



Bullis Student Tutors' Monthly Newspaper

# The Torch

Our Stories, Our Community



January

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Want to learn more about Zoe M's experience in Spain, the upcoming blood drive, the new lower school building, or the talented artists within our community? Keep reading The Torch!

## Upcoming BST Programs

*Join Us!*

What?	When?	Where?
Exam Review Sessions	Week prior to exams	TBD! Continue to check your email!

Check out our YouTube channel!



# A Sneak Peek into the New Lower School Building at Bullis

*By Rebecca E.*

Bullis School's campus is undergoing an exciting transformation, with a new building currently under construction that promises to enhance the learning experience for students, as we all have seen as we drive by. I sat down with Ms. Wade, Bullis's Chief Operating Officer (COO), to get the latest updates and insights about this long-anticipated project.

Ms. Wade began her journey at Bullis in March of 2021, starting as an assistant to Mr. Sullivan and working her way up to COO. Over the years, she's overseen a variety of administrative roles and has played an essential part in the planning of the new building.



Ms. Wade, the COO of Bullis.

***Can you provide a timeline for the construction process, including expected completion and move-in dates?***

Ms. Wade shared that the project is progressing faster than initially expected. The original target for completion was July, but now the building is projected to be finished by June 2nd. Afterward, five weeks will be dedicated to touch-ups and furnishing the space. Once the furniture is in place, lower school teachers will have the opportunity to move into their new classrooms and set up before the start of the new school year.



An inside look at the construction site.

***What is the purpose of the new building, and how will it serve the school community?***

The purpose of the new building is clear: it will serve as a dedicated and unique space for lower school students to learn and grow. As Ms. Wade explained, Bullis has never had a building specifically designed for the younger grades. This new facility

will offer classrooms and areas tailored to the developmental needs of younger children. Additionally, the relocation of the lower schoolers will free up space in South Hall, which will be repurposed for the middle school. This change will open up 14 classrooms in the Trone Center, allowing for more room for upper school students to learn.



Design of New Lower School Building.

***What are some of the key features or facilities that will be included in the new building?***

The new building promises to be a place where imagination and creativity can flourish. Among its standout features is an indoor play structure and a new three-story outdoor playground designed to grow with the children. With wide slides and multiple play areas, it's sure to be a favorite spot for students across the school. Additionally, the building will have a new maker space designed to inspire lower school students' creativity and innovation.

***How has the design of the new building been influenced by feedback from students, faculty, and staff?***

The design process for the new building was collaborative and involved input from various members of the Bullis community. A committee, including Ms. Wade, Mr.

Sullivan, board members, and lower school faculty, worked closely with architects to create a space that would meet the needs of the students. Zoom meetings with lower school teachers helped ensure their input was included, particularly when it came to classroom layouts and features.

***Will the new building offer any new programs or spaces that were not available in the previous buildings like Blair, North Hall, and Trone Center?***

The new building will also offer several programs and spaces that were previously unavailable. Notably, the lower school will have its own dedicated movement space, which will also be available to the sixth grade. Additionally, the lower school will have its own library, art room, and science room, removing the need to share these spaces with other grade levels. The new maker space, complete with innovative design features, will further foster creativity and new ideas among students.

***How will the new building help accommodate the growth and expansion of the school in the future?***

The construction of this new building is an important step in Bullis's plans to accommodate the growth of the school. By moving the lower schoolers out of South Hall, the middle school will be able to expand into that space, freeing up additional room for the upper school. This will allow for more room for students to thrive and engage in their learning.

***From Ms. Wade***

Ms. Wade also noted that the new building is a "from scratch project," meaning it was designed and built from the ground up. While South Hall was renovated this past summer and will be renovated this coming summer, the freedom of creating a new building has offered unique advantages. Nonetheless, she expressed her appreciation for the historic nature of South Hall, acknowledging the contrast between preserving the past and embracing the future.

With the new building on track for completion and set to open its doors to the lower school next year, the Bullis campus will continue to thrive in the coming years. The space is not only a testament to the school's growth but also a reflection of the commitment to providing a nurturing and innovative environment for all students.

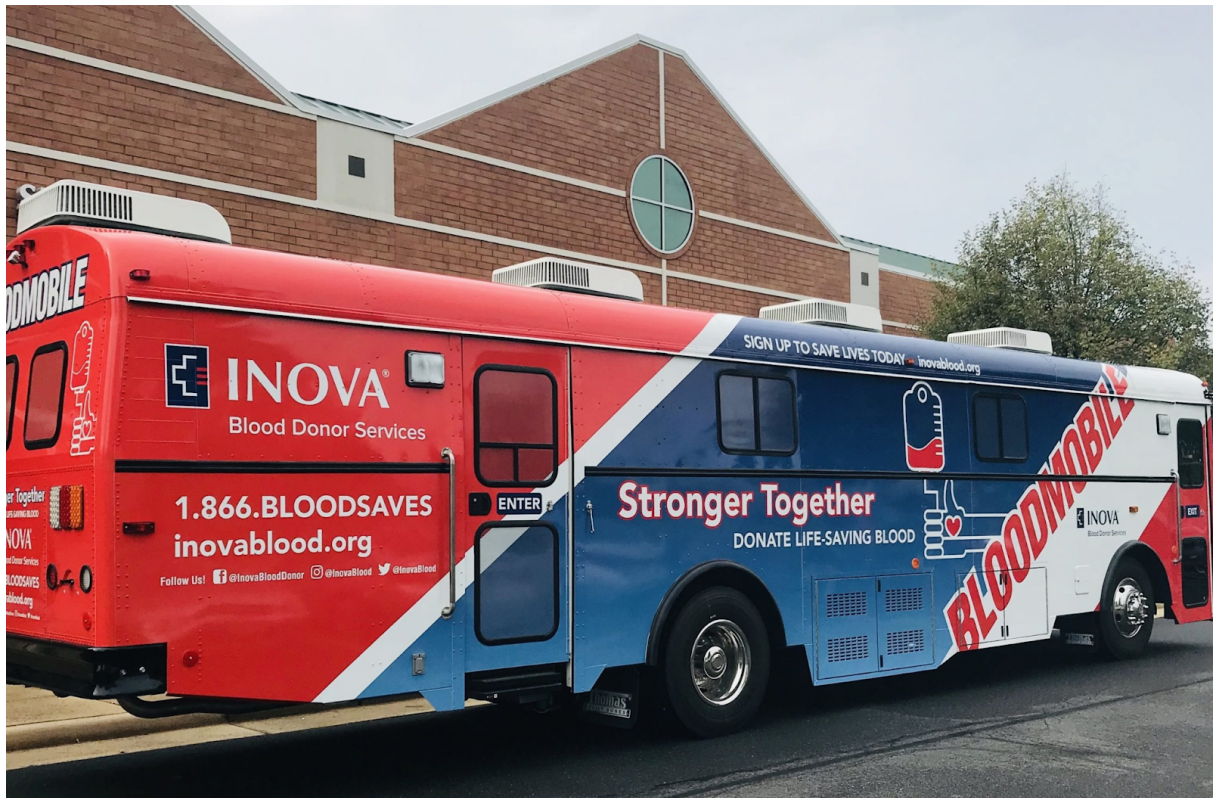
# Give the Gift of Life This Valentine's Day: School Blood Drive

*By Macy B.*

Bullis is giving students a chance to give back in a unique and meaningful way: by donating blood. The annual Valentine's Day Blood Drive, hosted in collaboration with Inova, will occur on Friday, February 14 from 8 am-1 pm in the Old Gym.

Students and faculty are encouraged to donate. To donate, you must be at least 16 years old. If you're 16, you'll also need a signed parental consent form. Anyone 17 or older can donate without parental consent. All donors should bring their Bullis student ID and make sure they eat a hearty breakfast on the day of donation.

Blood donations are critically important. By donating, you can directly help patients in need and make a difference in their communities. One pint of blood can save up to three lives.



Inova Mobile Blood Collection Truck.

Sign-up information will be sent out by Ms. Finigan in the upcoming weeks so keep an eye out for emails and announcements from her. If you have any questions regarding the blood drive please reach out to [macy\\_brill@bullis.org](mailto:macy_brill@bullis.org) or [julie\\_finigan@bullis.org](mailto:julie_finigan@bullis.org)

This Valentine's Day, show your love by helping save lives. Join us for the blood drive and be a hero to someone in need. Let's make this event a success together!

## Bullis Wrestling Triumphs at Annual Bubba Bunting Tournament

*By Ellie C.*

The Bullis wrestling team emerged victorious at this year's prestigious Bubba Bunting Tournament, a longstanding and meaningful event in honor of Captain Bubba Bunting. Bunting, a proud alumnus of both Bullis and the United States Military Academy at West Point, served multiple tours in Afghanistan before making the ultimate sacrifice in service to his country. The tournament, held annually to commemorate his dedication, bravery, and leadership, symbolizes determination and sportsmanship within the local wrestling community.



Bullis Wrestling After Their Win.

Bullis wrestlers showcased their talent and resilience throughout the competition, earning multiple individual titles and securing the overall team victory. Standout performances came from Sepanta E., Stephan N., E.J. B., Noah T., Salah T., Solly C., and Asher G., all of whom dominated their respective weight classes. Their exceptional performances were crucial in outmatching tough opponents and building momentum for the team throughout the tournament. Also, the leadership from head coach Drew Robertson as well as coaches David Tillman and Tony Howard.

The Bulldogs faced fierce competition from schools such as St. Anselm's Abbey, Gonzaga College High School, The Heights, DC BTS, and NVHAA Centurions. Despite the challenging matches, the team's unwavering spirit and skill led them to clinch the championship title. Bullis athletes and coaches alike reflected on the honor of competing in a tournament that celebrates the legacy of a hero and Bullis alumnus, vowing to carry forward his values of courage, determination, and leadership both on and off the mat.

## Onward Faring: Things to Know Before Your Senior Year

*By Ethan Y.*

As our senior class gradually breathes a collective sigh of relief and inches closer to the spring and college process finish line, our juniors are about to embark on their college journeys, which as we seniors have learned, can at times feel like an emotional roller coaster. Buckle up, rising seniors – this is going to be one of the most challenging, and ultimately rewarding, chapters of your high school career. To help you navigate these upcoming months with a bit more confidence, I've compiled some advice to keep you cool, calm, and college-ready.

### ***Key Takeaways***

- Our college counselors are one of a kind and one of the many privileges we enjoy as members of the Bullis community. They are great sources for advice on pretty much any topic you can think of, including and especially when it comes to colleges and senior-year courses. They are also extremely helpful in helping to plan your overall college application process. In summary, take full advantage of our College Counselors!
- Deadlines approach way faster than you think. Make sure you proactively keep track of your own deadlines. My advice? Google Calendar is your best friend!

Your deadlines will not only include application deadlines, but also various other dates around things like scholarship deadlines, financial aid application deadlines, and standardized tests - many popular universities among our student body (i.e. University of Georgia, Georgetown, etc.), still **REQUIRE** a standardized test score (ACT or SAT) as part of their application process.

### *What can our counselors do for you?*

Well, that is up to you. As you approach senior year, you will get to know your assigned counselor better. They will also get to know more about you, which will be immensely helpful when it comes to eventually discussing your college applications. As you and your counselor strengthen your partnership, they will be able to give you more personalized recommendations tailored to your individual needs and goals.



Ms. Miller Supporting Sydney S.

Applying to college is a nuanced process. You will need to complete your actual applications and associated supplemental materials, all of which will throw various questions at you. Your counselor can help you decode what might at first seem like cryptic prompts, and more importantly, can help you highlight your unique strengths to ensure your application tells a compelling story.

Remember: our counselors are guides, not autopilots. Your engagement with them determines how fluid your college application process will be and how effectively they can support your journey.

### ***What should you do?***

For the sake of reducing your stress and panic as much as possible, start brainstorming your essay during your junior year - *before* the application process gets fully underway in the fall. The Common Application, which you will use to apply to many of your desired colleges, releases its prompts for the personal statement by the spring, and most years the prompts are very similar, if not the same. This means that you can start preparing your statement as early as this spring or summer – or even now if you are truly ambitious! Additionally, our college counseling team hosts an Essay Writing Workshop in May for two days in each 11th-grade English class to give you advice and help you get started before summer break begins.

Your statement, as the word “personal” suggests, should be about you. This is the main resource for admissions committees to learn more about the kind of person you are, instead of just reading about your stats on a piece of paper. Be yourself, and tell the story you want to tell, not what you think an admissions committee wants to hear.

In regards to extracurricular activities, maintain a balanced approach. Instead of trying to fill out every single space offered to you on your application, remember depth matters more than breadth. Do things you feel passionate about, and let your experiences demonstrate your passion.

Remember, this journey isn’t just about getting into college. It’s about how you want to achieve your dream. Take it as an opportunity to understand yourself and prepare for your future, not just for the next four years. Good luck to you all!

## **Honoring the Legacy of the Man who Shaped Society: MLK**

*By Brenda A.*

### ***Who was Dr. Martin Luther King Jr?***

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr was a nobleman who used his life to change the world. Dr. King believed African Americans were entitled to the basic rights and opportunities of American citizens. He used his strong beliefs to determine the way he approached challenges and lived his life. He led peaceful protests, spoke out in favor of civil rights, and never backed down under threats of violence and opposition.

## ***How do Bullis and other schools honor MLK?***

Not only do schools close for MLK day, but Bullis does more. Bullis honors Dr. King by producing an assembly filled with many different activities to have a closer look at his life, field trips, and more. The assembly is run by upper school students which allows students to relate more since it's people of their age group. Bullis pays their respects to Dr. King and honors him for his wide variety of accomplishments. The assembly was filled with dances, poems, community service, and more. The middle school also visits Dr. King's memorial to honor the civil rights activist.



Bullis Students visit the MLK Statue.

## ***How can you make a difference in your life?***

As soon as I got the email for the Dr. King assembly I knew it was something I wanted to do, but I wasn't sure what I wanted to do. Many students face this similar thought process. Participating in school assemblies or school presentations is often a hard task due to the fear of people's perception in the back of your mind. Struggling to stand up in front of all of the upper school can be due to mental health, but it can also be because of how you want to be perceived. It was known that Dr. King stepped out of his comfort zone, no matter what people thought. Do you think everyone thought

highly of Dr. King, or that he wasn't nervous? No. Many people were sending explicitly dangerous messages to him and even got punched in the face numerous times. However, he didn't let that stop him from what was right and what he liked. When you believe strongly in something or the subject attracts you very much, it shouldn't matter what people think of you. At the end of the day, the only person who can make you feel negative is yourself; however, the only way to begin change is yourself too.

Thanks in large part to the efforts of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., we have a diverse school community that allows all people to get the education they need.

## Our Stories from the California Fires

*By Elizabeth M.*

In a tumultuous uproar the LA fires spread, uprooting families, decimating homes, and leaving destruction in its wake. There has been much speculation as to how the fires started, but it is largely believed that they were created during a New Year's celebration before spreading rapidly due to the Santa Ana winds. These winds are a natural phenomenon in Southern California that can reach 35 to 80 mph of dry and warm gusts. Together with the naturally dry California climate, these winds cause extreme fire hazards. Currently, the firefighters are unable to put out the fires fast enough before the winds brush the embers along. According to recent updates, many of the reservoirs of water that the firefighters rely on have dried up, worsening the firefighters' chances.

While most of us are not directly affected by the LA fires at large, many people in our community are. Here are some people at Bullis who want to share their family's stories:

### *How are the fires impacting you and your family?*

**Kailey Zuckerman:** My sister, Shara, currently goes to USC, and there are fires all around her. There are a lot of people evacuating the area, and though USC did not have a mandated evacuation she is currently at her friend's house far away because the fires are close by. We are currently hoping that some of the buildings around her campus will be able to withstand the fires because many are built for natural disasters. Therefore, after this awful event hopefully her life can continue as normally as it can. We also have some other friends who live near UCLA who have been fearing for their



A Helicopter drops foam to battle the horrific California Fires.

lives every day. They have been debating evacuating for a while, and have been communicating their scenario to us. We are all very frightened for them.

***How are you and your family feeling?***

**Kailey Zuckerman:** Of course, we are all really unhappy and worried, but thankfully we have emergency evacuation flights planned for Shara, so that's making us feel not quite so nervous. We are also very thankful for the constant new updates that we are getting as well!

***What do you think Bullis can do?***

**Kailey Zuckerman:** Bullis can help donate to those who have lost their homes and their belongings in the fires. Also, I think that we should use this as a wake-up call to do our part in stopping climate change. There are different aspects of our community that we can improve to help make us more environmentally friendly.

***How are the fires impacting you and your family?***

**Dr. Tinker:** I have a cousin who lives in Pacific Palisades, and he is a score writer for movies: which means that he orchestrates and makes the music and sounds for many movies. He's lived there for a long time, he bought his house in the early 1980s and he loves his community. I've been there a few times and it's very lovely. I think that his attitude has been very good because he feels that he's affluent enough and has the means to rebuild if needed, but he is concerned for others who are not in the same position, which is kind. And I think that there is this generally an attitude among all the people who he works with and is friends with in Hollywood that they are lucky, and they have a large sense of gratitude that their families are safe and they can be less concerned about their homes. They are more concerned about those who no longer have homes or belongings.

My sister lives in Tahoe and this year during the Tahoe fires she spent three weeks in an Airbnb while they waited to see if their house was still standing. And when living through these scary circumstances both my cousin and sister have said that their biggest hope is that people will begin to take climate change issues more seriously.

***How have you and your family here been feeling?***

**Dr. Tinker:** It's upsetting to think about these beautiful places that I have visited being lost, in a sense. Also, I have been worrying about people and animals that have been displaced, and I do think it's time that we start taking the environment more seriously and begin putting more laws into place regarding the safety of our environment.

***With regard to their situation, has California or its residents been doing anything to help?***

**Dr. Tinker:** It's been really interesting to hear about how in both my sister's and cousin's situations, they have grown much closer to neighbors they didn't know before. Everyone has pulled together to help each other. They have also gotten to know the fire marshals in their area on a first-name basis. Even firefighters who are out of state have come to help, and it's amazing to see our entire country come together to help each other in times of need.

***Is there anything that you think the Bullis community can do to help?***

**Dr. Tinker:** At this point, shelters are certainly in need of things, but also individual people and families are absolutely in need. Even as of yesterday the winds

have picked up and spot fires (where they jump from place to place) have begun to occur. This means that people who were not necessarily prepared are now impacted. My suggestion would be to reach out to major shelters and see what they may need. Maybe the Bullis community can help by partnering with a particular shelter.

I'm so grateful that this is even on the minds of us on the East Coast because we are a small planet and we should all take care of each other.

So, while you may not be affected by these fires, please consider those in our community who are. Take this as an opportunity to foster kindness and caring at Bullis and reach out to those who are affected by this disaster. Furthermore, if you can, you can donate supplies to shelters in the area. Our very own Lower and Middle school students created and donated hygiene kits to those affected by the fires, and you may want to do so as well. Use this as your wake-up call to stay environmentally friendly to help protect all of us from natural disasters like this one in the future!

## Combating Senioritis: How to Remain Motivated Late into Senior Year

*By Vivian H.*

With college acceptances rolling in, it can be very easy for students to lose motivation. We have been working hard to be well-rounded students since freshman year, and much of this motivation is external. I was highly motivated to perform well to get into college. Now that I find myself into college, which I am beyond excited about, I have lost much of my motivation and interest. Showing up to school and studying feels more difficult than before. What can students do once they are done with applications but are experiencing this lack of motivation? Graduation feels far away and exciting senior traditions don't begin until the third trimester. To get through school between now and then there are a few strategies that can help make our routines seem less robotic.

The first is to set up a creative reward system even for simple tasks like studying and attending school on time. Your reward can be anything from a bowl of ice cream to purchasing something that you've been eyeing for a while. These rewards will keep you on track and act as an incentive, but be strict about rewarding yourself only when it is deserved. A parent or sibling can help track when the reward is deserved if you do not think you have enough self-control to do so yourself. Positive reinforcement has proven to be more effective than negative reinforcement, making this strategy perfect.

Additionally, you can try to add things to your routine to make boring days seem more exciting. With less time spent on college applications, many people's schedules are freeing up. Dedicate this extra free time to a hobby that you weren't able to focus on during the busy college application season. I have begun selling items on Depop and going to work out classes to fill my time. Setting goals with these hobbies can be helpful, especially when you share your goal with someone else. This is also a perfect time to explore new hobbies that you could potentially bring to college with you. Hobbies can be integrated into our routines to give us something to look forward to every day. Even writing this article has been a fun change to my normal routine that I am now bored of and has allowed me to reflect on how I will minimize my boredom and enjoy the rest of the year. To gain additional insight, I have interviewed a few of my peers:

Reese N. '25 shared that she wants to work hard this year because she knows she will have to work hard in college. She is using this time to practice her study habits and determination to be best prepared for the demands of college.

Sadie R. '25 says that she feels like there is a light at the end of the tunnel and wants her Bullis legacy to be that she was a hard worker.

Sloane L. '25 suggests finding things that you enjoy doing so that you have something to look forward to.

A commonality between many of the senior's attitudes is that while many of us are tired and "checked out", this is close to our high school career and a time we should not take for granted. Appreciate every day, the countdown is on for the very last one! (104 days until seniors last day, if you were curious as of 1/31)

## Reentry into Spain: The Ups and Downs

*By Zoe M.*

Unfortunately, winter break ended all too soon on January 7. Usually, one falls right back into routine upon returning from break. However, my reentry has been different since I am studying abroad in Spain. In this article, I will discuss the positives and negatives of returning to Spain after a break.

As always, I spent the three weeks off this winter break with my family. Our break was restful and rejuvenating. We spent time in Madrid, Barcelona, and the South

of France. It was lovely spending time with them, as I do not get to speak with them as much as I would if I were home. Being with my family made the transition back to my host family all the more interesting.

After spending three weeks with my family, I had forgotten some of the challenges of living with a family that is not yours. I had to readjust to our meal times, for example, which are much, much later. I also had to get used to eating someone else's cooking again and having less control over what and how much I ate at meal times.

On the topic of food, I also had to adapt (again) to the Spanish diet. From what I have encountered, the Spanish people are straightforward yet particular regarding food. At my host family's house, we eat Spanish food almost daily. It comes from a place of pride, but there is not a lot of variety (or vegetables) in their cuisine. This was quite the change for me because my family and I typically eat a much greater variety of foods at home.

On a more positive note, however, it was incredible to see my friends again. When living abroad, friends become family, which could not be more accurate than with my friends. I am so lucky to have found such a group of people who are so kind, compassionate, and funny. Being able to see my friends again was undoubtedly one of the if not the best, part about returning to Zaragoza.



My friends and I at a Dinner we Prepared for Paige's (Blue Top) Host Family.

Another positive aspect that has not happened yet is meeting the new kids coming to our school. In my program, one can spend a semester or the entire school year in Spain, like me. Curiously, the program decided to have full-year students return earlier than the spring ones. We have not met them yet, and I am incredibly excited to do so!

While my reentry to Spain has been full of ups and downs, it has been a positive experience, and I am excited to see what this new semester brings.

## The Best of Bullis Art: The Stone Ridge Art Exhibition

*By Elizabeth B.*



Art Work Featured at the Stone Ridge Art Exhibition.

Every January for the past 9 years, Stone Ridge of the Sacred Heart has held an art exhibition inviting what is now 11 other private schools in the area including

Georgetown Prep, Holton Arms, Landon, and St. Andrew's Episcopal School to name a few. Art teachers in the area submit work from their students that they believe best represents the school's spirit, skill, talent, and creativity. This year, Bullis' art department submitted 19 pieces across numerous art classes ranging from AP Art to Foundations I. The work was sent to Stone Ridge and hung in their art building for around a month before students, family members, and teachers were invited to look at and appreciate the marvelous art their children, classmates, and peers created in the first half of the school year.

I was fortunate enough to have one of my pieces, *Getting Ready*, created with colored pencils, submitted to the show. A few of my AP studio art classmates including Amaaya M., Linus M., Zoe B., and Alexis P. had their work, ranging from eye-catching photography to shadowy charcoal pieces to meaningful mixed media paintings, submitted as well. Other Bullis art students had their work proudly displayed including Sadie L.'s digital drawing and many more.

My classmates, fellow Bullis art students, and I braved the cold temperatures on January 14th to attend the exhibition's closing and awards ceremony. After we walked around the exhibition and looked at all of the pieces we were called into the auditorium to hear from the organizers and the juror, Amy Kaslow, who picked all of the winners. There were 5 different categories: painting, drawing, mixed media, photography, and sculpture/3D design. My work was selected as the first-place winner in the drawing category! Kaslow announced she is planning to hang all of the award winners in her gallery in Bethesda. I was thrilled not only because of the prize I was awarded but also because I was proud of my piece and I was proud to represent the Bullis art department in a professional gallery.

Even though we might be rivals on the field, on the court, or now, in the art room, it is special to have Bullis and other schools in the area come together to appreciate talent, art, and creativity.

## Support Your Creative Classmates at the Open Studio Art Show

*By Christina A.*

The countdown is on – in just a few days, the doors of the **Open Studio Art Show** will swing open, offering an opportunity for students and faculty to explore and celebrate the remarkable talent right here within our own school community.

The **Open Studio Art Show** will be held on Monday, February 3rd at **3PM** in the Blair Lobby, and it's shaping up to be an event that students, faculty, and parents won't want to miss. This year's show will feature a diverse range of works from students in our Upper School, showcasing the breadth of artistic talent that exists within our school. From paintings and sculptures to photography, digital art, and mixed media, this year's art show will truly have something for everyone.

It's an event that goes beyond just viewing finished pieces—it's about coming together as a school community to support our peers, share in their creative journeys, and engage in conversations about the inspiration behind their work.



Elizabeth and Gabby working on swan sculpture - Made with Colored Pencils.

### ***Showcasing Talent Across Multiple Disciplines***

This year's Open Studio Art Show will feature a rich variety of artistic expressions, with student works ranging from traditional painting and drawing to experimental digital art and sculpture. Many of the pieces will be displayed in the gallery, allowing you to step into a world of imagination, emotion, and storytelling through visual mediums. Expect to see vibrant colors, intricate details, and thought-provoking works that reflect the unique perspectives of our talented student artists.

Art is a powerful way to communicate, and our student artists have used their creativity to express their thoughts, emotions, and stories. By attending the show, you'll have the opportunity to engage with their work on a deeper level—whether it sparks a conversation about the themes explored or simply leaves you in awe of their talent.



Chris R. Holding his Current Project.

***What are you currently working on?***

Chris: I'm working on making a representation of postcards for cities around the world.

Christina: What has been your biggest challenge?

Chris: Finding the materials to execute exactly what I had in my head. I also struggled with finding what exactly I wanted to do in terms of the design. I think materials were a little bit of a challenge because a lot of the materials are unconventional. Like stamps and having to use a hot glue gun and then pressed it down.

Christina: What message do you hope to portray with your piece?

Chris: I really wanted to display connectivity. Just having different countries on the postcards and having them all be one unified piece is the plan I have to show that.

### ***Don't Miss Out – Mark Your Calendars!***

As the event approaches, be sure to mark your calendars for **February 3rd at 3:30PM**. This year, let's show our support for the creative endeavors of our classmates and make the Open Studio Art Show an event to remember. Whether you're an art lover or simply someone who appreciates the creative spirit, this is an opportunity to be inspired, to learn, and to celebrate the incredible talents of those around you. Don't miss out on this chance to be part of something special. We look forward to seeing you there!

## **An Extreme Math Challenge**

*By Ethan Y.*

System of Equations:

$$ab+c=2020$$

$$a+bc=2021$$

Email [BST@bullis.org](mailto:BST@bullis.org) if you think you have the right answer!