adding extra passing time would cut into learning time by leading to shorter classes. Let us say you extend passing time to eight minutes: that would mean that there would be about 54 minutes of passing time a day. That is nearly an hour of wasted time that we could use for learning or studying.

One way students can do all the things they do now and still make it to class in five minutes is by walking and talking instead of standing around during passing time. By walking and talking, you can socialize with your friends and get to wherever you need to be on time. If people were to walk and talk more, there would not be such a big backup in the second-floor Y and students would enjoy a smoother commute to class.

Overall, it seems clear that five minutes is plenty of passing time. If students were honest with themselves, they would realize that keeping passing time at five minutes makes the most sense. It is a nice chunk of time to get from place to place. Furthermore, if the school were to extend passing time too much, students would likely misuse the extra time.

Restrooms now unusable due to student behavior

The only thing that does not seem to happen in the bathrooms is their actual purpose

By BEN KENYON
Quill staff writer

What is it: a restroom, bathroom or toilet? Maybe even a lavatory? Regardless of what you call it, I am sure you have an adequate understanding that this space is intended for students to do their business, wash up and head back to class. On their trip, they may come across a friend or two and exchange a few lines of banter, which is perfectly acceptable, but in no circumstance should the duration of an entire class period be spent in the bathroom. In recent times, though, this seems to be an increasingly harder concept for a growing number of students to grasp. Cooper's restrooms are eternally occupied by loiterers, making it difficult for others to use the space for its actual purpose. As the daily number of classroom absences increases, the bathrooms now serve as a breeding ground for a multitude of additional issues that have long plagued the school.

As an introduction to some of the issues taking place in our bathrooms, I would like to highlight one of the most prominent characters, just about complementary to the modern high school experience: the use of electronic cigarettes and marijuana. I cannot count the number of occasions when I have entered a bathroom, only to be met by a thick, foggy atmosphere combined with an offensively sweet, metallic scent in the air. Have I just teleported to some other worldly mystic rainforest? No, unfortunately not. There is just a bunch of nicotine fiends sitting in the corner, sucking on their vapes in desperation for the latest hit. On the rare occasion that there is not any vaping taking place, there is, of course, weed to be smoked. On multiple days, Cooper's hallways have been enveloped in its acrid smell.

RESTROOMS
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District applauded for keeping IB program

The potential elimination of this program would have done a huge disservice to students in all grades at Cooper

By ROSE VANG-LOHNES
Quill staff writer

Cooper is an International Baccalaureate (IB) school. Yet, there was a decision being made about whether we should cut our IB program. The reason this was being considered was due to the larger budget issues the district is facing and the cost of special programs like IB. Thankfully, the decision to cut the IB program was dismissed. As a result, the students at Cooper will benefit from having the continued ability to take IB courses.

The decision to cut IB came from the district's need to cut more than \$21 million from next year's budget. This stemmed from an error that was made when counting the money for the 2025-2026 school year. The district accidentally counted about \$21 million in compensatory revenue twice. With that mistake being made, the district was forced to consider various things to save money, including staff reductions,

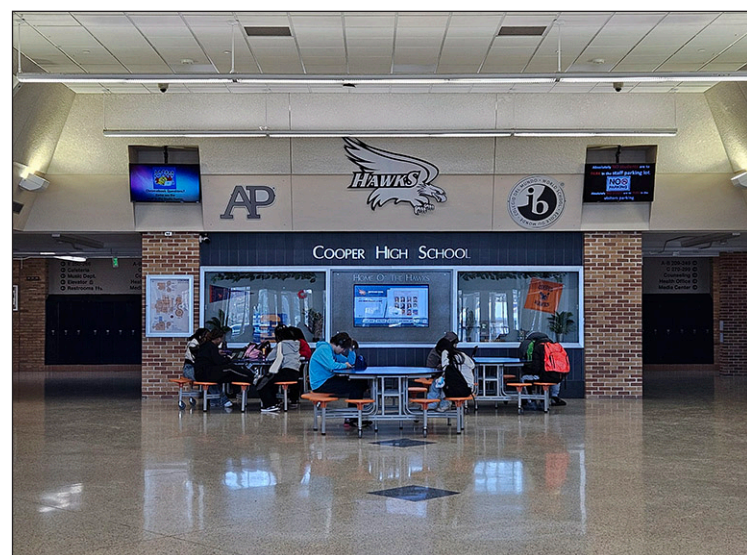


Photo by ROSE VANG-LOHNES

The IB emblem is prominently displayed in the school's main foyer.

selling buildings and cutting academic programs like IB.

I am taking my first two IB classes this year as a junior. Taking these classes has helped me be able to push myself. I found myself a bit bored and even uninterested in my classes in my freshman and sophomore years because the work did not feel

challenging enough. However, once I took my two IB classes, I found myself enjoying learning and the process of doing more challenging work. The work can get hard and even give me a headache here and there, but I am still enjoying the fact that I get to learn more. I am actually asking questions that are sharpening my

skills. I believe that it is crucial that we have challenging classes so students can get used to and even enjoy not always knowing the answer.

I cannot express enough how bad it would have been if the IB program was cut. A lot of juniors in IB courses were frustrated as it was not clear what would happen to us next year. When we first heard the news, we thought there would not be a continuation of our two-year-long classes, which felt unfair and frustrating. That decision would have sent our time and dedication to IB down the drain. Although there was talk that juniors would be allowed to finish out our IB classes during our senior year, that seemed unfair to the freshmen and sophomores who were considering taking an IB class in the future. Overall, this led to frustration and even distrust among students. No one wants to see our educational

IB PROGRAM
continues on page 8

ICE enforcement at public schools is troubling threat

Students, staff are understandably concerned about possible threats posed by ICE

By TRISTAN JAY TOLENTINO
Quill staff writer

The looming cloud of worries and concerns about Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) entering schools is becoming more prevalent each day, as our country faces increasing polarization on the issue of immigration. As ICE's presence in schools has the potential of becoming more of a reality, students and staff are left wondering what the future holds.

President Trump's executive orders, particularly one that allows ICE agents to enter sensitive areas like schools, hospitals and churches, have sparked fear among many. According to the Epstein Becker Green Law Firm website, "ICE agents will have the authority to enter sensitive areas and take enforcement actions." Additionally, the site explains that "ICE raids are generally targeted," meaning that agents may have a list of specific individuals they are seeking to detain.

This reality has students, particularly those who are children of immigrants, deeply concerned. The executive order could affect first-generation children in schools, many of whom may fear the possibility of deportation. The order suggests that a child born in the U.S. may not be entitled to citizenship if their parents are undocumented, which contradicts the protections provided by the 14th Amendment. This amendment guarantees that all people born in the United States are citizens, regardless of their parents' legal status. No student should be made to fear deportation simply because of their parents' status.

The consequences of this policy

ICE ENFORCEMENT
continues on page 7

Trump executive orders a clear affront to common sense

The new administration is taking aim at issues that include immigration, the environment, health care access

By ROSE VANG-LOHNES
Quill staff writer

I am not happy with America's current leader, President Trump. I do not agree with anything he is trying to force on Americans. I also do not agree with what he is doing to the rest of the world, including exiting the Paris Climate Agreement and wanting to shut down USAID. Within his first week in office, Trump made 37 executive orders on issues ranging from the economy to disaster response. I do not see how any of this is good for us. Of his many moves, the ones I want to focus on are his executive orders that involve immigration, the environment and health.

The way Trump talks about and treats immigrants is alarming. Eight out of the 37 executive orders are targeted toward immigrants. The one in particular that I

want to talk about is called "Protecting the Meaning and Value of American Citizenship." This order denies citizenship to certain U.S.-born children whose parents are not U.S. citizens or lawful permanent residents. This order is ridiculous. To me, this just screams of his lack of human decency. I mean, really? The government is going to deny U.S.-born people citizenship simply because they do not meet the meaning or value of being an American due to their ethnicity? Why does he have this obsession with gatekeeping what it means to count as an American?

"Drill, baby, drill," is what President Trump said when talking about Alaska. Two out of his 37 executive orders involve the environment. Both executive orders will push us down the path of destroying our climate. The first order, "Putting America First

in International Environmental Agreements," withdraws us from the Paris Climate Agreement and the Biden administration's U.S. International Climate Finance plan. If you do not know what the Paris Climate Agreement or International Climate Finance plan is, here is a quick run down. The Paris Climate Agreement is designed to cut greenhouse gas emissions in an effort to limit global warming and forestall the worst impacts of climate change. Meanwhile, the International Climate Finance plan aims to also help reduce and avoid greenhouse gas emissions and to build resilience and adapt to the impacts of climate change. What is the wisdom of withdrawing from either of these groups that are trying to help save the world from worsening our already bad climate situation? It is hard to say.

The second executive order re-

lated to climate is called "Unleashing Alaska's Extraordinary Resource Potential." This order wants to open up all of Alaska, including the traditionally protected parts of that state, to the search for and extraction of natural resources such as oil. They are going to essentially take all the natural resources that Alaska has to offer. I can already see the permanent damage he is going to cause to this state and the world. Unfortunately, all I can do is shake my head and write about my disappointment.

The final executive orders that concern me deal with the topic of health. Specifically, there is an order titled, "Withdrawing the United States from the World Health Organization." I let out a massive groan when I saw this executive order. During the COVID pandem-

EXECUTIVE ORDERS
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The Hate U Give provides insights on tough issues

The 2018 movie still feels timely given the many social problems it addresses



Photo by 20TH CENTURY FOX

Amanla Stenberg's great performance as Starr helps anchor the film.

By SAMAYA TAYE
Quill staff writer

The Hate U Give, directed by George Tillman, Jr. and released on September 7, 2018, is a powerful film that addresses racism and other important social issues faced by African Americans. The storyline resonated with me emotionally, and I chose to review this film because of its deep and impactful themes. *The Hate U Give* uses cinematography and character development to deliver powerful messages about social justice and the importance of speaking out against injustice.

The movie centers around Starr Carter (Amanla Stenberg), a teenage girl who constantly navigates two worlds: the poor, predominantly Black neighborhood where she lives and the wealthy, mostly white prep school she attends. The delicate balance between these worlds is shattered when Starr witnesses the fatal shooting of her childhood best friend, Khalil (Algee Smith), by a police officer. As she faces pressure from both the residents of her community and the students at her school, Starr must find her voice and stand up for what's right.

Cinematography plays a crucial role in many scenes throughout the film. The use of close-up shots during moments of intense emotion allows the audience to connect deeply with the characters' experiences. One scene that stands out to me, and where cinematography is especially powerful, is when Starr witnesses the shooting of Khalil. The close-up shots on Starr's face capture her shock and fear, making the audience feel her emotions intensely.

The filmmaker also uses music effectively to enhance the emotional impact of certain scenes. For example, in the moment when Starr gives a speech at a protest against injustice, the music in the background heightens the seriousness of the topic and adds emotional depth to the moment. The music amplifies the scene's emotional intensity, creating a strong response from the audience. This scene left a lasting impression on me as a viewer.

One of the main themes of *The Hate U Give* is the importance of finding one's voice to stand up against injustice. This is clearly demonstrated in the scene where Starr, despite her fears of retaliation or even potential harm, speaks out about Khalil's murder at the protest. This moment represents a shift from silence to action, as Starr gains the confidence to speak her truth. I personally connect with this theme, as I believe everyone, at some point, must find their voice in order to express their beliefs. This theme deeply resonated with me emotionally as a viewer.

In conclusion, *The Hate U Give* uses cinematography and character development to communicate powerful messages about social justice while emphasizing the importance of speaking out against injustice. My overall opinion of the film is that it is exceptional, and I believe every African American parent raising an African American child should watch it with their children once they are old enough. I thoroughly enjoyed the film, as I was engaged throughout the entire plot, which was both compelling and thought-provoking. *The Hate U Give* earns a well-deserved five out of five stars.

Conclave is one of 2024's best films

The Edward Berger movie was nominated for eight Academy Awards, ultimately winning one for best adapted screenplay



Photo by FOCUS FEATURES

While the film touches upon the topics of religion and religious faith, it is more focused on the intrigue surrounding the selection of a new pope.

By TESSA LENOCH
Quill staff writer

Edward Berger's *Conclave* is, in my opinion, one of the best films of 2024. I was first introduced to the film with a pretty decent line: "It's like *Mean Girls*, but with the Pope." This sentiment is echoed in pretty much any place you can find movie reviews and it is not entirely untrue. However, what *Conclave* offered to me went past the more absurd concept of a bunch of Catholic men gossiping for its entire two-hour runtime. *Conclave* is ultimately a movie about faith: faith in institutions, faith in one's peers and, most obviously, faith in religion.

After the unfortunate passing of the Pope, the College of Cardinals is now burdened with the responsibility of electing a new leader of the church as the movie begins. This comes with complications, as the cardinals leading in the elections hold starkly different perspectives on how the church should be run. From progressive to traditionalist, the new Pope will shift both the contained world of the church and the globe at large,

making this decision extremely heavy on the minds of each cardinal who casts their vote. Thomas Lawrence (Ralph Fiennes) must run the conclave, despite his growing disillusionment with the church and his life as the dean of the College of Cardinals. As he grapples with his personal faith in both himself and the institution

the environment gets exceedingly more political and aggressive as the days drag by. Most shockingly, a new cardinal is ushered in when the conclave begins. Archbishop Vincent Benetiz of Kabul (Carlos Diez) had been named cardinal in secret just one year before the Pope's death, and his status had been kept hidden even from Thomas, who is undeniably

Much like any other election, the environment gets exceedingly more political and aggressive as the days drag by. Most shockingly, a new cardinal is ushered in when the conclave begins.

of the church as a whole, he also must balance the line of interference with versus protection of the unfolding election process.

With almost every possible Pope holding some sort of sin in their past or even in their present, it is practically impossible for the voters to come to an easy majority. Much like any other election,

shaken by the sudden arrival of the stranger.

It is hard to discuss the nature of faith without entirely spoiling the film, which is why I heavily recommend you watch *Conclave* yourself, but each sparse line of dialogue is enriched by the underlying theme of belief. In order to entrust an entire religious insti-

tution to one man, the cardinals must have faith that he will lead them in the right direction. However, Thomas seems to have lost faith in this process entirely and in the idea that the church operates in the correct way. In fact, it is revealed that even the late Pope had echoed this sentiment before his death. Thomas repeats throughout the film that there will always be a level of uncertainty, a level of mistrust, but persevering throughout those feelings is what creates faith in the first place. Persevering does not automatically equal one path, either.

Conclave does not reduce itself to purely questioning the reality of God. Although it is clearly about religion, the film decides to focus more on the understanding of faith as a whole concept, rather than faith in one specific facet of one's life. You have to have faith in others, faith in yourself and faith in the things you believe are right if you truly want to lead a life you can be proud of. You can watch *Conclave* with this in mind, or you can just go in for the Pope gossip. It is a good film either way. I rate it four out of five stars.

All Quiet is one of the greatest war movies ever

Prior to making the award-winning drama *Conclave*, Edward Berger directed this 2022 film about World War I

By BEN KENYON
Quill staff writer

Released in 2022, Edward Berger's *All Quiet on the Western Front* is a modern film adaptation of Erich Maria Remarque's 1929 novel of the same name. Through epic scenery, striking visuals and immersive effects, this adaptation creates a powerful anti-war narrative, inviting viewers into the brutal reality faced by a young German soldier on the Western Front during World War I.

I chose to review this film for a few personal reasons. I have always been drawn to war and conflict films, particularly those that highlight battle scenes, military life and the camaraderie shared between soldiers. These films often portray acts of tragedy, bravery and complex human emotions, particularly when dealing with both internal and external struggles. For me, this genre resonates on a deep level. Additionally, I have a personal connection to Germany and its language, since I was born and raised there, which adds a layer of relevance to my experience when watching the film.

The movie follows Paul Bäumer, a teenager who, along with his friends Albert and Müller, voluntarily enlists in the German army. Initially, they are filled with patriotic zeal, but their idealistic



Photo by NETFLIX

The movie does a starting job of capturing the realities of trench warfare.

expectations quickly dissolve when they confront the brutal realities of war. Paul's preconceived notions about the enemy and the morality of the war disintegrate as he experiences the unrelenting horror of the front lines. As the armistice nears, Paul continues fighting, with no purpose beyond fulfilling the orders of the higher-ups who are determined to end the war on a German offensive. Ultimately, the film demonstrates how the horrors of war will disillusion soldiers, erode their moral compass and reveal the tragic futility of war.

Cinematography plays a key role in *All Quiet on the Western Front*, particularly in highlighting

the stark contrast between soldiers' expectations and the grim reality of war. One scene that stands out to me occurs near the beginning when new recruits, including Paul, are gathered in a building as an officer delivers an inspiring speech about the glory and excitement awaiting them on the battlefield. The warm lighting and hopeful atmosphere of this scene stand in sharp contrast to what will soon unfold. The camera alternates between close-ups of the officer's confident speech and the faces of the recruits, whose eager expressions reflect their naive anticipation. This cinematographic technique sets the stage for the devastating contrast between these

idealized expectations and the harsh reality that will follow.

In terms of art direction, the film takes a realistic and grounded approach to faithfully depicting the historical events. Each scene is meticulously designed to accurately reflect the time period, from the location and props to the use of appropriate technology. The film's dark, earthy color palette and desaturated lighting enhance the sense of devastation, capturing the bleak landscape filled with fallen soldiers, wrecked structures, barbed wire and the remnants of trees.

One moment where the art direction truly stands out is when the soldiers, freshly recruited, are alerted to an incoming artillery strike. As they scramble for shelter in makeshift dugouts, the camera follows Paul into the trench, just as explosions rock the earth. When Paul wakes up, dazed and disoriented, the camera pans through the chaotic scene of destruction. The trench is littered with bloody bodies and debris, underscoring the brutal, unrelenting nature of war. This moment is one of the first in the film to truly immerse the audience in the harsh reality the soldiers face.

The central theme of *All Quiet on the Western Front* revolves around the transformation that oc-

ALL QUIET
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Early Miyazaki film *Nausicaä* still delights

Now more than 40 years old, *Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind* is a stellar example of excellent anime

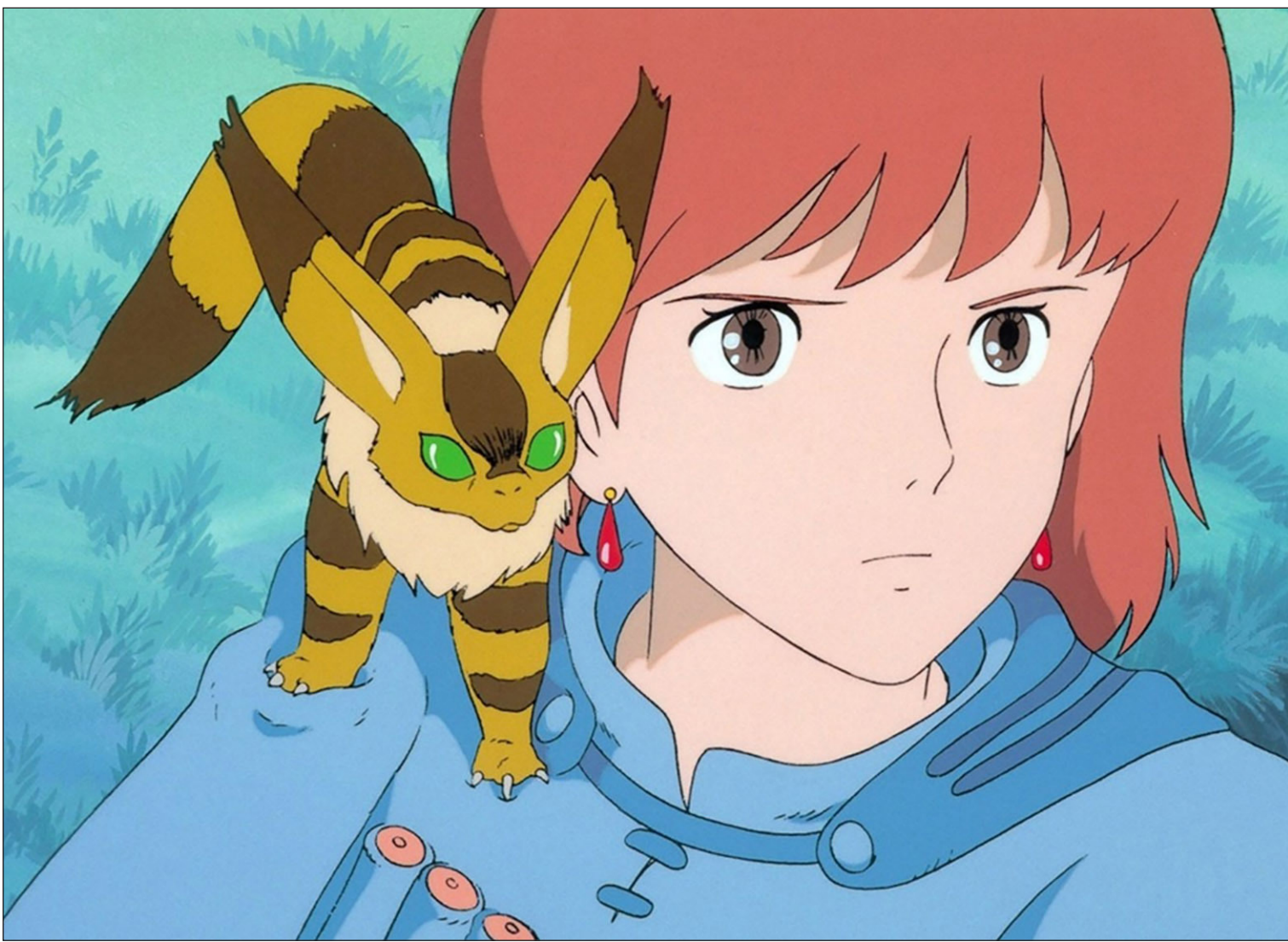


Photo by WALT DISNEY STUDIOS

The film's title character struggles throughout the story to find common ground between the forces of human progress and the needs of nature.

By VIVIAN HETTLE
Quill staff writer

The film I have selected is to review is *Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind*, directed by Hayao Miyazaki and released in 1984. I chose this movie because of its brilliant musical score and eye-catching costume design. Miyazaki masterfully uses moments of “ma,” where we are left to gaze at a beautiful scene in peace, sometimes with a character, while an enchanting score plays in the background. It feels as though we are lost in the film, as if we could reside inside of it forever. These are the moments that pull me into the movie. Another aspect that captivates me is the engaging costume design, where each character is perfectly represented by their attire, ranging from humble peasantry to royal elegance, from humility to pride. In *Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind*, Miyazaki uses costume design and musical score to paint a picture of how spreading fear can lead to war on a dying

planet.

Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind is set in the distant future, after an apocalyptic conflict has devastated much of the world's ecosystems. The few surviving humans live in scattered communities within a toxic jungle. The film's protagonist, Nausicaä, resides in the arid Valley of the Wind and has the ability to communicate with the massive insects that inhabit the dangerous jungle. Under the guidance of a veteran warrior, Lord Yupa, Nausicaä strives to bring peace to the ravaged planet.

One filmmaking technique that makes this film memorable is its musical score. Early in the movie, we meet Nausicaä, who is exploring a toxic forest covered in deadly spores. She discovers a deceased Ohmu, an enormous, multi-eyed insect resembling a giant pill bug. Nausicaä harvests an eye shell from the Ohmu, which will greatly aid her people. As the forest releases its afternoon spores, Nausicaä, wearing a gas mask, sits

in the moment, admiring the beauty around her. The music playing is light and serene, contrasting with the danger she faces, as these spores are highly toxic and could kill her instantly. Despite the peril, the scene creates a sense of calm, drawing us into Nausicaä's perspective. This moment of ma, a stillness of time, encourages us to view the spores not as a threat but as something that can be understood and treated. The music helps set the mood, allowing us to connect with Nausicaä's peaceful and curious approach to the situation.

Costume design is another key filmmaking element that enriches the story, representing each character's unique traits. As the film progresses, we meet one of the antagonists, a royal woman named Kushana, who has just seized Nausicaä's village and killed her father, the king. She gathers the villagers to announce her plans and assert her authority. The contrast in clothing between the two kingdoms speaks volumes about their respective cultures.

Nausicaä's people wear simple, practical clothing that reflects their humble farming lifestyle, while Kushana and her army are adorned in flashy, elaborate garments and armor that signal their wealth and status. Kushana has an ornate outfit that includes a crown embedded with jewels and a white cape. Her right-hand man also dons luxurious clothing, including purple and blue garments traditionally reserved for royalty. This stark contrast suggests that Kushana is not to be trusted; her wealth and status are symbols of her manipulation and control. In contrast, Nausicaä's simplicity allows her to connect more deeply with her people, as she is seen as one of them. Her clothing conveys humility, while Kushana's attire emphasizes her separation from those she governs.

The central message of the film is that war destroys both people and their planet. A pivotal scene illustrates this is when a

NAUSICAA
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Superman Returns is underappreciated superhero film

With the DC cinematic universe undergoing a massive overhaul, it is a good time to revisit this 2006 release

By KRIS OATES
Quill staff writer

Superman Returns is a 2006 film directed by Bryan Singer, starring Brandon Routh as Superman, Kate Bosworth as Lois Lane and Kevin Spacey as Lex Luthor. I chose to review this film because it was my favorite movie growing up and it made me imagine a life as a hero. In my opinion, it is the best of all the Superman films. *Superman Returns* explores themes of heroism, redemption and the eternal struggle between good and evil as Superman returns to Earth to face his old nemesis.

After leaving Earth for five years to visit his home planet, Superman returns to find that humanity has lost faith in him as its savior. Lois Lane has moved on with her life and society has learned to survive without him. Superman must now find a way to reconnect with Lois and rediscover his place in a world that may no longer need him. Adding to his difficulties is the rise of Lex Luthor, who plots to destroy Superman once and for all.

One key filmmaking element in the film is editing, which is crucial in creating the realism of Superman's powers. A notable scene where editing plays a critical role is the airplane rescue sequence. The quick cuts and transitions heighten the tension as Superman saves the aircraft. These editing techniques not only showcase the realism of the action but also emphasize Su-



Photo by WARNER BROS.

Donning the famous cape in *Superman Returns* is Brandon Routh.

perman's heroic abilities and the scale of the disasters he faces. In this scene, the editing builds suspense and maintains a rhythm, using fast cuts between panicking passengers,

the edge of their seats, making the moment memorable and emotionally intense as Superman saves the day.

Another important filmmak-

The main theme of *Superman Returns* is hope, perseverance and the power of good. A pivotal scene that reflects this message is when Superman, weakened by kryptonite, lifts a massive landmass and hurls it into space.

the failing aircraft and Superman's efforts. This sense of chaos makes Superman's eventual success feel even more impactful and thrilling. The editing keeps the audience on

ing technique in *Superman Returns* is the use of special effects. A key scene where special effects are vital is when Superman lifts the massive landmass created by Lex Luthor.

The visual effects highlight the landmass' enormous size and weight, as well as Superman's strength and determination. The landmass is infused with kryptonite, which weakens Superman, making the scene more dramatic and challenging. The special effects make the impossible seem believable, immersing the audience in Superman's struggle. The impact on viewers is significant, as the effects draw them into the scene, allowing them to feel the danger and weight of Superman's actions.

The main theme of *Superman Returns* is hope, perseverance and the power of good. A pivotal scene that reflects this message is when Superman, weakened by kryptonite, lifts a massive landmass and hurls it into space. This moment shows Superman's determination, hope and unwavering commitment to doing good. It showcases his role as a protector of humanity, even at great personal cost. I strongly agree with this theme, as it reminds us of the importance of hope and the power of doing good, not just being good.

In conclusion, *Superman Returns* explores the themes of heroism, redemption and the battle between good and evil. I love this movie and appreciate the director's work. It has brought joy to me and my family and we have always gone to see it when new Superman movies come out. I can tell that a lot of effort and time went into this movie, both from the actors and the director. *Superman Returns* deserves five out of five stars.

CONCERNS ABOUT ICE
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some of our students and families are experiencing right now is legitimate, and I don't want to diminish that real fear. I think the most we as teachers can do to ease fears is provide students with factual information. At this time, schools are not being targeted by ICE. There have been no ICE raids at schools in Minnesota to the best of my knowledge. If an ICE official enters our building, before they have access to any student or student data, they need to provide the school with a judiciary warrant. Our district has put into place a plan involving the assistant superintendent, building administrators and building security to limit ICE access to as little as legally required and protect our students as much as possible," she said.

Right now, no schools in the United States have been raided by ICE. However, the worry among some students has grown so strong that school attendance rates have been dropping in some communities, according to CNN. In light of that, Foster said it is important that school teachers and staff members support their students.

"For their own safety, a student's immigration status is on a need-to-know basis. I don't need to know the immigrant status of a student to teach and support them. Therefore, it's hard for me to link any behaviors or attendance to fears of ICE raids. I have definitely heard and spoken with individual students who have expressed fear and asked for resources. I have also noticed a decline in attendance and an increase in withdrawn or guarded behavior in the last couple of weeks that may or may not be connected. I think it's important that, as educators, we don't jump to conclusions regarding what's going on in our students' lives," Foster said.

On a larger scale, Smith added that there has not been a dramatic decrease in attendance at Cooper and she is hopeful that students will feel safe enough at school to continue coming for the benefit of their own education.

The threat of ICE is not only an administrative issue, however. Students at Cooper who feel passionately about the subject have spoken out against the new federal policy.

"The situation with ICE has reached a point where it no longer surprises me. My friends, all of us at 17, are now speaking up, not only for our own lives, but for others, showing unwavering determination to speak out for what's right. They have made it clear that they will stand up for justice, meaning facing opposition for those who have never encountered issues with law enforcement," Carlie Jones (11) said.

Now more than ever, Foster said it is important that students and administration work together in order to keep each other's best interests in mind.

"The message I want to share with all students is that you belong here, your teachers and administrators want you here and we will do everything in our power to support you. We are here to talk with you if you are feeling fearful, frustrated or sad. If you are hearing comments from others that are hurtful, discriminatory or harassing, please let us know and we will work to end those types of comments. Please know that we care about you and we are here for you," Foster said.

BUDGET CUTS
continued from page 1

activities to assess their cost-effectiveness and will present a plan in the coming weeks to address these offerings.

District officials stress that they are committed to providing a transparent process for staff, ensuring they receive guidance as staffing decisions are made. The district will continue to talk with students, staff, families and the broader community through various channels, including school board meetings, newsletters and social media updates, to keep everyone informed.

"We know this is challenging, and there are no easy answers. But together, we will move forward, and we will do so in a way that puts our students first and restores trust in our district's financial leadership," Staloch said.

Premier Performers

The story of the musicians and artists who bring their talents to Cooper

Joey Bristol

By MARIAH WASHINGTON
Quill staff writer

Joey Bristol (12) is making his mark in both the choir and theater programs at Cooper. Bristol said he is finding joy in the connections he has made and the creativity he can express in these activities.

"I started both choir and theater in 11th grade because my friends recommended it," Bristol said.

Although he is now just in his second year of both activities, Bristol said he quickly found that both experiences have been far more rewarding than he initially imagined. For Bristol, what stands out the most in both choir and theater is the sense of community.

"The thing I've enjoyed most about theater and choir is the communities that they both are and all the friends

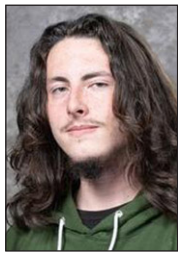


Photo by R. VANG-LOHNES

I've made," he said.

Bristol's dedication to the arts has led to some memorable experiences, including performing in the final show of *A Midsummer Night's Disaster* and singing at Orchestra Hall during the district's annual Fall Music Festival.

"Singing in Orchestra Hall was definitely a highlight," he said.

Looking ahead, Bristol said he is excited to continue pursuing his passion for performing.

"I'm putting on my own one-act play for the one-act festival in the spring," he said.

Outside of school, Bristol spends his free time working. When he looks toward his future after graduating, Bristol is clear about his goals.

"If it's possible, I would love to act or make music for a living," he said.

Lizzy Monner

By MARIAH WASHINGTON
Quill staff writer

Lizzy Monner (12) is a Cooper student who is leaving her mark both on the theater stage and in the clay studio. Involved in both activities since her freshman and junior years, respectively, Monner said she enjoys being in these creative spaces.

According to Monner, her introduction to theater came when friends who were involved in acting encouraged her to join the crew.

"I joined theater because my friends said they needed people for the stage crew," Monner said. "I love being involved in the making of a theater show and bonding with people who love musicals as much as I do."

One key part of Monner's job in theater is running the soundboard during



Photo by R. JARFMAN

the school musical.

"I deal with the mics and the only issues we have are when the mic packs or heads start to die," she said.

Despite the technical challenges, Monner said she enjoys the responsibility and the thrill of making sure everything runs smoothly.

In addition to theater, Monner more recently found a new passion in her Clay class, where she enjoys the creative environment.

"I love Clay class because of the environment of the classroom. It feels like a fun, relaxing break from the rest of the school," she said.

Monner added that her favorite part of class is "stomping on a massive amount of clay when preparing it for our sculpture-building process."

Next fall, Monner plans to major in design and technology for theater at Minnesota State University, Mankato.

Luna Moon

By MARIAH WASHINGTON
Quill staff writer

Working in the fine arts at Cooper is Luna Moon (12), who has taken both Clay 1 and Clay 2 at the school. Although she has spent two years refining her craft in these ceramics classes, Moon said she initially hesitated to take Clay 1.

"I had no plans to take the class in my junior year until [art teacher] Mr. Molitor gave me advice on my last day," she said. "He told me not to let myself be overwhelmed by my work. That stuck with me and pushed me to try the full class."

Moon's love for clay has only grown stronger since then. She said she appreciates the freedom Molitor gives her to explore new ideas.

"He's always pushed my ideas and never said no, even if my way ended up



Photo by R. JARFMAN

a mess," she said. "He never shot down a dream."

Moon's artistic interests extend beyond Cooper's walls. She said she often brings her work home, where her mother has been a supportive figure.

"My mom believes I have potential," Moon said. "She loves that I'm always excited to share my new pieces and the stories behind them."

Outside of art, Moon said she is spending her free time working on passing a bill in the Minnesota legislature to incorporate Native American history into Minnesota schools. While she is not sure exactly how art or

her political interests will factor into the decisions she makes about college and a career, Moon said they will likely be a focus.

"I don't know exactly what I want to do yet, and that's okay," Moon said.

Charles Nichols

By MARIAH WASHINGTON
Quill staff writer

Charles Nichols (12) is a member of the Hawks arts community with interests spanning theater, clay and photography, in addition to his involvement in church choir outside of school. His interest in theater started at a young age.

"I've been doing theater since sixth grade. I decided to try it because my sister was in theater and I thought it looked fun," Nichols said.

Meanwhile, his involvement with church choir started even longer ago, although Nichols said he cannot quite remember when he first started. Finally, his work in clay and photography started through taking these classes at Cooper.

For Nichols, the most rewarding



Photo by R. VANG-LOHNES

part of each of these activities is the sense of community that is formed. Whether it is collaborating with fellow actors, sculpting in clay or snapping photos, the connections he has made are what he values most.

"For all of them, it's definitely the people," Nichols said.

According to Nichols, his favorite memory in theater was writing and producing his own play during Cooper's spring one-act festival.

"I managed to keep the audience laughing for a good chunk of my show," Nichols said.

Looking ahead, Nichols said he is excited to continue his artistic journey after high school. Nichols plans to attend Augustana University in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, where he hopes to study something connected to the arts.

Media Center adds art collection

Media Specialist Mr. King is showcasing artwork to promote student expression at school



Photo by ROSE VANG-LOHNES

The dresses currently residing in the Media Center were made in the Fashion Merchandising class.

By SAM PETERSON
Quill staff writer

Independent art projects are often displayed in the Media Center for short periods of time, but this year, Remi Desalu (12) proposed the idea of a permanent art display. The permanent art display would be up for around five years, leaving it viewable for the next few graduating classes.

"My main focus was collaboration as the focus of the project," Desalu said.

Having more students see the artwork in the Media Center helps them to feel more included and seen.

"Having permanent, smaller works helps make the Media Center more student-oriented and lets kids express their voices," Mr. King, Cooper's media specialist, said.

Chelsea Fontaine (12) is the artist behind one of the new displays. Her artwork depicts a young black woman wearing a graduation cap. Using acrylic paint, Fontaine captures the

woman using different shades of blues and oranges. The material it was done on was a large, recycled wood board.

"I wanted this piece to celebrate diversity at Cooper, as



Photo by SAM PETERSON

Chelsea Fontaine (12) created her painting to celebrate the diversity of students at Cooper.

well as remind those who come that they are creating their future here," Fontaine said.

According to King, art is an important activity to many Cooper students, which is why he tries to make sure it is rep-

resented in the Media Center. Other displays that are currently in the Media Center include the paper dresses made in the Fashion Design class. Additionally, during the spring, the sophomore IB Personal Project boards are displayed in the Media Center. Sometimes, teachers request to display their students' work in the room as well.

"Art should express a skill or a point of view and make the viewer think or feel something and Cooper students do a good job of that," King said.

Displaying art also has many mental advantages for students, such as boosting confidence. To have art displayed and viewed by one's peers takes a lot of courage. It can also let the artist see what other people think of their art and what impact that art has on the world.

"Seeing their work displayed validates students' efforts, fostering a sense of accomplishment and encouraging them to take pride in their creativity," Ms. Mielke, one of Cooper's art teachers, said.

ALL QUIET IS ONE OF THE GREATEST WAR MOVIES EVER continued from page 4

curs when an individual is exposed to the cruelty of war. As mentioned earlier, the cinematography captures the shift in Paul's character; he goes from being an eager, patriotic young man to someone hardened by the horrors he witnesses. A pivotal scene illustrating this transformation occurs near the end, when Paul and his comrades are ordered to attack a French trench. Despite the initial surprise and resistance from the French, the Germans successfully push through. During the attack, Paul's complete desensitization is revealed as he brutally kills enemy soldiers with a blank expression. It is here that Paul's loss of innocence becomes painfully clear. His actions no longer stem from a sense of duty or patriotism

but from pure survival instinct. This moment is a powerful illustration of how war dehumanizes soldiers, turning them into mere instruments of violence.

Another important theme in the film is the futility of war and the meaningless sacrifice of soldiers. In a tragic loop, Paul, who once collected the dog tags of fallen soldiers, is eventually killed at the war's end. In a poignant moment after the armistice, a young soldier is seen collecting Paul's tag, underscoring the tragic cycle of expendability. This loop symbolizes the idea that soldiers are mere pawns in the larger game of war, their deaths serving no purpose other than to satisfy the desires of the powerful few. I strongly agree with the themes

presented in the film, as they shed light on the traumatic experiences faced by soldiers during a historical conflict. The film's portrayal of disillusionment, dehumanization and the futility of war is both compelling and thought-provoking.

Ultimately, *All Quiet on the Western Front* demonstrates how the brutality of war can strip soldiers of their ideals and morals, leading them to realize that war is far from the glorious pursuit they once imagined. After rewatching the film, I can confidently say that it remains one of my top 10 favorite films of all time. With its powerful performances, stunning cinematography and poignant themes, *All Quiet on the Western Front* deserves a perfect five-star rating.

EARLY MIYAZAKI FILM NAUSICAA STILL DELIGHTS continued from page 5

massive herd of Ohmu goes on a rampage toward Nausicaä's village after Kushana captures a baby Ohmu and uses it to provoke the herd. Nausicaä's instinct is to save the baby Ohmu in order to stop the destruction. She succeeds in freeing the baby, but she and the creature are trapped on a tiny island surrounded by acidic water, an effect of the planet's deteriorating environment. This toxicity results from the toxic spores and years of conflict between warring factions. Kushana, blinded by her desire for

war, fails to see the devastation her actions will cause. In the end, Nausicaä teaches the people that fear should not drive their actions; rather, they should approach the world with curiosity, kindness and understanding. I fully agree with this message, as it resonates with our own world, where too often we are consumed by conflict instead of focusing on preserving and improving our planet.

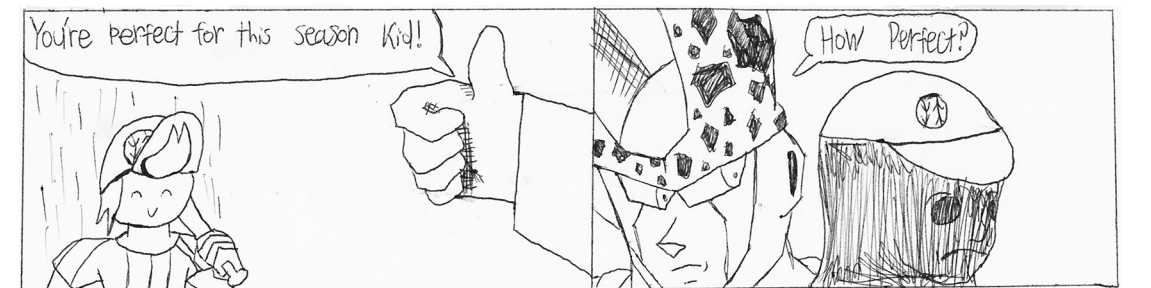
Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind brilliantly uses costume design and musical score to highlight

the consequences of fear-driven war on a dying planet. Overall, I absolutely love this film. The character of Nausicaä is so beautifully written and the story makes you genuinely care for her. As an animated film, it is visually stunning, with exceptional artistry. I cannot get enough of this movie and I have watched it numerous times. Miyazaki is a brilliant storyteller and his films are designed to convey important messages. *Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind* deserves a five-out-of-five-star rating.

Quill Comics Corner

The Perfect Season

By John Papenfuss



Hawk artists start mural-making process

The annual mural assignment will bring art students into the hallways to work on their pieces during April, May



Photo by ROBIN JARMAN

Art students can either propose their own design or they can receive a commission from a specific teacher near the mural area.

By TRISTAN JAY TOLENTINO
Quill staff writer

Murals are more than just art; they are a declaration of an artist's pride and dedication to their craft. As mural season approaches, Cooper International Baccalaureate (IB) Art students are gearing up to continue a tradition of creating murals that not only showcase their artistic talents, but also serve as lasting symbols of their impact on the school community.

Over the years, Cooper has built a rich history of student-made murals, from the Cooper band mural on the brick walls near the music rooms to the Pan-African mural at the heart of the school near the main foyer. According to IB Art teacher Ms. Mielke, these pieces are an important part of the school's identity, with student artists dedicating their time and creativity to make the school environment more expressive and inspiring.

"The seniors in IB Art are

prompted to leave their legacy behind when they graduate through their murals," Mielke said.

The tradition of mural-making at Cooper was started by Mielke in

seniors and seniors in the IB Art class, students are either commissioned by a teacher to create a mural or, in the case of seniors, they are given the freedom to design their own murals

"The messages must be uplifting or positive. As long as it's school-appropriate and approved by the administration, we are open to the artist's vision," International Baccalaureate Art teacher Ms. Mielke said. "We want these murals to foster a love for the arts and give attention to student voices."

2018, when she entrusted her IB Art students with the opportunity to pursue large-scale projects. She pushed them to think bigger and go beyond traditional classroom work. As ju-

as a personal artistic statement.

One senior in the IB Art program, Toby Bishop (12), said the challenge of creating a mural is a welcome one.

"It forces me to completely step out of my comfort zone as a digital artist, which is terrifying, but also makes me a better artist," he said.

Starting after spring break, IB Art students will be seen roaming the halls with paints, ladders and brushes, bringing their murals to life. Before painting begins, Assistant Principal Mr. Nelson reviews the rough drafts of each student's mural designs.

"The messages must be uplifting or positive. As long as it's school-appropriate and approved by the administration, we are open to the artist's vision," Mielke said. "We want these murals to foster a love for the arts and give attention to student voices."

As the murals continue to be painted, they will serve not only as a form of artistic expression but also as a reminder of the creativity and passion that thrives at Cooper.

"The murals bring beauty to the hallways and positivity to the school climate and culture," Mielke said.

ICE ENFORCEMENT continued from page 3

are far-reaching. Firstborn children of immigrants could be forced to leave the only country they have ever known and sent to a country where they have no connections, no support and possibly no understanding of the language. This would leave them stranded in a foreign land, with no sense of belonging or security. In some cases, families would be torn apart. Parents would be separated from their children, who may either be left behind in detention facilities or taken to a country they do not know.

Trump's executive order underscores a troubling shift in America's approach to immigration and its perception of national identity. The policy reflects an attitude of exclusion, where individuals deemed "undesirable" based on their immigration status are pushed out. This approach aims to uphold what some perceive as America's "prestige" and reputation by excluding those seen as "tainting" the nation's image.

Of course, Trump's policies have divided our society. On one side, some argue that his actions are justified and that anyone who is in the country illegally should face consequences. On the other side, many defend the rights of immigrants, particularly those who came to the U.S. seeking a better life or fleeing dangerous situations. Advocates for immigrants emphasize that firstborn children, who have grown up in America and know no other home, should not be punished for their parents' choices.

The debate over immigration policies continues to polarize America. While some believe the enforcement of stricter immigration laws is necessary for the country's security and integrity, others view it as a violation of basic human rights. The impact of such policies on families, especially children who have lived their entire lives in the U.S., cannot be ignored. It is crucial to consider the moral and ethical implications of these actions and how they shape the future of our society. However, one thing for certain is that no student should have to fear coming to school because of the chance that ICE may show up.

HEALTH MENTOR continued from page 2

consultations on relationships. These conversations can bring up many questions around intimacy, communication, conflict management and self-esteem," she said.

Also important is that her job helps connect students with the Annex Teen Clinic.

"I am able to meet with them before they have a clinic appointment and I encourage them to check in with me afterwards to discuss how their clinic visit went. All Cooper students have the unique opportunity of accessing the clinic and all our services for little-to-no cost," she said.

According to Alamilla, there are several things that motivated her to seek a job as a health mentor.

"I became a health mentor and educator because I believe that learning about one's own body is empowering. Sex education is a universal experience because everyone has a body. By understanding ourselves and having the knowledge to make our own choices about our bodies, we become less vulnerable and more confident," she said.

Alamilla also has a message to any student who is hesitant to see her.

"To any students who are feeling hesitant about reaching out to me, I would say that only you can decide when the time is right for you. If your needs are affecting your mental or physical health, education or personal life, just know that there are efforts in place to make sure that it doesn't have to be that way. So, whenever you're ready, my door is open," Alamilla said.

RESTROOMS NOW UNUSABLE DUE TO STUDENT BEHAVIOR continued from page 3

It lingers around for a long time and covers vast swathes of area because of its large dispersal radius. The students who have had to endure this while traveling the hallways must be very appreciative of the terrible odor, especially those with sensitivity to allergens.

With that out of the way, I would like to bring to light the next issue, one that is not that much of a trouble for the average student but is the bane of building management and custodial staff: careless bathroom littering and vandalism. Sure, there is occasionally an apple in a toilet bowl or an accumulation of crumpled paper towels all over the floor; maybe there is even some uninspired slurs etched into the stall door; those things are expected. What really gives you an appreciation for the work the custodians do, however, is when you come across just how big of a mess is created when a chocolate milk carton explodes when it is heaved against a bathroom wall or when nicotine fiends flush their vapes down the toilet to

avoid rightful apprehension. That just has to have been a grand old time for the custodial staff to unclog and fix. It is likely quite expensive too.

Now, let us crank up the severity of the next issue by setting a scene: You find yourself in desperate need of a bathroom and head to the nearest one. Upon the approach to the doorway, you are met with the ambiance of unintelligible shouting. You think nothing of it at first and make your way into the bathroom only to find that, immediately in front of you, there are two guys going at it, slamming each other around while throwing hooks left and right without regard for anybody or anything around them. An audience collects in the room's corners, shrieking like bats while recording the fight. What are you going to do now? Guess you are out of luck. They sure are not going to stop to let you through, at least not until somebody hits the floor.

What would compel individuals to do this? What issue is so urgent and

pressing that it necessitates scheduling a fight in a school bathroom of all places? You would think somebody at the age to attend a high school would have a developed enough brain to employ rational thinking skills and be capable of solving their problems in a normal and civilized manner, but apparently not. Apparently this big dramatic situation has to be created, one which could have been entirely avoidable in the first place, just to endanger themselves, as well as endangering and disrupting the bathroom routines of others.

Because of these occurrences, the state of Cooper's bathrooms has been ridiculous for some time now. A place where students are offered an intermission to relieve themselves between class periods has become a space where illicit acts are perpetrated. The continuation of these behaviors not only interferes with the common student but also with the building itself, made evident through accounts of previously discussed examples. Clearly, there is not enough of an

incentive to discourage this behavior, as the students involved in these activities have no regard for the possible consequences to their actions or the effect it may have on others. These issues will just continue to persist if no changes are made.

While I am not too familiar with how Cooper handles disciplinary action myself, and I am in no way one to command how punishments should be imposed, they seem all too lenient to me. There is just no way that this would be such a widespread issue if delinquents were under the threat of a heavy punishment for their offenses, not even for a nicotine fiend that cannot go five seconds without sucking on their stick before breaking out in a manic sweat. All that is wanted by me, and many others, surely, is a bathroom free from nonsense. It is my hope that to the benefit of everybody, the school will finally put a stop to this, because in the end, the ones committing these acts have shown they could not care less.

The Quill

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Trainer supports Hawk athletes

Ms. Shelstad is available in the Athletic Training Room Monday through Friday from 3:15-6 p.m.



Photo by ROSE VANG-LOHNES

One busy time in Ms. Shelstad's office is right after school when team practices are about to begin.

By MARIAH WASHINGTON
Quill staff writer

Hawks athletes know the importance of their coaches and teammates when it comes to their high school athletic careers. However, there is another person working behind the scenes whose job it is to ensure that students stay healthy, recover quickly and return to their sports safely after injury: Athletic Trainer Ms. Shelstad.

As the primary athletic trainer for Cooper's student-athletes, Shelstad's role goes beyond wrapping ankles and providing ice for injuries. Her daily tasks include injury evaluation, physical therapy exercises, concussion management and treatment plans for the school's athletes. In addition to providing these services to students who need them, Shelstad also looks after the Cooper staff.

"I provide injury assessment and care to keep our Cooper student-athletes and staff participating and being active," Shelstad said. "If needed, I refer them to other providers for further care. Whether it's taping, ice, injury evaluation or treatment recommendations, I'm here to help."

During the three athletic seasons, Shelstad is available in the Cooper Athletic Training Room Monday through Friday from 3:15-6 p.m. After school, she first focuses on in-season athletes who need taping or treatment before their practices or events begin.

"I make sure those athletes who need to catch the bus to an event are taken care of first," she said. "After that, I evaluate new injuries, and depending on the home event schedule, I have time to see other students who need assistance."

Shelstad's role extends beyond just treating injuries. After taking care of the athletes, she checks in with coaches and observes practices if there are no home events. She works closely

with coaches to ensure that all athletes are getting the care they need.

"It's important for me to stay in communication with coaches and make sure they're aware of any injuries and how to handle them," she said.

One of the challenges Shelstad often faces is covering multiple events that are scheduled at the same time.

"Sometimes, I have to cover both hockey and basketball on the same day. I'm usually able to find another athletic trainer to help cover the events I can't attend," she said.

Shelstad is no stranger to the world of injury recovery. She herself was once an injured athlete and learned firsthand how important a structured recovery process is.

"When I was injured, I was

dent-athlete who competes in boys cross country, swimming and track.

"[Ms. Shelstad] has helped me with multiple issues regarding running," Brooks said. "She's always helped me with my shin splints, the way I run and my recovery after a broken foot from running."

Brooks added that Shelstad not only showed him stretches but also stretched him herself to help his recovery.

"She's shown me key exercises to strengthen the muscles I needed to improve my condition," he said. "Thanks to her help, I've been able to get back to running at tolerable levels, and I've been recovering faster from certain injuries. This allowed me to get back to running with my team sooner."

According to Brooks, it is helpful to know there is an expert in the building who can help with the health of athletes.

"Her help has been invaluable to me," Brooks said. "I truly appreciate all the work she's done to help me recover and get back on my feet."

While her job may be demanding, Shelstad said she still finds time for the things she enjoys in life.

"I enjoy a good pun, being outdoors and spending time with friends and family," she said. "It's important to have a balance in life, especially in this line of work."

Overall, Shelstad's work is integral to the success of the athletic programs at Cooper and, as Brooks' comments make clear, her contributions do not go unnoticed. Whether it is ensuring that an athlete is properly rehabilitating an injury, providing guidance on concussion recovery or offering a listening ear, she is an asset to the school's athletic community.

"Stop by anytime. I'm happy to help. Let's see what I can do to help you participate and stay healthy," she said.

"I provide injury assessment and care to keep our Cooper student-athletes and staff participating and being active," Ms. Shelstad said. "If needed, I refer them to other providers for further care. Whether it's taping, ice, injury evaluation or treatment recommendations, I'm here to help."

given the orders to do nothing while my injury healed, and then I was allowed to return to activity four weeks later with no progression or strengthening. I ended up re-injured. That experience has shaped the way I approach recovery for the athletes I work with. I make sure they get the proper care and treatment to prevent further injury," Shelstad said.

In addition to her work at Cooper, Shelstad also works for M Health Fairview, where she serves in the Sports Medicine, Podiatry and Orthopedic Surgery clinic in the mornings. This added experience provides her with even more expertise to help Cooper athletes recover and return to their sports quickly.

One athlete who has benefited from Shelstad's expertise is Andrew Brooks (12), a stu-

EXECUTIVE ORDERS AN AFFRONT TO COMMON SENSE continued from page 3

ic, Trump repeatedly criticized the World Health Organization for being too slow and being "owned and controlled by China." Now, Trump will be withdrawing us from the World Health Organization. I do not understand how this is a great idea. In a time when the globe is interconnected and the spread of disease across borders is rampant, we should be working more closely with other countries on these issues, not cutting ourselves off from them.

Another health-related executive order is named "Enforcing the Hyde Amendment." This order will prohibit the use of federal dollars to cover abortion and related health care services. I will never understand why other people, typically powerful men, feel the need to control the wellbeing of a woman and her body. At the end of the day, we women have to carry the child, not the men.

This collection of troubling

executive orders is just skimming the surface of what Trump has done and intends to do during his presidency. I highly encourage you to read more about these and the other executive orders he has signed, which will have an impact on all of us in the United States of America. I do not believe he is making America great again. As an indigenous person and an American citizen, I am merely shaking my head in shame and disappointment.

DISTRICT APPLAUDED FOR KEEPING IB PROGRAM continued from page 3

opportunities limited.

Thankfully, the final decision was announced in early March that the district will not cut the IB program. Although I was relieved

about this decision, I also became aware of something for the first time as a student: I did not realize until now how our education is determined by how much money

a district has. I hope in the future a budget error like this does not happen again and that we do not consider getting rid of beneficial programs like IB.

Cooper Competitors

The story of the athletes who strive for success in Cooper sports

Kaiden Hicks

By MARIAH WASHINGTON
Quill staff writer

Kaiden Hicks (12) is a sports enthusiast who is involved with the Hawks basketball program. During the winter season, he plays for the Cooper team, and in the spring, he competes with his travel team.

Hicks said he has been passionate about basketball since he was one year old and began playing in a youth basketball program at the age of four. He said his love for the game was sparked by his "brothers and cousins, who all played basketball."

Hicks said he appreciates the way his coaches give feedback. "They're able to criticize in a way that helps you improve," he explained. "They care about your development as both a player and a person."

When reflecting on his favorite

basketball memories, Hicks said he cherishes every moment he has spent with his basketball teams and considers his entire experience with the sport as extremely memorable. Hicks said he sees himself as "the voice of the team" on both offense and defense, playing a pivotal role in communication and strategy.



Photo by R. JARMAN

Outside of the Cooper season, Hicks competes in the Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) basketball program, traveling to Wisconsin and Illinois to play in various tournaments.

When he is not playing basketball, Hicks said he enjoys every class in school. He describes his teachers as "nice, understanding and always willing to help when you need it."

Looking ahead, Hicks hopes to continue his basketball career in college while pursuing a degree in engineering.

Cam Bouvard

By MARIAH WASHINGTON
Quill staff writer

Cam Bouvard (12), an exchange student from Switzerland, has been actively involved in sports since arriving at Cooper. She joined cheerleading in the fall and dance in the winter.

Bouvard has been dancing for more than five years, specializing in modern jazz, which is why she decided to join the dance team. Although she is not performing modern jazz as part of the Hawks team, she said she still enjoys being part of the program.

"The atmosphere of the team, along with the friends and coaches, is what I enjoy most," she said.

Looking back on the fall cheerleading season, Bouvard said she is glad she joined the team.

"The season went well," she said.

According to Bouvard, she hoped to get involved in a spring sport as well, but her exchange program was coming to a close at the end of January, so she will not be at Cooper during the spring season.

Inside the classroom, Bouvard enjoys her Psychology and Band classes. She said she appreciates the friendships she has formed and the strong bonds she has made with her teachers. She said she finds both subjects engaging and exciting.

Outside of school, Bouvard enjoys swimming in the summer and skiing in the winter.

As she looks toward the future, Bouvard said she hopes to attend McGill University in Montreal, Canada. She also plans to continue participating in sports in college "just because [she] loves them."



Photo by R. VANG-LOHNES

Emeric Clercq

By MARIAH WASHINGTON
Quill staff writer

Emeric Clercq (12) is a three-season Cooper athlete, competing in football during the fall, swimming in the winter and tennis in the spring. As a foreign exchange student, Clercq said he is eager to make the most of his year in America, which is why he participates in every sport he can.

Currently, Clercq is wrapping up his swimming season. He said he enjoys swimming because "it is really tiring."

"I like pushing myself and testing my limits as far as I can go," Clercq added.

Although Clercq does not have many specific memorable moments from the time he has spent in swimming, he hopes to "make many memories" during the end of the season.

Prior to swimming with the Hawks, he played football for the first time in the fall. Clercq said his football season went "really well." He enjoyed the experience and the people he met along the way. He especially appreciated the opportunity to connect with teammates.

With the spring season now here, Clercq said he is looking forward to giving the tennis team a try.

Outside of sports, Clercq said he enjoys his Physics class because of the friends he has made in addition to the fact that he is passionate about the subject itself. Meanwhile, outside of school, he said he loves watching movies and could "watch movies all day."

Clercq plans to extend his love of physics into college, where he hopes to study engineering. He also intends to continue playing sports at college.

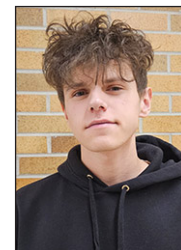


Photo by R. VANG-LOHNES

Luke Skoglund

By MARIAH WASHINGTON
Quill staff writer

Luke Skoglund (12) is an accomplished athlete who competes in Nordic skiing during the winter and is part of Cooper's lacrosse and trap shooting teams during the spring season.

"I started Nordic skiing in my freshman year because I needed a way to stay in shape over the winter and make my winters more enjoyable," Skoglund said.

Skoglund has been a captain of the Nordic squad for the past two years. He said he especially values the friendships he has built with the other members of the ski team, along with the opportunity to stay active throughout the winter months.

One of his favorite memories of being on the Nordic team is the ski trip the team takes each year. He said this

excursion is a fun way to bond with his teammates in a new environment.

"The best part of the ski trip is night skiing," Skoglund said.

In the spring, Skoglund plays lacrosse and participates in trap shooting. He said he is able to compete with both teams because lacrosse is largely during the week and trap is usually on the weekends.

As for this year's lacrosse season, Skoglund said he is "hopeful but scared."

"We have some new people joining, but we may not have a big team this year," he said.

Outside of sports, Skoglund enjoys his Band class, where he has developed strong relationships with his classmates and Mr. Hahn.

Next fall, Skoglund will attend the University of Minnesota, Duluth, where he plans to continue with lacrosse and Nordic.



Photo by R. VANG-LOHNES