



Success, Changes for Second Annual Cultural Day

By MARIANNE LU '19

Eight percent of Groton's student body is international, and the vibrant cultures of the fourteen different countries from which they come converged when Groton held its second annual Cultural Day on the last Saturday of January.

The idea for Cultural Day formed when Director of Student Activities Timothy LeRoy, Diversity and Inclusion leader Sravani Sen-Das, and Chinese teacher Shannon Jin came together to discuss how to expand Chinese New Year celebra-

tions to include the whole community. They decided to allocate a Saturday evening to celebrating all of the unique cultures represented at Groton. "I had always wanted to see how we can further our goals of being inclusive, and celebrate and

familiarize ourselves with the different backgrounds and cultural identities in the school," said Ms. Sen-Das.

At the school's first Cultural Day last year, tables for each country packed the Forum. Activities ranged from dance exhibitions to

crepe stations. "I learned to do Chinese calligraphy and tasted Middle Eastern food. It was so cool to learn about what everyone's cultures are here, and what an inclusive community we have," said Julia Kendall '19.

Mr. LeRoy was surprised by how well the event turned out. Not all student activities are a hit, but the students who organized Cultural Day ensured that each table was stacked with food and games. Mr. LeRoy said, "...with so many cultures and diverse ideas, there were many spur of the moment decisions. We chose to host a limbo contest on the spot and it was one of the highlights of the night."

This year, changes have been made to Cultural Day activities. With support from Mr. Maqubela, the International Community Advisory Program (ICAP), and Groton's Diversity and Inclusion group, the budget for each table has increased to \$150. Ms. Sen-Das said, "It's amazing that this event is a joint effort of the three groups, and that we are coming together to do something good for the school." Fur-



Cultural Day festivities.

T. WEISBERG '22 for *The Circle Voice*

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GRAIN Reaches \$50 Million: A Retrospective

By JULIA KENDALL '19

Headmaster Temba Maqubela's tenure at Groton has made diversity and inclusion priorities. One particular step that Groton has taken to further these ideals is instituting the Groton Affordability and Inclusion (GRAIN) initiative, which aims to make Groton affordable for all. With the help of a large gift given Christmas eve, funding for GRAIN reached a \$50 million milestone.

GRAIN was officially announced by the Board of Trustees in November 2014. According to Chief Financial Officer Arthur Diaz, this money was raised primarily through Mr. Maqubela and the Development Office. He said, "They spent a lot of time over the past three years

traveling to meet with parents and alumni. An anonymous donor pledged \$5 million when GRAIN was first announced." That action, he said, set the initiative in motion – since that time, it has received several multi-million dollar donations.

GRAIN particularly targets the so-called "missing middle" – middle class families that cannot afford the cost of tuition, yet are often passed over by financial aid offices due to the appearance of less need. "GRAIN is built upon this great idea [of inclusion] with a focus on including the talented missing middle—the daughters and sons of professionals, whose families are caught between those with modest incomes



A. WEI '21 for *The Circle Voice*

and those who can afford to pay full tuition. GRAIN ensures that all socioeconomic cohorts will be included," said Mr. Maqubela.

That the GRAIN initiative raised \$50 million in the span of just over three years brings great anticipation for its future. Mr. Ma-

qubela hopes GRAIN will ensure "that no talented and deserving child will be denied a Groton education because of the inability to afford the high cost of an independent school tuition." Due to money raised through GRAIN, fifteen current students have received previously nonexistent scholarships, and five more students are expected to receive special inclusion scholarships next year.

In addition to funding scholarships, GRAIN is also an intrinsic component of Groton's decision to freeze tuition. After recognizing that the cost of tuition had escalated unus-

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Does Groton's hookup culture bother you? Read why Andrew Rasetti '18 thinks it's getting better.

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The Right Way Out of Hookup Culture

The View From Salt Lake
A Column by Andrew Rasetti '18



P. SHI '19 for *The Circle Voice*

In a society that is very conducive to a thriving hookup culture, Groton has done a remarkably good job in fostering relationships that are constituted by an attraction greater than one that is solely physical. Despite the world and culture around our community, Groton is not a place where hookups are counted like currency. Rather, it is a place where, relative to other communities, relationships are meaningful because they are a bond between two people.

The Groton community itself is the driving force behind this type of community. Certain administrative steps, like changing the name of “Last Chance Dance” (with the “to hook up” implied) to “Last Chance to Dance Dance,” have helped to create a healthier environment in respect to hookup culture, but I think that much of this change can be attributed to this year’s sixth form.

Past senior classes suffered from gender tensions, which created an unhealthy standard for romantic relationships. The truth is, sixth formers play a very big role in setting the tone for the rest of the school. A fair number of sixth formers this year are in long-term relationships, which makes others more comfortable with having an emotional connection to their significant other.

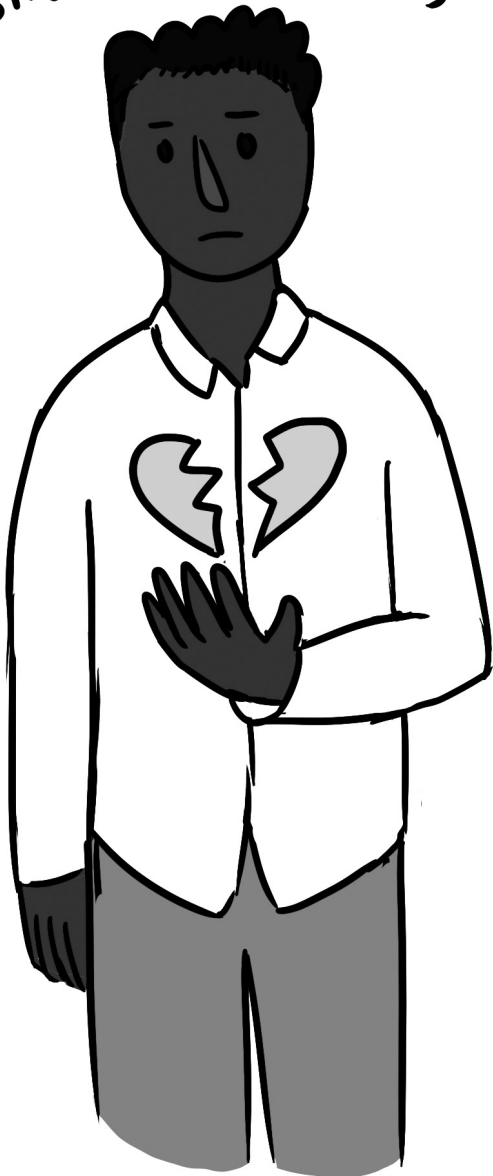
In fact, long-term relationships have become so custom that casual hookups are now unusual, and generally frowned upon. I hadn’t heard of the term “shu,” meaning “secret hookup,” at any point during my freshman year because people didn’t need to conceal their

relationships. Quick flings were not just normal, but expected. Now, students feel they must keep their casual hookups a secret. intimate with one another is a Groton that better prepares its students for relationships later in life. It’s up to students to destigmatize meaningful, emotional connections in relationships. I don’t claim that this

Although the state of romantic interaction at Groton is nowhere near perfect, it’s come a long way.

I see this as a positive change, and although the state of romantic interaction at Groton is nowhere near perfect, it’s come a long way. Intimacy is an important part of the human experience, and a pervasive hookup culture is not conducive to such intimacy. A Groton in which people are comfortable and year’s graduating class is perfect, but I think that younger forms could benefit from observing the standard of positive gender relations set by the Sixth Form. I can confidently say this: if you respect and develop bonds with one another, it will not only benefit you, but the entire Groton community.

GROTON STUDENTS



A. WEI '21 for *The Circle Voice*

Essential Enviro

BY FRAN SALDIVAR '19

The yearlong Environmental Science course is often overlooked by Groton students. Many never step into Dr. Black’s classroom, choosing courses that are more popular and sometimes considered more useful. This year, for example, only 12 students take the Environmental Science class – far fewer than corresponding chemistry or physics classes. This needs to change. Environmental science is not only changing rapidly, but its subject matter concerns us now more than ever. The solution: I propose a required term of Environmental Science for every student in upper school.

Many people will oppose this proposition for scheduling purposes. But some difficulty in scheduling does not outweigh an existential threat to the very planet we live on. Environmental science is at a turning point, and we must be informed about the changes humans are causing the planet. The global climate changes every day, inching towards catastrophe and setting us up for problems with food pro-

duction and air quality. must ask ourselves, in what condition do we want our world to be?

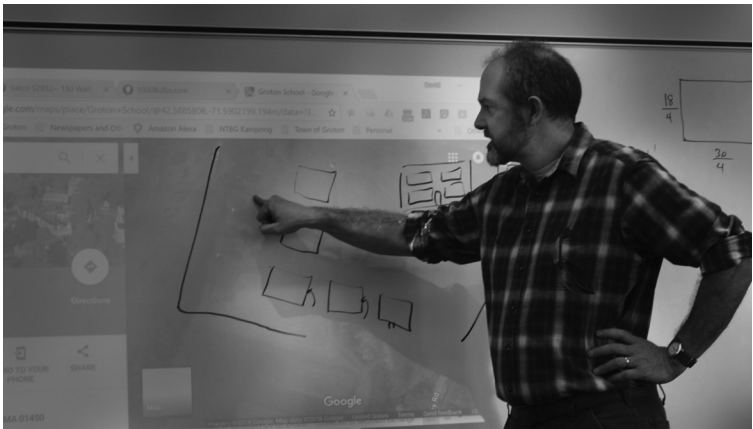
Dr. Black, the only environmental science teacher at Groton, says: “Like much of the country, many Groton students have only a passing understanding of the profound environmental issues which confront us today, and which will almost certainly increase in severity in the years to come.” Groton students can no longer afford to be misinformed about the environment.

A course concerning the wellbeing of our planet and species is no less important than biology or chemistry. This term-long requirement would not be a huge time commitment, but would greatly benefit the student body. During his time here, Dr. Black has seen “students coming out of the [Environmental Science] course taking positions of advocacy and effecting change.” Hopefully, a required term of this course will encourage more students to promote change and eventually study environmental science.

Since taking Enviro, I have striven to use less plastic, habitually turned the lights off in my room, and even become vegetarian. I’m not saying that every student must go to these lengths for environmental purposes, but Grotonians need to inform themselves about issues that concern our future. An environmental science requirement would educate the student body on at least the major issues to coming our way regarding the environment. Educating the student body will not only create environmental leaders, but also begin to prepare them for more environmental atrocities to come.

Students can no longer afford to be misinformed.

And it doesn’t help that the United States’ political leadership is hostile to environmental initiatives. The Trump administration is doing everything in its power to reduce environmental protection, from cutting funding for the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), questioning the existence of climate change, and, just recently, levying a tariff on foreign solar products. As future leaders of the world, we



Dr. Black teaching Environmental Science.

S. CONROY '19 for *The Circle Voice*

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A Joint Korean Team is a Step Toward Unity

BY BROOKS ANDERSON '20

On January 17, North and South Korea agreed to march together under one flag and field a joint women's ice hockey team in the 2018 Winter Olympics.

The Koreas' agreement to field an Olympic team under a flag of unity is a tiny step towards a peaceful resolution of tension on the peninsula. The agreement throws a wrench into the United States' strategy of hardline rhetoric and tough economic sanctions. Thus, the real question is whether the détente will positively impact the situation.

President Trump has adopted a striking stance of provocative and threatening rhetoric against the Kim Jong-Un regime. Trump has repeatedly threatened violence against North Korea, declaring that "they will be met with fire and fury like the world has never seen." The United States' policy is blatantly harsh and incendiary.

The resolution of unity between the Koreas to march and compete together under one flag lies in stark contrast to the warmongering of the White House. A



Y. CHANG '21 for *The Circle Voice*

proclamation of peace and a de-escalation of the Korean conflict is certainly far from this small step towards reconciliation, but a small step in the right direction is a still a step.

At this point, the amity from South Korea and enmity from the United States simply cannot coexist. Both nations must adopt a single

approach. The United States of America should step aside, put down its megaphone of belligerence and demagoguery, and let the Koreas engage in meaningful diplomatic discussion. Of course, the U.S. should still maintain a presence in the talks and on the peninsula itself, but it is not the country's place to dictate the foreign policy of

South Korea. If the South desires a peaceful settlement to its own crisis, the U.S. should not demand a violent one. The White House must stand down.

The hawkish policy in Washington is fundamentally opposed to the dovish policy in Seoul, as highlighted by the Olympics. A joint Olympic team might have no

tangible effect on the status quo of hostility. However, it is a gesture of good faith and hope for future diplomacy, and therefore the United States cannot move to jeopardize the détente, whether by means of further sanctions or further inflammatory tweets.

Neither threats of war, nor economic sanctions, nor US-led diplomatic talks have had much effect on the crisis. Perhaps it is time for us to stop thinking only of our interests in the Pacific theatre and focus on resolving the issue by letting Seoul pursue peace and security via diplomatic means.

Issue 4 Correction

An article on the squash ladder system credited Lars Caspersen as a JV squash player near the top of the ladder. He does not play squash this year.

Notice an error? Email it to ccarson18@groton.org and acmansfeld18@groton.org

Medical Marijuana Shouldn't Transplant Patients off the List

BY JULIA KENDALL '19

This past March, the *Bangor Daily News* reported on Garry Godfrey, a father of two, who suffers from Alport disease. His condition eventually resulted in renal failure, and his case rose to prominence across Maine. After waiting eight years on the organ transplant list, he was promptly kicked off. The reason why? He smoked medical marijuana.

Mr. Godfrey's case was just one of many in which prescribed medical marijuana has resulted in withdrawal from an organ transplant list. A Huffington Post article by Russ Belville detailed how Kimberly Reyes, a Hawaiian woman who needed a liver transplant, initially received approval from her insurance carrier, Hawaii Medical Service Association, but the organization denied her transplant three days later because her toxicology report revealed she had smoked medical marijuana. She died within two weeks. The same article also discussed how Timothy Garon, a Seattle musician, was also denied an organ donation due to him using marijuana.

A 2018 Vox article by German Lopez discusses how medical marijuana is now legalized – at the state level, at least – in 29 states as well as the District of Columbia. This shows how medical marijuana has become an increasingly popular way for patients to deal with certain illnesses or medication side effects. And yet it seems

that hospital policies against medical marijuana users hurt those patients.

According to the aforementioned *Bangor News* article, hospital policies against medical marijuana

It is incredibly unjust that patients needing life-saving organ transplants are deemed erratic or irresponsible simply because they use a prescribed medication.

are usually attributed to two major issues: first, that people on drugs can be erratic and irresponsible; and second, the threat of infection among drug users. Lynn Pittsinger, director of Groton's Health Center, commented that hospitals avoid medical marijuana users "because they are considered to have an increased risk of incurring a deadly fungal infection [called] Aspergillosis during the transplantation process."

Let's go to the first big issue. It is incredibly unjust that patients needing life-saving organ transplants are deemed erratic or irresponsible simply because they use a prescribed medication. Additionally, an obvious paradox stems from the

second issue: if medical marijuana puts users at risk for infection, why prescribe it to patients who might need organ donations? There needs to be greater contemplation on the part of those prescribing medical marijuana and a discussion between doctors and insurance providers, so others never have to suffer the same fate as Kimberly Reyes.

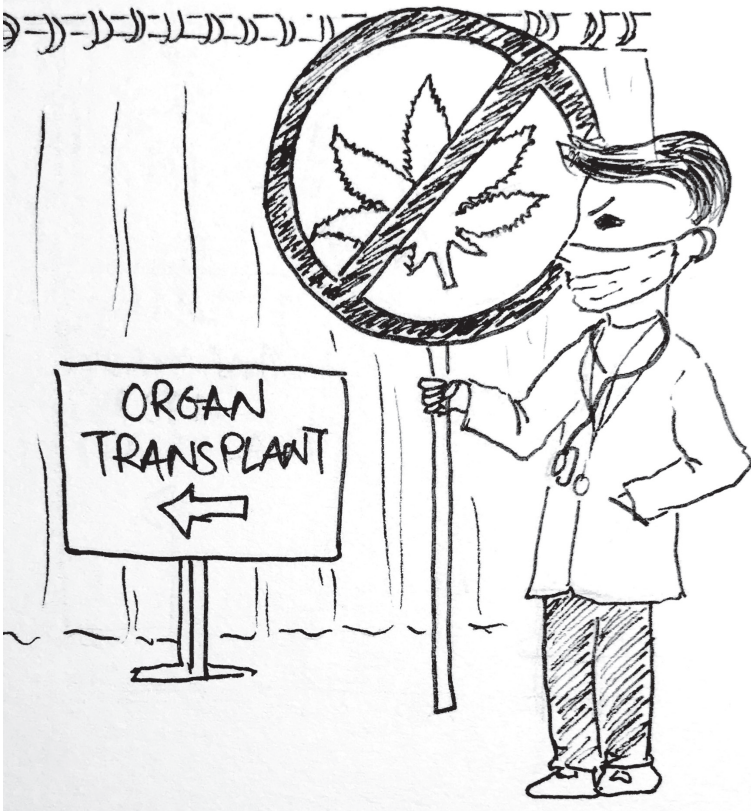
The apparent health repercussions of using medical marijuana further complicate the debate over its role in deciding organ transplants. There is a clear flaw in the argument that marijuana increases risk of infection because, if giving medical marijuana to patients is such a large risk, there should be a national protocol against it. Massachusetts General Hospital recommends that transplant patients avoid marijuana, but otherwise advises that patients bake or microwave their marijuana to eliminate mold spores. But there is no national protocol, and therefore regulations regarding organ transplants and medical marijuana vary widely.

In fact, according to a 2017 BuzzFeed article by Alyson Martin, many hospitals do allow patients to receive organ transplants regardless of marijuana intake. But going to these hospitals, instead of local hospitals that often have more strict organ transplant guidelines, can be costly and time-consuming. The aforementioned BuzzFeed article discussed

how the United Network for Organ Sharing, the group that runs the national organ donation system, also has no guidelines on how to incorporate medical marijuana into the organ transplant decision process. This lack of both governmental and private regulation poses a clear question: is risk of infection really that bad if some hospitals around the country are still allowing transplants?

The no-transplant policy seems to stem from the first issue: that medical marijuana users will be irresponsible following an organ transplant. This exemplifies

just how stigmatized medical marijuana users are in medicine. In order to fix this stereotype and the problems it causes, doctors must prescribe medical marijuana with greater caution and awareness of the regulations, allowing those who actually need medical marijuana to get it without unfairly being labeled as irresponsible or erratic. No prescribed medication should hinder life-saving surgery, especially because of stereotypes and a lack of awareness.



Y. CHANG '21 for *The Circle Voice*

Master Storyteller Odds Bodkin Comes to the Circle

By LEO MCMAHON '19

On Friday, January 26, master storyteller Odds Bodkin presented his adapted rendition of Book I of the *Iliad* in the Campbell Performing Arts Center (CPAC), accompanied by his harp and his 12-string guitar.

The reaction of students to Bodkin's performance was largely positive. Lwazi Bululu '20 appreciated "a new take on classical material" and that students of varying classical knowledge could all experience the high quality of the storytelling. Oliver Ye '20 said that, since "when you're reading Latin, you focus a lot on the grammar... you often lose track of the story, and the storytelling brings back what's inherently interesting about it."

Based in New England, Mr. Bodkin performs his versions of a variety of folktales and epics taken from numerous traditions, including ancient Greek, the Bible, and American legends such as that of Paul Bunyan.

Mr. Bodkin began with an introduction to the *Iliad*, in which he spoke of Greek mythology and the three themes he saw in Homer's work: supernatural politics, the glory of a warrior's death, and misogynistic treatment of captives. His story unfolded with the

cause of the Trojan War – the Judgment of Paris – then moved to telling the full book, a brutal tale of war, greed, and divine intervention.

While tuning his guitar before the performance, Mr. Bodkin told the story of how he became a professional storyteller. He began as a musician, and, since he "was a rebellious little boy and refused to play the piano," turned to the guitar at about 12 years old. He largely taught himself and "learned to play the guitar by composing music on the guitar."

After graduating college, Mr. Bodkin moved to New York, where he became interested in Jungian psychology. Interested in the workings of the human mind, he combined his musical background with "dramatic, mythical storytelling," in 1982, working off the few folktales he knew, and discovered that he had "an ability to urge people to listen."

Although he doesn't read Ancient Greek, Mr. Bodkin has explored several translations of the *Iliad*. He argues, though, that the nuance isn't as important as one would think: "...it's not the scholarly depth of the story that I'm really focused upon; it's the story itself." In terms of the substance, though, Mr.



Odds Bodkin performing. in the CPAC.

F. LYNCH '19 for *The Circle Voice*

Bodkin does his best to stay close to the original.

Nothing of this performance is ever written down, according to Mr. Bodkin. He uses the same structure of the original text, but improvises the details for each performance, depending upon "what the mood of the story's asking for at the moment." Mr. Bodkin thought of the theme for the introduction's harp accompaniment the afternoon before his performance, and added that – along with numerous other variations – to

his performance.

Creating and refining works is a long process for Mr. Bodkin. His most recent story is called "Beowulf: The Only One," which he crafted over five years. He begins by "reading various versions of the story in whatever mythological sources I can find, [or] literary sources." He then envisions characters and musical themes, after which he plays and performs the story repeatedly, and his stories change slightly with every performance. Nevertheless, he says that once different

stories "codify themselves, they all have their own music."

One of Mr. Bodkin's goals for his performances is to engage the audience's imagination, an experience that he finds all too rare "in an age of saturation of information and imagery beyond the ken and ability of humans to process fully without becoming anxious." Linking skill in imagining to success in science, art, and other fields, Mr. Bodkin believes that stories can help people in many areas of their lives.

GRAIN Hits Milestone

Continued from the front page

tainably, Groton decided to institute a three-year tuition freeze, which ends with the 2017-2018 school year. This tuition freeze substantially lowered the relative cost of attending Groton, so much so that it went from being the most expensive out of forty peer schools to being the 37th most expensive one. Of the fifty million pledged to GRAIN, about half will be used to fund the tuition freeze, and the other half will go towards scholarship funding.

GRAIN has increased the number of applications from both families who can pay the full tuition

and families that require financial aid. Furthermore, annual giving to Groton has increased unusually quickly since GRAIN's inception, suggesting that GRAIN stimulated more funding overall.

As Mr. Maqubela said, GRAIN perfectly represents the ideals of Groton: "The original idea of an open Circle is what prompted the question, who is at Groton today and who will be at Groton tomorrow? GRAIN says, the Circle is open when all talented and deserving children are invited to apply. GRAIN embodies the ultimate Groton embrace."



Mr. Maqubela, who spearheaded the GRAIN initiative.

B. CALMAS '18 for *The Circle Voice*

Cultural Day, Round 2

Continued from the front page



P. SHI '19 for *The Circle Voice*

thermore, Mr. LeRoy contacted outside companies to cater certain foods rather than having students prepare them, hoping that this would allow student organizers to focus on hands-on activities like games and music. Students participated in a raffle at the South Africa table, answered trivia questions at the Hong Kong table, and practiced calligraphy at the China table.

Sangah Lee '18 has organized the table representing Korea for the past two years, and noted improvements in the event's organization. Last year she found the process more rushed, and had to take more initiative in finding teachers who were willing to help. However,

with catered food and more structure easing preparation this year, she could "be a lot more adventurous with what [she] wanted to share with the school."

This year's Cultural Day featured more outside performances, including a Chinese lion dance group as well as a band playing Dominican *tipico* music. Yet students were not left out: Neha Agarwal '20 presented the audience with a Bollywood dance show and even taught students some basic moves.

While the event ran smoothly this year, Mr. LeRoy is still trying to figure out the best setup and flow for Cultural Day. He said that there were "a lot of logistics we need to work through,

which makes it more exciting and nerve-wracking." Looking forward, Mr. LeRoy hopes to expand Cultural Day to include yet more cultures, including the various cultures within the United States. He said, "we don't want to close any doors to the students who want to share their culture with the school." Mr. LeRoy also wants to incorporate a wider range of opinions to the SAC's decision-making process, and is working on school-wide surveys for all students to share their thoughts.

Ms. Sen-Das described the beauty of Cultural Day, saying, "it speaks to the heart, not just the head."

Groton's Steps Toward Sustainability, Revisited

By MARIANNE LU '19

In the third issue of this year, *The Circle Voice* ran an article on Groton's sustainability, pointing to many of the strides the School has taken in pursuit of an eco-friendlier campus. While all of that article's information was factual, the Circle still has a considerable way to go in reducing its environmental footprint. This article hopes to add context to its previous incarnation to present a more balanced picture of Groton's environmental impact.

Groton School relies on the Groton Electric Light Department (GELD) for energy, and while the company has recently added a local solar array to its energy generation methods, solar energy contributed to only 2.8% of its fuel mix in 2016 (the last year for which full data was available), according to Tammi Lemire, Business Manager of GELD. The percentage has increased somewhat throughout 2017, but is still small compared to the sustainable energy used at some of our peer schools who generate their own electricity.

According to Lawrenceville School's website, for example, the school generates 90% of its energy needs with a nearly 30-acre solar farm. During the day, they can produce nearly twice the amount of energy needed by the School,

and this excess is exported to the local electrical utility. St. Mark's School's website also states that the school uses solar energy to power 25% of the school's total annual electricity consumption. Other schools in the Independent School League (ISL) have also implemented solar panel initiatives. Belmont Hill's solar panel generates approximately 25,000 kilowatt hours of power per year for the Science Building, Milton Academy's solar panel provides about 50 percent of the electricity for its Athletic Center, Roxbury Latin has installed a 137 kW solar photovoltaic (PV) renewable energy system on the roof of its Field House, according to the schools' websites.

However, while a number of other schools have talked about and looked into solar initiatives, in many cases "they haven't done much yet in the way of spending money to do anything," according to Groton's Chief Financial Officer Arthur Diaz. Groton is thus not the only school lacking a large-scale solar-panel installation, but we still lag behind peer schools when it comes to sustainability. (The School does have a very small array on some its land near the Nashua River.)

To reduce Groton's environmental footprint,

the Groton Association for Environmental Awareness (GAEA) put together a student petition for solar panels, in order to show the trustees that the effort to make Groton a more environmentally friendly place does not only come from a small group of students. Sandra Redjali '19 said, "We hoped that after we showed them how much the students care about this issue, they would be more willing to give us a chance to make a full solar panel proposal at the spring trustee weekend." With over 340 student signatures, Mr. Klein agreed to give the group a slot to present.

In the past, Groton's administration and trustees have examined and rejected solar panel initiatives on several occasions. Mr. Diaz cited two main drivers for switching energy sources: to reduce the school's carbon footprint and to reduce our costs. He said, "The administration and the school's trustees have looked at installing solar several times and on each occasion decided not to, because there was not an overly convincing case in terms of either of those two measures." Mr. Diaz added that GELD is the lowest cost energy supplier around — nearby towns that receive electricity from National Grid pay rates 81% higher than the rates from

Groton Electric. Furthermore, the school has made reductions in its carbon footprint, cutting its emissions by half from 2004 to 2016. Even though GELD's energy does not completely come from solar or wind sources, the company has been switching its energy procurement to more renewable resources.

Currently, 45.1% of GELD's energy comes from nuclear plants. While there is a general consensus that nuclear power is superior to fossil fuels in sustainability, there is another issue: one of New England's two power plants is slated to close by 2019. (A third shuttered its doors in 2014.) Although these sources of GELD's current nuclear energy are closing, Ms. Lemire said the company plans to increase the nuclear power portion of their fuel mix over the next couple of years.

Solar panels were described as only having incremental financial benefits in the previous article, but that perspective did not take into account calculations of financial impact that proved that a solar array would almost certainly be profitable in the long term. In 2016, Allie Banks '16 and Angus Warren '16 outlined a proposal for a solar array to be placed on some of Groton's currently unused land. After

extensively researching and calculating initial costs, energy usage, annual savings of solar panels, and through discussions with solar installers, they stated that a conservative estimate time for Groton's payback period would be eight years, even accounting for Groton's inability to take advantage of solar renewable energy credits (SRECs). While the math has likely changed due to changing U.S. solar policy and a new tariff on solar companies, the investment would likely still pay itself back.

Furthermore, the previous article mentioned that solar panels will become hazardous waste when they cease producing power, but did not report that the amount of waste generated by solar panels is tiny compared to that generated by oil refining and fracking for natural gas, according to environmental science teacher David Black.

Dr. Black is a strong advocate for sustainability. "We can never do enough," he said, "and we shouldn't be satisfied by relying on GELD when we have such huge resources." While Groton is currently able to meet its energy needs, implementing solar panels would be a large step toward sustainability.

Groton Alum Tackles Mental Health in a Prep School Setting

By ELIZA POWERS '20

On Tuesday, January 23, Mitzi Bockman '83 and Kristy Hommel came to Groton to speak about their experiences with mental health. The two are part of the In Your Own Voice initiative started by the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI). They, along with others involved in the organization, travel to prisons, schools, and other institutions to share their personal stories with mental illness in their own words. They hope to help destigmatize mental health by humanizing their illnesses. "There are people like me living with mental illness," said Ms. Brockman, "and it's not just a stereotypical idea of a homeless person on the street."

Ms. Bockman had originally reached out to Director of Communications Gail Friedman to find out what Groton was doing to address mental health issues and to share her story with Ms. Friedman, who thought Director of Counseling Sheila Fritz-Ellis might be interested in Ms. Bockman's story and so connected the two. At the same time, Groton Workplace Wellness committee member Peggy Duffy reached out to Ms. Fritz-Ellis to see if she knew anyone who could come to Groton to talk about mental illness as part of the staff Wellness program. Ms. Fritz-Ellis then



Ms. Bockman and Ms. Hommel.

contacted Ms. Bockman and began working to get her here.

The pair's visit to Groton was their first time delivering a presentation to a boarding school. "Really we're here because I went here and I reached out," says Ms. Bockman. Both of the lecturers remarked that the resources available to Groton students now were not available at their own boarding schools thirty-five years ago. "We had a counselor, Birch Ford," she remembers. "She was the one counselor for the school and she was the only person we could go to if we

needed someone to talk to. It was just her."

Ms. Bockman was especially curious to hear about Groton's peer counselor program. "We had our prefects in our dorm but we never talked about our feelings," she says, adding that "from what I have seen at Groton there has been a significant increase of resources available to students." The two both hope that by delivering their own stories, someone might recognize their own self in their words. "Whether they are somebody suffering with mental illness, whether they are

somebody who knows somebody suffering, my hope is to just reach at least one person, just through sharing what I've gone through," says Ms. Hommel. "That is always our hope, that we're going to reach one person in these. And often we do," adds Ms. Bockman.

Ms. Bockman shared her struggle with bipolar disorder, which has affected her since her high school years. She explains that she did not know she had a mental illness while attending Groton because issues were not talked about to begin with, and she did not have any

classification to describe the way she felt. Ms. Hommel explains that, during her own boarding school experience, she knew something was wrong but did not know what. "There wasn't really a protocol at my boarding school. I was struggling with self injury, and it just wasn't talked about. It wasn't something that people knew even really existed," she recounts. "My hope is that faculty can hear what it's like to [be] a student, to be that young, to be that confused, and understand that there are a lot of different perspectives and ways that people can support each other."

The pair's advice to students confused about separating stress and homesickness with mental illness is to listen to themselves. "Pay attention to how you're feeling," Ms. Bockman says. "There is a difference from being sad and stressed versus being depressed and anxiety-ridden. And there's [a way] to tell the difference. If you're sad and it's because something happened, that's sadness. But depression is more characterized by long term sadness, deep sadness that isn't caused by anything. And that's why we're here. To help educate you guys about the other things."

L. TOCE '19 for *The Circle Voice*

Breaking the Other Barrier: Students with English as a Second Language

By CARA CHANG '20

For many students, the transition to Groton and boarding school life is uniquely challenging. New friends, teachers, subjects, and surroundings on the Circle are daunting, even to the most outgoing student. Some students have yet another variable to juggle: language.

Approximately eight percent of the student body is international, and many students at Groton speak English as their second language. Interim Director of Admission Jamie Funnell said, "The standard we expect is a bit ambiguous, but I use the term 'near native' to describe the level we are looking for." In addition, Groton requires the TOEFL (Test of English Foreign Language) for anyone who has not studied at an English language school for at least two full years. Mr. Funnell added that there is no formal cutoff for the TOEFL results, but most students score above 100/120 on the exam. Like every other challenge on campus, everyone who has a different native language approaches English-related studies differently. However, many students who speak English as their second language do not believe it is a lasting barrier to their studies here.

"I don't feel that English being my second language has hindered me in any aspect at Groton," said Faye Tian '19, whose native tongue is Mandarin.

Tyler Weisberg '22, who also speaks Mandarin fluently, said, "I seem to be able to mix in with the other kids perfectly fine. When I tell them that English is my second language, sometimes they seem a little bit surprised."

Julien Lee Héberling

'19, whose first language is French, mostly agreed. "Well, language-wise, I was generally able to speak English, but there would be some phrases I would miss out of, especially colloquial stuff," he said. "[My English] wasn't quite as natural as my French, but I haven't spoken French in a while so [English has] gotten better."

Not everyone's experience has been seamless. Fran Saldivar '19, a native Spanish speaker, noted that it was initially more difficult writing essays, reading aloud in class, or debating publicly because the level of English increased substantially from her old school and, subsequently, insecurities arose. However, since then, Fran said, "My writing has gotten progressively better. I am now more concise, eloquent and, of course, have more vocabulary."

When asked about how Groton's curriculum accommodates non-native English speakers, students had a variety of answers. Lwazi Bululu '20, whose first language is Xhosa, said, "The Groton curriculum has helped me by teaching me at the same pace as my classmates, not putting me in an easier section because English is not my native language... But I feel in second and third form, teachers work on improving that aspect of language [teaching]."

Fran, in contrast, called for more guidance, although she said that she was motivated by the high standards teachers held her to. Faye shared a similar view, adding that the only way she could see students getting extra help at Groton was by seeking out one-on-one meetings with teachers. Other students simply cited

the requirement of English throughout the application process as a natural deterrent for students who truly struggle with the language. Julien noted that more than half of the SSAT is based on a thorough understanding of English, and Filip Engström '20, originally from Sweden, said, that students whose native language isn't English "are expected to have the same proficiency as any other student, regardless of how long they have spoken the language."

Yet, most students agreed that their time at Groton changed their perspective on different cultures through their understanding of language. In addition, many students said they became more conscious of both English and their native languages. For example, Faye described situations both from English to Chinese and vice versa "hopelessly lost in translation," and how they prompted her to compare cultural norms and linguistic habits. "In Chinese," she said, "for example, relatives all have different names depending on whether they come from the mother's or the father's side of the family, whereas in English there is no such distinction. Also, in Chinese, there are no tenses; I'd actually never thought about or even realized this before someone at Groton asked me how to say 'I run' versus 'I ran' in Chinese, and it struck me that Chinese verbs don't have different tenses."

Lwazi also mentioned becoming more conscious of the ties between language and identity, saying, "I feel sometimes I cannot fully express myself not because Groton is suppressive but because I find myself to be unique in my native tongue."

Word on the Circle

"What do you love about the Dining Hall?"



"I like their willingness to engage with the community. They don't feel like their own department. They ask people to come to their meetings, which they don't have to do. We're so lucky to have such a devoted people working with us, not for us."

-Randi Dumont



"I love the memes that they put up on the walls. They always make me laugh no matter how cheesy they are."

-Annabel Kocks '20



"I really like the variability. The food is never generic and there's always something for everyone. It's also very accessible, which is nice."

-George Kingsland '21



Tyler Weisberg, whose first language is Mandarin.

B. CALMAS '18 for *The Circle Voice*

Photos by B. CALMAS '18 for *The Circle Voice*

The Social Significance of *Cabaret*

By KARLA SANFORD '19

This winter, Groton's theater program will be producing *Cabaret*. The show follows Sally Bowles (Lily Cratsley '19), an ignorant expatriate, on her quest for fame in the tawdry Kit Kat Klub as well as her relationship with Cliff Bradshaw (Christian Carson '18), a visiting American novelist. Meanwhile, a Master of Ceremonies (Julien Alam '19) oversees the Kit Kat Klub and, by extension, the world of the show.

With a large cast, *Cabaret* is a perfect show because it allows many students to shine on stage, and also "makes social commentary," according to Director of Theater Laurie Sales. Primarily, Laurie believes that the show makes the audience think about their values and privileges that come with being in a place that allows the expression his or her values. For example, the show centers around the Kit Kat Club, a seedy Berlin nightclub with dancing cabaret girls on call. However, Laurie says that, while the show is sexy, it's not necessarily sexual. "It makes you think about norms and deviants and how we get boxed in and how some forms of expression are acceptable and others aren't, but it's not in a way that's about sexual expression. It's about freedom to express oneself in a variety of ways."

On a more political level, the show allows the au-



The *Cabaret* cast rehearsing.

S. CONROY '19 for *The Circle Voice*

dience to view Berlin through the eyes of the show's antagonists, the Nazis. Laurie explains that the original Broadway production used a huge mirror as a metaphor. After the production, the audience members are met with their own image and are forced to confront their own ambivalence towards the gradual Nazification of Berlin.

During the Nazis' rise to power, many Germans had little choice on whether to support the Nazis. Even the *Cabaret* girls, who can easily be written off as mere dancers, the audience must be more introspective. The cabaret lifestyle represents both their livelihoods and escapism from the drollery of politics and society. "In a way, this show has made me think about understanding

a perspective that's very different from mine. It makes me think about how privileged I am to decide what my values are and live my values by choice," says Laurie.

Throughout the rehearsal process, the cast practices moment work – short pieces of theater incorporating the show's themes and theatrical elements – to begin to understand the place of citizens in the late Weimar Republic. Many drew comparisons between this time period and today's political climate. Josie Fulton '18, who plays a cabaret dancer, says, "So clearly linking the two periods of time together greatly affected me. I felt like I was able to fully understand what complacency is and how we're living in a period of complacency now."

Laurie explains this moment work is necessary to put on a good show. She explains, "Without [the moment work], as educators we are not doing our jobs... It's great to learn how to perform but we are really interested in teaching is how performance gets at these universal human questions." Choreographer and co-director Nicole Harris hopes that the moment work won't be lost on the audience. "Any time as an audience member you watch something where the ensemble is experiencing what's happening, you have a different experience as an audience member," she says.

In addition to creating a broad social commentary, the show holds other themes that may resound, especially on Groton's campus. Julien Alam '19 says, "Certain songs such as 'Money' may hit particularly home. I think that there are a lot of themes that the Groton community can relate to including privilege, status, and discrimination." Laurie also points out a song titled "What Would You Do?" as an embodiment of the relationship between privilege and action: "It's not that easy to answer the question, 'What would you do?' if you didn't live in a privileged situation where you have all the resources at your fingertips, when your values are not as important as being able to

eat and survive and protect your family, what would you do? I think the answer for all of us is kind of scary."

The harsh beauty of *Cabaret*, says Laurie, is that the audience members do become bystanders. "There is no fourth wall," she says. The seamless changes between the club performances and to scenes of real life heighten this effect. Because the setting seamlessly changes between the club performances to scenes of real life, the audience is immediately drawn in. Lily Cratsley '19 explains "In the whole play, as a matter of fact, life merges with performance and performance overlaps with life."

While there are ties to present-day politics, cast members insist that the show is not about this. Julien Alam '19 says, "I would also say, on the show as a whole, that it is coming at a really perfect time and I don't think people are ready for how hard it may hit them." Laurie says that, while she is not trying to impress any single set of values on the audience, she is challenging the audience to think about their values. She hopes that as the audience members leave, they will consider two important questions: "What does it feel like when you see some of your values played out on stage like this? What are you going to do about that?"

A History of Groton's Model UN Club

By ALEX KOGLER '19

This year, on January 25, twelve students departed for a three-day conference in Boston, to attend the Harvard Model United Nations Conference. Since its founding in 1986, this event annually attracts students from regions as far away as South America and Africa. The conference, run entirely by current Harvard students, is one of the most widely recognized and highly-attended Model United Nations conferences around the world. For three days, students spend hours attending meets, deliberating, and forming resolutions to propose to the mock general assembly.

MUN is, as the name would suggest, a simulation of the United Nations. Students at the high school, college, or even middle school level represent diplomats from countries from around the world in mock committees. On the social front, students have a chance to meet other internationally-minded students from around the world.

History teacher John Lyons first started a MUN group at Groton in the early 2000s. Originally, the school took part in the Georgetown MUN conference in Washington D.C. Due to complications arising from

the clashing of conference dates and long weekend, the program was discontinued in 2008. After receiving interest from both current and prospective students, Mr. Lamont reestablished the program in 2013. The program has been running for three years and the team has attended both Yale and Harvard MUN conferences. Over three years, MUN's popularity has increased, with twenty-six students in total affiliated this year and twenty-four of those students attending either MUN or Model Congress (MCONG) conferences. Mr. Lamont attributes the club's popularity to both the increasing interest of current students and an influx of new students with previous experience.

This year, Groton students, grouped with specific committees, were assigned to research various issues with regard to Pakistan, their assigned country. Possible jobs for students ranged from researching human rights to working as a member of the press corps. As preparation for the conference, each committee uses their research to complete a position paper, a document explaining their issue and solution to the problem, and submit it to their respective



Members of the Groton MUN Club.

T. WEISBERG '22 for *The Circle Voice*

committee heads. As MUN head Margot French '18 explains, students "represent their [assigned countries] and interact with other delegates based on [the assigned country's] allies or enemies." Margot further explains that "the goal is to draft a successful resolution that deals with an issue presented within your committee."

After weeks of preparation, each twelve-person team travels to its respective conference. MUN and its partner club, Groton's Model Congress (MCONG) group, dedicated two hours ev-

ery Sunday for two months to participate in the event. Students are assigned to a wide range of committees spanning topics from environmental work to international security keeping.

Despite the lengthy preparation, MUN provides opportunities not only a learning process for those interested in international relations, but also a valuable social experience. MUN/MCONG co-head Jack Wilmerding '19 says that the group "is a really good experience for anyone with aspirations for politics. Oth-

erwise, it's a lot of fun to go out of my comfort zone and socialize with students from around the world that attend these conferences." MUN participant Fran Saldivar '19 enjoys meeting fellow students who are "very motivated" and "clearly there to make a change in the future." As the MUN conference ends, the Model Congress students prepare for the Harvard Model Congress event, also hosted in Boston, where student have the opportunity to portray real-life political figures such as governors and house judiciaries.

Athlete Of the Issue: Alyna Baharozian

BY BEN ZAIDEL '20

The day was February 27, 2016: St. Mark's Day, one of the most important days for a Groton athlete. All Groton students who play sports pit themselves against St. Mark's students in a battle that comes down to pure athletic prowess. The team was girls varsity basketball, and things weren't looking good. The team was down 45-46 with only a few seconds left on the clock. Time was running out, and hope for a victory seemed lost. That was, until Alyna Baharozian '18 got her hands on the ball. Sinking a buzzer-beater to win the game, Alyna propelled the entire team to a victory. Alyna has been an integral member of the Groton's girls basketball program for all five of her years at the school, and the team functions better with her at its helm.

Alyna's basketball career started around first grade, when she was only six or seven. All of the basketball programs in her hometown – Westford, MA – didn't start until third grade, but she was dying to get into the sport. "Athletics have always been big in my family," she says. So, she had her mom sign her up for a church league called Upward. After that, she continued with basketball, improving on her skills well through arriving to Groton. She has played basketball for her entire Groton career, even making vari-



Alyna on the court.

Courtesy of RUSS CARNEY

ty in her second form year, and now captains the team and is a crucial part of the team's successes. Alyna currently plays as a point guard and shooting guard for the school, averaging 14 points per game. Her other statistics are equally impeccable: over her career, she has made 74 percent of her free throws and 31 percent of her field goals.

Alyna's dedication to the sport is thorough. When asked why she loves the sport, her answer is simple: that she loves being on a team. She also attributes her success to working with, rather than against, the team, saying that she is "willing to

share the ball and get everyone involved." She firmly believes that the team's wins come from cohesion on everyone's part, and doesn't take sole responsibility for any success. Thus, it makes sense that her favorite parts of basketball are the "physicality and teamwork." Besides this, she believes that the high level of competition involved in basketball makes it enjoyable.

As well as being a solid team player, Alyna also co-captains the team with Mary Sabatelle '18 and Lyndsey Toce '19. Alyna, Mary, and Lyndsey all do their best to bring the team together. They transitioned

rather easily into leadership – given that only one senior graduated last year, they had previously taken some responsibility for leading the team.

This year, though, almost half of the girls varsity basketball team is comprised of second and third formers, making leadership critical to inspire new talent. Alyna is a big fan of the younger kids on the team, saying, "The younger kids are awesome. They all work super hard to pressure the older kids in practice and it certainly helps the team. All of the lower schoolers are super fun to hang out with and be around."

Alyna's teammates and managers have beaming reviews of her skills both on and off the court. Mary Collins '20 says that "Alyna has great team spirit and [has] been able to help us pull through in some of our toughest games. She is an amazing captain, player, and teammate." Sunhoo Park '18, co-manager of the team, thinks that Alyna has been leading the team ever since fourth form. "She constantly gives her all and leads her team through the ups and downs on both ends of the court."

Coaches Stacey Spring and Kate Dennison also praise Alyna's work ethic and talent. Mrs. Spring said that Alyna "is our most consistent scorer who can shoot the three or drive to the hoop." Mrs. Dennison added that "her basketball IQ is very high, adding to her diligence and talent on the court."

Alyna plans to continue with her athletic endeavors. Next year, she will join Middlebury College's Class of 2022 and play basketball for the Panthers. In the nearer future, though, Groton's girls basketball team will most likely be focusing on making the NEPSAC Class B playoffs, as they did last year. They also hope to improve before their next big match up against St. Mark's, hoping to beat them for the third time in a row.

2018 Winter Olympics Preview

BY MAX STEINERT '20

Finally, the wait is over. Beginning February 9, the 2018 Winter Olympics will be held in Pyeongchang, South Korea. This tradition, idolized by spectators and competitors, happens once every four years, and the competition looks sharp for yet another year. Team USA will return with both veteran competitors and rookies.

Mikaela Shiffrin, a member of the U.S. alpine skiing team, has especially big plans to expand on her first gold medal received in Sochi in 2014. Ms. Shiffrin is a native of Vail, Colorado. Specializing in slalom and giant slalom, two of five alpine skiing events, Shiffrin competed in her first Olympics in Sochi in 2014. 18 years old, she won gold in women's slalom and made history as the youngest champion in her event. After her victory in Sochi, she is setting a personal goal to win five medals in 2018, a daunting challenge even for experienced Olympians.

However, as the Winter Olympics approach, this milestone does not seem too far out of reach. Shiffrin has won a total of nine slalom races in the the alpine ski World Cup race this year,



Team USA's bobsled at the 2002 Salt Lake City Winter Olympics.

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winning most recently by a massive margin of 1.64 seconds. Additionally, in other alpine skiing events, she remains in top form and seems prepared to make the run for five Golds. At Pyeongchang,

Ms. Shiffrin plans to compete in slalom and giant slalom, the first two events on the schedule, and depending on her performance, she may attempt other events. As one of the top winter athletes for

the U.S. team in 2018, audience members should certainly keep their eyes on Ms. Shiffrin.

Another popular event in the Winter Olympics is the luge. Although

Team USA has a competitive luge program and has earned medals on more than one occasion, the team has yet to win an Olympic gold. The key to winning is simply performing under pressure on the competition run. Many athletes on the team have the capability to produce gold-medal runs: it is just about performing when it matters. Luge is a unique sport: there are a total of 20 corners to navigate around, and the fastest run wins. Athletes lay on their backs and throw themselves feet first down an ice track in a metal sled, peering over their toes down the course. The United States will look to finally secure their first gold medal in this fast-paced and somewhat dangerous sport this upcoming Olympics.

Overall, the United States is shaping up for an excellent performance in this year's Olympic Games. Competing globally as one of the most consistently performing countries in this grand culmination of winter sports, we can expect the nation to succeed and – with some luck – to take home a world record or two as well.

Why Hockey Players Choose Groton

By LILIAS KIM '19

Groton's boys varsity hockey team competes in the Eberhart division of the New England Prep School Ice Hockey Association. The season begins in the end of November, and stretches to the end of February, playing two to three games per week. Groton's hockey team prides itself on strong teamwork and experience. In the last decade, Groton players have committed to Yale University, the University of Vermont, Colgate University, Colby College, Williams College, Babson College, Bowdoin College, St. Michael's College, and Connecticut College. Over the years, the team has gained a strong reputation, attracting players from different regions in New England and Canada. The question on the table: why did they choose Groton?

New fifth former Brandon Slawaska '19 is currently in the midst of his first Groton hockey season. Hailing all the way from Montreal, he was eager to join a competitive hockey league. "New England prep school hockey is great exposure. There are a lot of college scouts that look around the prep school circuit, and it's a great preparation for collegiate level," he says.

Independent School League rules prevent schools

within the league – like Groton – from offering athletic scholarships. The rule states that member schools are only permitted to offer scholarships "only on the basis of students' demonstrated financial need."

At Groton, there is no formal recognition for recruited hockey players. Student athletes such as Will Torriani '19, Noah Kader '19, and Brandon decided to choose Groton not only to play hockey, but also for

its rigorous academics. Will says that his journey to Groton was motivated largely by academic factors: "...back home with my club team, we used to play more games, but you would only go to school four hours a day. Here, school is more rigorous. The hockey is good back home, but here the education is really good." Brandon also chose Groton for more than just hockey. A transfer from Westminster School, he enjoys the experience he has at Groton

because of the tightly knit community and team at Groton. "My mom's friend's son went to Groton, and he really liked it. I called Coach [William] Riley, and he helped me a lot. We have a really strong camaraderie here, and that's really important", he explains.

Liam Calder '18, from Montreal, and Tom Steere '18, from New Hampshire, came to Groton in 2016 as new fifth formers. Liam plays defense, and

Tom is a goalie. They both say that academics were a strong factor in their choices; Liam says that he found Groton by looking up "best prep schools in the United States." They've transitioned well here, arguing that the rigidly scheduled hockey season helps them succeed in their academic pursuits. Liam says, "Winter term is my best term for sure. The time table with practices and classes allows no time for procrastination which helps a lot".

Kai Dueñez '18, also from Montreal, appreciates the "great variety of friends at Groton with the hockey team and his extracurriculars." "It's a healthy balance between school life and athletics".

Even though these athletes arrived in the fifth form – later than most Groton students – they seem to adjust well to Groton's rigorous schedule and contribute to the team. Hockey captain Tyler Forbes '18 commented on the strength the boys have added to the team: "They've helped fill the hole that was left after last season. In the past seasons, we've lacked depth, but the new recruits have made our team a better one because they've given us a bigger and more competitive bench."



Noah Kader '19 and Kai Dueñez '18 on the rink.

F. LYNCH '19 for *The Circle Voice*

Do Managers Deserve Half of a Varsity Letter?

By ANNABEL KOCKS '20

Managing a varsity team has long been an alternative to athletics or drama for fifth and sixth formers seeking an afternoon activity. However, not playing in the games or matches sparks the question of whether managers ought to be considered part of the teams they manage – and whether they deserve the half varsity letters they receive at the end of each term.

The Athletic Department requires managers to bring the waters to and from team practices as well as attend all of the team's games, both home and away. As a result, the time commitment is not significantly less than the sport itself; boys varsity hockey manager Addie Newsome '18 says "I'll work out so I'll be in the AC for the same amount of time they are."

Then, before every home game, Addie and her co-manager Evie Gomila '19 have to "fill up the water, set up the puck pyramid, bring the back-up sticks, keep stats, control the music, and tweet the score of the boys' game." Much of this would be the domain of coaches or players otherwise, so managers fill an important niche in team activities. Further, by using the statistics managers take, coaches have the ability to analyze the team as a whole and determine what tactics

they need to focus more on in practice

According to Athletic Director Bob Low, managers are given only half a varsity letter because "the time commitment compared to that of an athlete on the team is not equal." Willow Irving '20, a member of the girls

varsity squash team, agrees with Mr. Low that managers "deserve half a varsity letter because even though they aren't playing for the team, they are still helping out, taking the scores, and setting up the matches."

Varsity letters are traditionally awarded based on

varsity team status – by proxy, on athletic skill. Getting half a varsity letter showcases the level of commitment that managers bring in an often thankless position. However, some would argue that this doesn't mean they are truly part of the team. Varsity hockey player Henry Hodde

'20 says that managers "are very useful, but I wouldn't necessarily consider them to be a part of the team. I'd say they're connected but not actually on the team because they're not actually playing in the games. For hockey, they're not on the ice with the rest of the team, they're off to the side, and they aren't in the locker room."

On the other hand, boys varsity basketball manager Elechi Egwuekwe '18 says that she feels like she is truly a part of the team "because this team is made up of some of my best friends, so it wasn't hard for me to fit right in."

The same is true of managers on the girls varsity basketball team; Coach Stacey Spring strongly believes that the managers are integral members of the team: "Sunhoo [Park] and Charlie [Pearce '18] bring positive energy to bus rides, practices, and games... They help keep things light." Overall, it seems that the question of whether or not managers are truly parts of their teams depends on the specific team and manager. Regardless, managers serve important functions and help to keep team's running smoothly. "The team wouldn't be the same without them," says Willow.



Team managers attend every game. But should they letter?

T. WEISBERG '22 for *The Circle Voice*

Teachers Reveal Their Favorite Tunes

BY JULIA KENDALL '19

Mr. Kohn	Mr. Lamont	Mrs. Maqubela	Laurie Sales	Mrs. Bannard
<p>In the words of Kanye West, “[Kanye’s] music isn’t just music – it’s medicine.” This certainly rings true for English teacher Jake Kohn, who lists Kanye as his favorite artist and Kanye’s <i>My Beautiful Dark Twisted Fantasy</i> as his favorite album. What Mr. Kohn likes so much about Kanye is that “he has the vision and courage needed to reinvent himself.”</p> <p>Mr. Kohn’s love for Kanye stems from his high school days. He has vivid memories of how inspirational Kanye was; specifically, how listening to Kanye’s “All of the Lights” got Mr. Kohn to “think about having the confidence to ask for the spotlight, to believe that you were smart enough or fast enough that you wanted every light in the place on you, just so you could be seen.”</p> <p>Kanye wasn’t the only artist that Mr. Kohn enjoyed listening to in high school – he frequently played tunes by U2, Death Cab, Elton John. the XX and more.</p>	<p>If you’ve been at Groton for long enough, you have certainly noticed the big black-and-white “The Not” stickers stuck on a plethora of students’ laptops. For those that don’t know, “The Not” is the name of history teacher Tom Lamont’s band. Mr. Lamont has been an avid fan of music since he was young, and while his music taste has ranged from country to heavy metal, he lists “Play It Again” by Luke Bryan, and “Young Man Blues” by The Who as some of his favorite songs.</p> <p>“‘Play It Again’ is simply a perfect pop song – short, melodic, and memorable. The lyrics, the chords, and the song structure are very basic, but it all just comes together magically, at least for me... I am touched by the simple message that, no matter how awkward it may seem, love is possible,” he says.</p>	<p>English teacher Vuyelwa Maqubela enjoys listening to different South African artists: “I love listening to all kinds of South African artists, including Brenda Fassie, Zahara, Sibongile Khumalo and Hugh Masekela.” In addition, she also enjoys several American artists such as Diana Ross, Bruno Mars and the band The Temptations.</p> <p>Mrs. Maqubela recounted how sentimental she gets: “Just listening to oldies and South African music reminds me of home and of growing up in South Africa, where people love to listen to good music and dance.”</p>	<p>Drama teacher Laurie Sales uses music as a medium for finding inspiration, fun and ambition in daily tasks. She says, “I listen to EDM or other kinds of music with a serious beat when I clean the house or am doing some kind of crafting project... When I driving, I like to sing loudly... If I want to be inspired in my creative brain, I listen to Dan Mangan or Gabriel Rios or Regina Spektor – music where the sweeping sounds move me while the lyrics provide an instigation for my imagination.”</p> <p>Laurie lists “everything on the <i>Dear Evan Hansen</i> or <i>Hamilton</i> soundtrack,” as her favorite songs, although she also admits to a deep love for <i>Cabaret</i>.</p>	<p>Latin teacher Mary Frances Bannard finds that though her favorite artist/band is constantly changing, she does have some constants – Sufjan Stevens, James Taylor, the Beatles, Josh Ritter, and Taylor Swift,. In addition, she professed a love for Elton John’s “Your Song.” She recalled, “Mr. Bannard put it on a mix CD when we were first dating (in days of yore, i.e. the pre-iPod/digitized music era), and so it has always been special. We danced to it at our wedding.”</p> <p>Mrs. Bannard’s spent her high school days listening to the likes of the Dave Matthews Band, Guster, John Mayer, and Elton John. “After I turned 16, I drove a beaten-up Ford Explorer to and from school, and I was responsible for shuttling my two younger brothers from place to place. Probably my best memories surrounding music are in that car, on those rides, solo or with my brothers or friends, blasting music and singing at the top of my lungs,” she says.</p>

Cardi B: More Than Just a Girl from the Bronx

BY KATIE REVENO '20

Triple-platinum debut single. Three songs in Billboard’s Top 10. Stripper turned Instagram personality turned superstar.

Cardi B is arguably the biggest hip-hop breakout star of 2017. If the lyrics “I don’t gotta dance, I make money move” don’t ring any bells, I recommend that you attempt to escape from the rock you’ve been living under for the past seven months. Just as her fierce lyrics suggest, Cardi isn’t afraid of the media or anyone else’s perception of her, unlike so many celebrities today. She’s controversial, bold, and, most of all, real. With the majority of today’s celebrities carefully constructing artificial public personas, fans are drawn to the 25 year old’s intense relatability, and the enormous personality with which she expresses it. A vast part of her relatability stems from her impoverished background, which she escaped from through money earned by stripping. From there, her uniquely candid attitude towards discussing almost any topic on Vine and other social media platforms boosted her to internet fame. Within one of her most well-



Cardi B’s logo.

Public Domain

known videos, Cardi says, “You know people be asking me like, ‘What do you does?’ Like, ‘are you a model? Are you like a comedian or some-

Cardi isn’t afraid of the media or anyone else’s perception of her, unlike so many celebrities today.

thing?’ Nah I ain’t none of that. I’m a ho. I’m a stripper ho. I’m about this shmoney.”

It is not difficult to see how she attracted the attention of millions, even prior to her singing success.

With her newfound fame, Cardi moved on from stripping to hosting club events and then the reality TV show “Love and Hip-Hop: New York.” Due to her huge persona, she amassed even more attention during her time on the show, but ultimately elected to leave in order to better pursue her burgeoning music career. Beyond “Bodak Yellow”, the Madonna and Lady Gaga-influenced rapper has experi-

enced immense success with both “Motorsport” and “No Limit,” which featured collaborations with Migos and G-Eazy, respectively. Despite the fact that she is no longer primarily an Internet star, Cardi continues to entertain with her one-of-a-kind personality and utterly unapologetic outlook. Delivered in her iconic Spanish accent mixed with New York slang, a few comedic gems include “I’m an emotional gangster. I cry once a month,” and “I’m being nice to you. Have I stabbed you? No.”

Although much of

what Cardi says during interviews and on social media is entertaining due to sheer shock value, she also delivers the impactful message of always being yourself and not allowing others’ expectations to define you. When Cardi jokes that she’s “sorry [she] ain’t proper and s***. My hair proper though,” she also sends the message that it is acceptable for people to act outside of society’s social norms and boundaries. Similarly, when she says that she doesn’t want people to “expect [her] to cook. I’m tired. I’m as tired as you,” Cardi lets her female fans especially know that defying traditional gender roles is perfectly fine. In a world filled with false personas and an ever-present fear of how we are perceived by others, Cardi provides a refreshing dose of realism and confidence that inspires. Perhaps summing up her carefree attitude and pervading sense of relatability mixed with humor, Cardi expresses that she is “just a regular degular shmegular girl from the Bronx.”

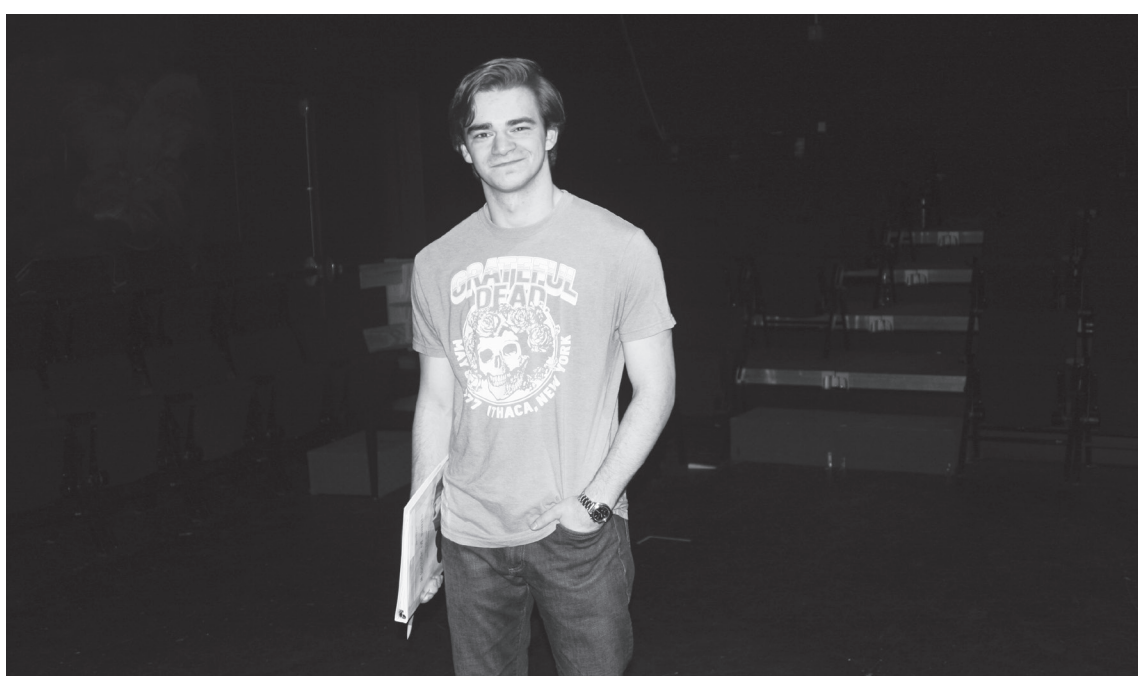
Artist of the Issue: James Hovet

By ELIZA POWERS '20

James Hovet '18 has spent time in the CPAC ever since his arrival on the circle five years ago. Taking a bow after directing his first one-act play has been James' most memorable Groton theater moment. He has also acted in the productions of "Equus," "The Laramie Project," "Twelve Angry Jurors," and *Twelfth Night*. James is most proud of his roles as Nugget in "Equus" and Jedediah Schultz, Aaron McKinney, and Russell Henderson in "The Laramie Project."

At Groton, directing and playwriting have become some of James' many passions. Last year, he directed "A Streak of Lavender," a short play written by Mac Galinson '17. In the past, James has also taken time to do some playwriting himself. In the spring of 2016, James wrote and directed "The Groton Project," a one-act inspired by the structure of "The Laramie Project." The show is based on a compilation of interviews with Groton students on their experiences with mental illness.

This winter, James is working on a directing tutorial with Laurie Sales, Groton's resident theater director, with whom he has been preparing to direct a play called "a gaggle of saints," written by Neil Labute. Pat Ryan '19



James in the Black Box.

S. CONROY '19 for *The Circle Voice*

and Lyndsey Toce '19 will star in James' interpretation. "It's going really well," says James. "We spend a lot of time talking about what it is that makes a play good, and a lot about how to get actors on board and how to direct them in a way that helps them and is not just telling them what to do."

The actors in shows James directs are complimentary of his directing ability. James is "very good at what he does," says Lyndsey. "He asks us really thought-provoking questions that force us to dig deep inside ourselves to create a

character."

Aside from acting and directing, James feels passionate about behind-the-scenes work in theater: lighting. Learning to code in second form translated into a fascination with lighting design, which heavily involves computers. During his time at Groton, James has been in charge of lighting for Groton dance shows, one acts, and plays. This spring, he will be the lighting designer for the mainstage production of "The Women of Lockerbie." "In Second Form, there were one acts going on and I was

just in the building when it was happening and thought 'Oh, that's cool, I might as well try my hand at that,' and so I lit a one act that starred a young Julien Alam ['19]," James says of his initial encounter with lighting. This one-act had eight lighting cues that James was adamant about doing perfectly. After that, he was hooked.

James says that lighting is "an art...the real job of a lighting designer is to help the director tell the story that they want to tell... [which] takes a deep understanding of the play and of the emotion and of the meaning

behind it." He says that a successful lighting designer "understands the human psyche."

James' passion for all aspects of theater including acting, directing, tech, and lighting is apparent in his work. Laurie says, "I often notice when he is acting that he looks at the whole production, thinking about what I am doing, what the lighting designer is doing, what the technical team is doing and then some. He asks questions constantly and has been entirely proactive about his learning in the theater."

"All of these skills are serving James as he studies directing," she says about his many different projects involving Groton theater, adding that James' "passion for theatre is holistic."

James credits his experience to Laurie and her husband Brandt Belknap. "I didn't do much of it beforehand, so it was all Laurie and Brandt getting me interested and pointing me in the right direction," he says.

James advises younger students who want to get involved with Groton theater to "take every single opportunity [they] can get... Brandt wants you to try as many things as you want to try, and so you should just ask. He will help you out."

Who's Winning What? Oscar Predictions 2018

BY CHARLES WAHBA '20

After a tumultuous and historic year in Hollywood, the year's most prestigious awards ceremony is nearing. In this article, I'll be predicting the winners of the Oscars' main awards based on the results of previous award shows, critic reviews, and personal opinion. Here is a list of the Oscar nominations for the Best Picture award, widely regarded as the most prestigious: *Call Me by Your Name*, *Darkest Hour*, *Dunkirk*, *Get Out*, *Lady Bird*, *Phantom Thread*, *The Post*, *The Shape of Water*, and *Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri*.

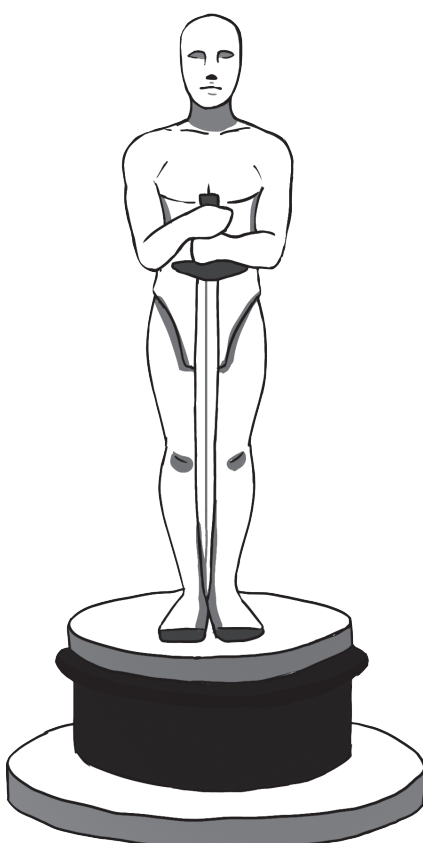
Best Picture

Receiving the most nominations this year with thirteen, *The Shape of Water* will take home the evening's most prestigious prize. Co-written and directed by Guillermo del Toro, *The Shape of Water* tells the story of a lonely, mute woman who falls in love with a sea creature being held by the government. A peculiar, but ultimately heartwarming story ensues, with performances from Sally Hawkins and Michael Shannon, along with a terrific ensemble

cast. A well-acted, compelling story accompanied by beautiful cinematography and expert direction makes a winning recipe for *The Shape of Water*.

Best Actor

The nominees for best actor include Timothee Chalamet (*Call Me by Your Name*), Daniel Day-Lewis (*Phantom Thread*), Daniel Kaluuya (*Get Out*), Gary Oldman (*Darkest Hour*), and Denzel Washington (*Roman J. Israel, Esq.*). After essentially sweeping all previous award ceremonies this year, Gary Oldman looks poised to take home a long-awaited and much deserved Academy Award this year for his performance of Winston Churchill in *Darkest Hour*. Oldman completely vanishes in the role, in appearance, voice, charisma, and mind. He powerfully plays a leader struggling to unite and inspire his country in the face of near-destruction. While perhaps not the most nuanced performance of the nominees, Oldman is the most successful in conveying the trials and tribulations of



A. WEI '21 for *The Circle Voice*

his character, a man doing all he can to keep England and the world from defeat.

Best Actress

The best actress nominees are Sally Hawkins (*The Shape of Water*), Frances McDor-

mand (*Three Billboards*), Margot Robbie (*I, Tonya*), Saoirse Ronan (*Lady Bird*), and Meryl Streep (*The Post*). Like Oldman, Frances McDormand is the strong favorite to take home this year's best actress award. After having already won for *Fargo* (1996), it looks like she will add a second Oscar to her collection. She plays Mildred Hayes, a mother grieving over the rape and murder of her daughter. However, the investigation is stalling, prompting her to put up three billboards urging the police to take action. McDormand's role is far more serious than that of her competitors, playing a role Oscar voters will surely fall in love with, and rightfully so. The audience is not just able to comprehend her pain, but feel it themselves as she takes on a town and system fighting against her.

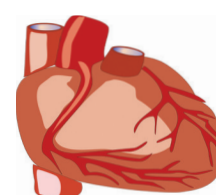
Best Director

The nominees for best director are Christopher Nolan (*Dunkirk*), Jordan Peele (*Get Out*), Greta Gerwig (*Lady Bird*), Paul Thomas Anderson (*Phantom Thread*), and

Guillermo del Toro (*The Shape of Water*). Believe it or not, Christopher Nolan has never been nominated for Best Director, despite such smash hits as *Interstellar* and *Inception*. This year his first nomination will result in his first victory in the category for *Dunkirk*. Assuming *Dunkirk* does not win Best Picture, (although it does have the best chance), I find it hard to believe that such a filmmaking achievement will go completely unrecognized by the Academy. Nolan successfully crafted the greatest war film since *Saving Private Ryan*. In *Dunkirk*, the audience is given the most realistic and accurate portrayal of war perhaps ever seen. Minimal CGI is employed, with decommissioned World War II boats being hauled out of museums to serve as props and reconstructing Spitfires flown by the actors. The director made the bold choice of forgoing character development in order to truly convey the chaos of 400,000 men stranded on a beach, with all of this being shot in awe-inspiring IMAX.



Pick a Pick-Up Line



1. I would transfer to St. Mark's for you.
2. You make every day feel like Surprise Holiday!
3. Flik isn't the only one who can be cheesy.
4. You're my personal happy lamp.
5. I would cut the Circle just to reach you faster.
6. Are you an overacheiving fourth former? 'Cuz we've got AP Chemistry.
7. You make living in rural Massachusetts worth it!
8. Are you in the accusative? Because you're the object of my love.
9. I would visit you in the Health Center even if you had the flu.
10. This June, you're the only prize I want to win.

Poems for your Boo

Dearest Lover,

I see you across the table in the Dining Hall,
It takes a strong person to admit when they fall,
I think about how cheese in the toaster is my worst fear,
But for you, my love, on Valentine's Day, I shed a single tear,
Sitting there at the table, all I want is a panini,
But I only stay loyal to you...because Flik so cheesy.

Love,
A Hungry Student

Dearest Lover,

Even though you didn't fulfill my lofting request,
I still think that you are the very best,
I come home from a long day and see that toilet bowl clean,
With the brightest shine I have ever seen,
I know you are behind the scenes on every delivery
B&G, you are the definition of the word chivalry

Love,
An Upstanding Student



We hope you find someone this Valentine's Day.

Peace n' Love,
The Humor Section <3

