

TEENS

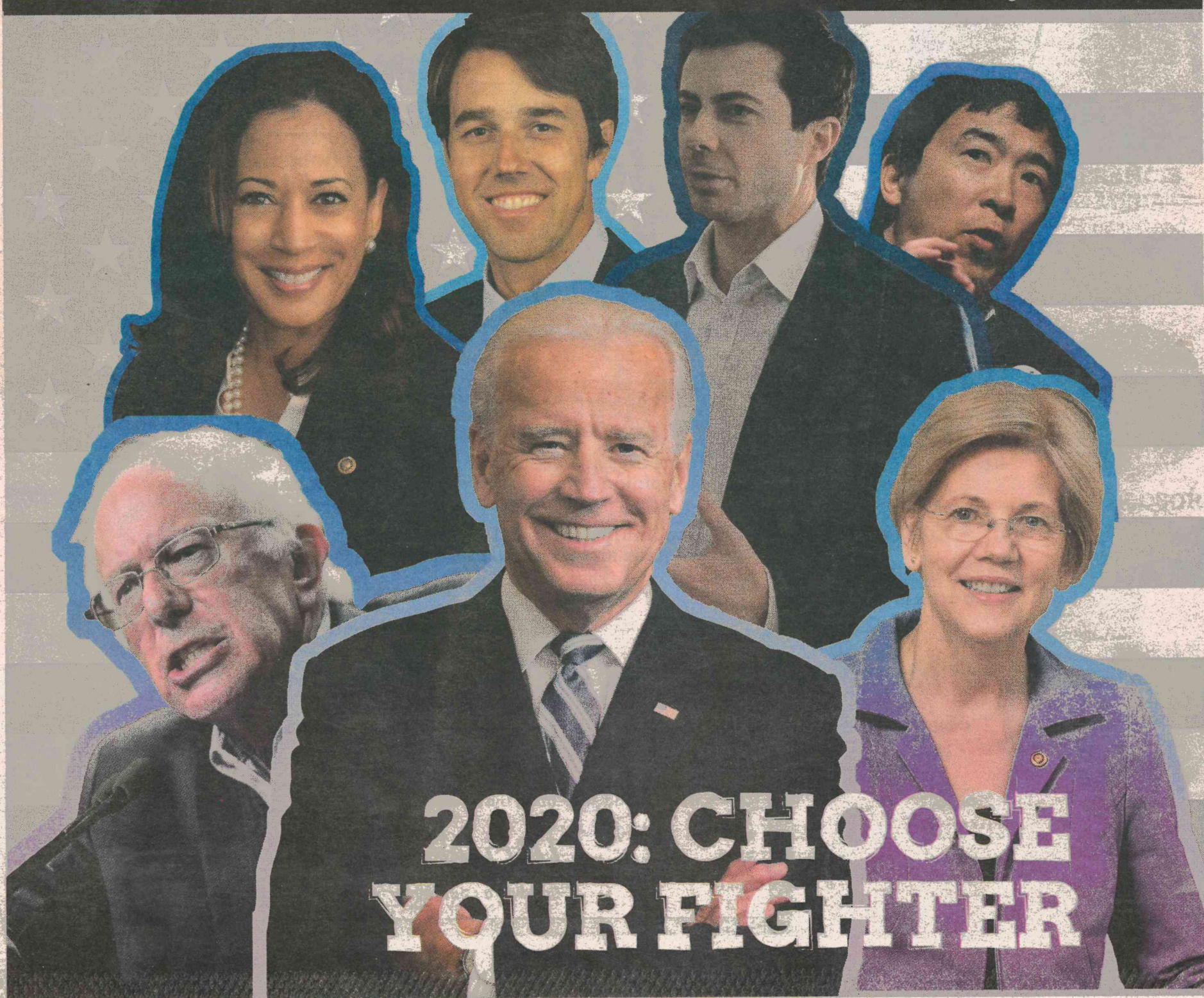
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TEENS IN PRINT

bostontip.com

unites the city's teens to
create an outlet to inform,
communicate and provide **positive**
change through written expression.

WRITE FOR US!

Teens in Print is Boston's only citywide newspaper
written by and for high school students. Launched
by WriteBoston and the Boston Globe in 2004, and
published quarterly, TiP is a powerful platform for
student journalists, essayists, poets and artists.

WANT TO HEAR MORE YOUTH VOICES?

Find **exclusive online** content
including multimedia reports at www.bostontip.com

Next issue: September 2019

Teens in Print accepts submissions of original news articles,
opinion pieces, essays, poems and editorial cartoons.

To submit, please email your work along with your full name,
grade and school to carlagualdron@writeboston.org.

Teens in Print reserves the right to
edit for length and content.

We look forward to your submissions!



SEE THIS INSIDE THE NEWSPAPER?

We are excited to recognize the winning pieces from our Rising
Voice Awards, celebrating powerful teen voices across diverse
genres of journalism. Many thanks to Wilson HGA for sponsoring
and presenting the awards to our talented youth writers!

WriteBoston

Building a Community of Writers

MEET THE STAFF

What is your song of the summer?



**AMY
AGUILAR**
Never Cared
G Herbo



**DARREN
SETO**
Perth
Bon Iver



**ALBERTINA DE
CARVALHO**
Slow Hands
Niall Horan



**DARWIN
SOTO**
Zeze
Kodak Black
feat. Travis Scott
and Offset



**DAVID
SANTANA**
Shinning
(Sparkling Sea
Bump) Krptic
Unknown



**FRANCIS
MEJIA**
King's Dead
Joey
Bada\$\$ and
XXXTENTACION



**JACOB
DOWNEY**
Young and
Doomed
Frank Iero and The
Future Violents



JESSIE LI
Crawl Outta
Love
Illenium feat.
Annika Wells



APRIL ATTRIDE
lovely
Billie Eilish feat.
Khalid



**LINK
NGUYEN**
Teenage Fever
Drake



**MALIA
MCCLERKLIN**
Unapologetically
Monét X Change



MARK OSORIO
Shook Ones, Pt. II
Mobb Deep



**MASHA
LEYFER**
Winter
Vivaldi



**SALMA
SHARIFNOOR**
Jealous
DJ Khaled ft.
Chris Brown, Lil
Wayne and Big
Sean



KENNY HE
Teenage Fever
Drake



**TIFFANY
CESPEDES**
"High School
Musical 2"
soundtrack



WENDY ZHU
NYLA
blackbear



**WINNIE
RUAN**
Don't Worry
Bout Me
Zara

HIGH SCHOOL: EXPECTATIONS VS. REALITY

By: Amy Aguilar // Staff Writer

Dear Rising Freshmen,

It's time to get used to that name for us: freshmen. We will no longer be little middle schoolers that worry about who is in what relationship, or what new drama spiced up over the summer. For some of us, entering high school will be a new start or a new building that we will travel to every morning. It's time for us to let go of the hand we've been holding onto and get ready to walk on our own. Since not all of us have older siblings in high school or older friends, we don't really know what high school is going to be like. In order to learn more, I spoke to a couple of high school students around the area about their experiences, and asked the rising freshmen about what they should expect before entering high school.

WHAT DO EIGHTH GRADERS THINK HIGH SCHOOL IS GOING TO BE LIKE?

"To be honest, I don't know, and I'd like to keep an open mindset because I am ready for anything in high school."

-**Jacklyn Alvarez**,
eighth grade, MATCH Middle

"I think it will be too much work. They will have more expectations [for] us in high school than in middle school, which will make it more stressful."

-**Sarai Ramirez**,
eighth grade, New Mission High

"High school is going to be more difficult, but it's going to be worth it when you get to college and all the AP classes were helpful."

-**Adrian Santana**,
eighth grade, MATCH Middle

WHAT ARE YOU NOT READY FOR ABOUT HIGH SCHOOL?

"Tests—like the SAT and whatever college prep we need to go through—those are the things that I am scared of and I'm trying to avoid, but can't."

-**Jacklyn Alvarez**,
eighth grade, MATCH Middle

"I'm not ready for the school work or meeting new people. Not because I don't like meeting new people, it's because I'm not comfortable with new environments."

-**Julia Goubeth**,
eighth grade, MATCH Middle

"I'd say the drama."

-**Sarai Ramirez**,
eighth grade, New Mission High

WHAT ADVICE DO HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS HAVE FOR THE INCOMING FRESHMEN?

"Try to connect with your parents because they are [the] only ones that will support you. Also, say 'Hi' first in the hallways, even if you don't get one back. It gives you confidence and makes people know you are easygoing and fun."

-Lila Jane Carr,
10th grade, Needham High

"Try not to get overwhelmed with work. Remember, all the other freshmen are in the same boat."

-Stephen Carr,
12th grade, Needham High

"I'd say to lower your expectations a little bit, and if you're going to make mistakes, do it while you're still a freshman."

-Gabriella Diplan-Lopez,
12th grade, Roxbury Prep High

"Do all your work! Don't think that at the beginning of the year you can slack off because it will hurt you at the end."

-Chandler Farias,
ninth grade, MATCH Middle

"Try to be cordial with everyone, especially if you are going to be spending time in the same classroom with at least 25 percent of the kids for the next four years. You should be polite to everyone, [...] high school is a chance to have a fresh start, be yourself and focus on what's important—like school work."

-Yasmin Mohamed,
10th grade, Snowden International High

WHAT DO YOU WISH YOU WOULD HAVE KNOWN BEFORE ENTERING HIGH SCHOOL?

"That staying home on a Friday or Saturday night isn't the worst thing that's ever going to happen. It took me a while to realize that I can still have fun on the weekends without my friends."

-Lila Jane Carr,
10th grade, Needham High

"There is always something that you can do to get your grades up. Always explore all of your options and do your homework. It's gonna suck, but like, when you get to college everything gets better."

-Gabriella Diplan-Lopez,
12th grade, Roxbury Prep High

"Freshman grades are a quarter of your whole high school career. When you apply to college and are sending in your transcripts, having really good grades freshman year counts."

-Yasmin Mohamed,
10th grade, Snowden International High

Overall, we should know that things don't always go as planned and that high school is nothing like the Disney movie, *High School Musical*, says it's going to be, unless you make it that way. I am lucky enough to have many acquaintances in high school who tell me what it's like, but this isn't about me. This is for those who don't have older people to guide them. And yes, I know this might not be applicable to all high schools, but this is just to give you an idea. High school is a place where we will all grow and figure out how to handle things. It may take a while, but we will all get there.

THE PROMISE ACT IS THE BEST OPTION FOR IMPROVING SCHOOL FUNDING

By: Shailany Ortega // Boston Student Advisory Council

A host of schools in BPS suffer from underfunding and it has become evident. Walking into schools, one sees broken lockers, cracked chairs, graffitied desks and little to no hallway space. Other schools may have physical defects that are not as visible, such as non-functioning intercoms or a lack of adequate teachers and nurses. Without these essential resources, BPS students don't have the same opportunities as students in suburban school districts that are located just a few miles from Boston.

The Foundation Budget that dictates how much money is allocated to districts across the state is 25 years old, but legislators have been unable to agree on a bill to update it. There are three proposals: The governor's bill, The House bill introduced by Rep. Paul Tucker and the Senate's Education PROMISE Act, introduced by Sen. Sonia Chang-Diaz. The latter is the only legislation proposed that would support young people and their immediate needs,

and it should be passed and implemented immediately.

Youth-led organizations support the PROMISE Act in part because it's the only proposal that includes all of the Foundation Budget Review Commission recommendations. The commission was tasked with recommending budget updates that would provide students with more equitable resources. It called for increased supports for low-income students, English language learners and special education programs, along with improvements to teacher healthcare.

The PROMISE Act also includes a District Student Aid increment that would close the gap between current budgets and a new-and-improved foundation budget in each district, along with mandating a regulated amount of funding for all Massachusetts districts. The successful implementation of this bill would increase opportunities by providing students with better

supplies and resources, new sports teams, more extracurriculars and more comprehensive and robust course options. This would ultimately result in happier and more successful students, competent and satisfied teachers and a healthier school climate.

Underfunding has a strong negative impact on students. Many believe that this is the best education we can receive because it's all we have been exposed to and provided with, but it is not sufficient and we can have better. Students can and should stand up and speak up for policies like the PROMISE Act that would benefit us. If students want to see improvements to school funding, they can also vote and visit local legislators at the State House. It is the house of the people and students should take advantage of that.

Students have to fight for what they deserve because it's the only way to get what we are owed. The PROMISE Act would be a step in the right direction.

ABOUT BSAC

BSAC is a group of students representing their respective high schools and serving as a voice for the students of BPS. Here at BSAC, we share our ideas and discuss changes we want to see within our schools and within the school district as a whole. Our young, intelligent individuals frequently break off into smaller subcommittees based on interest and around issues they believe need change. Those subcommittees are Environmental Justice and Sustainability, Student Rights and Youth Empowered Learning.

BRENDA CASSELLIUS APPOINTED SUPERINTENDENT AMONG PRAISE AND CONCERN

By: Masha Leyfer // Staff Writer

Brenda Cassellius, Minnesota's commissioner of education, was named as the new superintendent of Boston Public Schools on May 1, 2019. Cassellius has spent the majority of her career in Minnesota working as a commissioner, a superintendent, an assistant principal, a diversity coordinator and a social studies teacher. The decision was made after a search process that lasted more than a year and included 39 candidates, three public interviews with the finalists and about 300 written survey responses from community members.

Cassellius's resume, available on the BPS website, demonstrates an interest in closing achievement gaps and advancing diversity initiatives. Cassellius was praised by numerous news outlets and interest groups for her political skills. School Committee Chairperson Michael Loconto, who was on the superintendent search committee, said that her extensive experience at all levels of educational administration, as well as the political skills she demonstrated working across the aisle, set her apart from the other candidates.

"We wanted someone that demonstrated some political acumen... and could get people all across our community to unite in the service of children," he said. "Minnesota [is] regarded as a quote-unquote purple state, so she frequently had to work across the aisle to get things done."

Many adults expressed hopes that Cassellius' would work to mend community relations, which were broken as people lost trust in the schools. One thing that could improve relations would be increased equity. Cassellius resume

claims that her policies resulted in Minnesota's highest graduation rates on record and closed the achievement gap between white and non-white students by 30 percent.

Students have expressed hopes for increased communication and student influence in the way the district is run.

"She should hold open 'town hall' style meetings with student, administrator, teacher, and parent representatives to provide a sense of transparency in the plans for BPS," Clair Fu, a Boston Latin School senior said. "I would hope that the superintendent will have an open connection with the students instead of simply telling us what happens."

Cassellius has already visited several Boston elementary schools and has told the Boston Globe that she hopes to observe more classrooms in the future.

While some have extended their well-wishes and support, others have expressed their discontent with the process and with the pick itself. Parents have questioned why organizations like the Citywide Parent Council were excluded from the process, despite similar complaints being raised consistently about BPS policymaking. "The district repeatedly closes CPC out of processes and it is frankly baffling to me," said a Boston Latin School parent. "During the start times fiasco, CPC was also closed out of the conversation. In retrospect it was clear that had the district actively involved parents in more conversation before making sweeping policy decisions, they may have gained more traction."

In an opinion piece for the Globe, Boston city council president Andrea Campbell criticized the search process for

being "quiet" and lacking clear timelines and transparency. "Not only are students and parents left out, but even the council has little knowledge as the process unfolds behind closed doors," she wrote.

Concerns have also been raised about Cassellius' record. She is leaving her previous position as Minnesota prepares for a class-action lawsuit alleging that the state racially segregates its students, with students of color fairsing significantly worse than their white counterparts. Despite Cassellius' claims of improvements the state saw under her leadership, Minnesota records suggest a more stagnant picture. Dan Shulman, the prosecution's lead counsel, has stated that Cassellius left Minnesota's schools an "unconstitutional mess."

Boston has struggled with similar racial disparities. Chairman Loconto once again emphasized the need for city-wide consistency.

"We're trying to make it more consistent, the way that—the experiences that every student has in the Boston Public Schools," he said. "We want a more consistent distribution of resources and programs across the schools."

When she takes on the position, Cassellius will inherit similar conditions to those she faced in Minnesota — and she will need to work hard to amend them. "She should be proactive, instead of...reacting to changes," said Fu, the BLS student.

Boston's public schools are in need of revitalization, and Boston's parents, teachers and students have heaps of ideas on how to implement that. Cassellius will have to be able to listen and reconcile all of those voices.

CURRENT EVENTS



BROKEN WATER FOUNTAINS BREW DISTRUST IN SCHOOLS

By: David Santana // Staff Writer

In the wake of the Flint, Michigan water crisis, lead in tap water has become a major concern across the nation. The Massachusetts Water Resources Authority rated Boston's tap water as "excellent" in 2017. Yet, in the same year, water test results at some public schools rivaled the amount of lead and copper found in Flint at the peak of the water crisis, according to the Boston Globe.

Boston has seen a marked improvement in water quality in public schools. This is a good thing, but 94 of the 125 Boston public schools still report their water fountains to be offline, according to the BPS website. While factors like old buildings and water fountains that don't work influence the results, this still demonstrates that water quality is a big problem.

The city spent \$411,000 on bottled water and cups for public schools during the 2013-14 school year, the Globe reported in 2015. The city tried to fix water fountains the following year as part of a \$300,000 project, yet most of them are still offline.

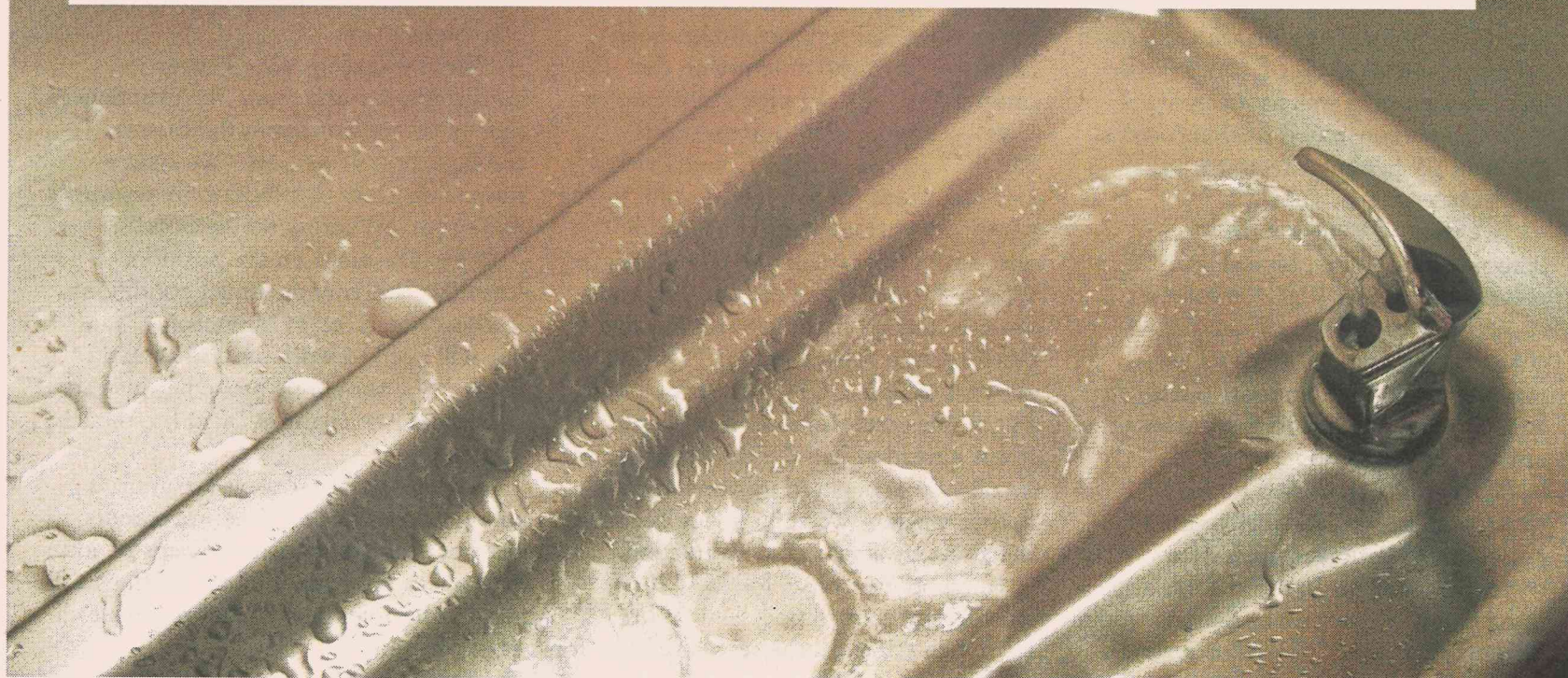
To enforce water safety policies in schools, BPS regularly tests the water. During 2019, the school system will test 859 drinking water units, 473 of which are fountains, said Katherine Walsh, BPS' sustainability and environmental resources manager. Walsh is one of the people working to ensure the safety of students' drinking water. While 93 units, or 12 percent, failed initially, by June 2018, only four samples had unsafe levels of lead, Walsh said. "In other words, 99.4 percent of the online drinking water units did not have lead safety

issues."

Despite BPS' efforts, students at MATCH Middle remain unimpressed. A poll of 46 of my eighth-grade friends found that 39 percent of them drink the tap water at the school.

Leonard Rivers, one of the respondents, thinks that it's unfair that the water fountains aren't online at all schools. "It's weird to know how much money and how much schools care about the drinking water, but then after all this money has been spent, it's still a bad result," Rivers said, referring to the 76 percent of fountains that are offline.

Clearly, the drinking water situation in schools is a major problem. With BPS spending the amount of time and money that they have to fix this issue, it begs the question as to whether all these efforts are enough.





FOR PUERTO RICANS, UNIQUE CULTURE CLASHES WITH PRACTICAL NEEDS

By: Tiffany Cespedes // Staff Writer

Some days the electricity goes out, leaving Minerva Rios and Jesus Noriega without light or water. They often have to carry large water jugs up the hill they live on in order to drink and bathe, which is crucial for Puerto Ricans who experience high temperatures on a weekly basis. Their grandchildren across the sea in the continental United States constantly worry about their wellbeing and are bothered by the lack of U.S. support after the disaster.

The island has not fully recovered from Hurricane Maria in September 2017. More than two hundred schools were damaged, which forced Puerto Rican students to leave their old schools and friends, according to *The New York Times*. *The Washington Post* reported that close to three thousand people have died from the storm, leaving families torn. Puerto Rico's Congress believes that it would take about \$130 billion to rebuild Puerto Rico's streets, houses, schools and other crucial utilities, according to NBC News.

Puerto Rican governor Ricardo Rossello has requested statehood for Puerto Rico. A poll conducted among residents in September 2018 found that about 48 percent want Puerto Rico to become a state, 26 percent would rather remain a U.S. territory, and 10 percent want full independence, according to Vox.

Puerto Rico became independent from Spain in February 1898 but also became a commonwealth of the U.S. in the same year. Now, the island is one of the oldest colonies in the

world as it is still considered an American territory today. Puerto Ricans are American citizens, which means they don't need a passport to enter the United States. They pay federal taxes, but do not have a congressional representative and cannot vote in major elections that will affect their island. It is clear that Puerto Ricans do not receive the same benefits as citizens living in the U.S., but the debate over what they should do about it has been dismissed for the most part for several years. After Hurricane Maria hit and the U.S. failed to give sufficient aid, frustration has risen to the surface in the hearts of

is going to create a lot of mess, and right now there's so much violence," he said. "And if Puerto Rico becomes independent it's going to be harder to get the benefits that they need and the support."

To students unfamiliar with the island's history, it can seem like it'd be easier if Puerto Rico became independent due to its unique culture. However, the more one learns about this delicate topic, the more they understand the true story that is being told. Three Fenway High students who aren't Puerto Rican were shocked to learn about the injustices that the island has faced over the years. When asked if Puerto Rico should become a state or an independent country, their position changed from "I think they should be independent" to "But if they have no congressmen they can't just become independent on their own."

Statehood is a popular choice for Puerto Ricans because they would gain not only two seats in the U.S. Senate, but also around \$20 billion every year, which could be used for the much-needed repairs, according to *The Washington Post*.

Not to mention the connection many Puerto Ricans have with the States as the U.S. has always acted as a support system for the Puerto Rican community. Still, there are some who believe that there are more complex aspects to consider when thinking about a history-making decision such as this.

Inquilinos Boricuas en Acción is a non-profit organization that focuses on helping to advance the lives of low-income families with

affordable housing, along with art and education programs that help shape young leaders. Pedro Cruz, director of the organization's Youth Development Program, is a proud Puerto Rican who is enriched by the culture and traditions of his home island. He believes that this topic is one that cannot be easily answered with a one-word response.

"This is one of those questions that brings up more questions," he said. "It's almost like we want to be a state because of some sense of survival, but is it really in our hearts to be a state, or is it just an act of survival? If we become a state, what's going to happen to our culture? I would love in my heart of hearts to be independent, but they crippled us to the point that we ask, 'Are we even capable of being independent?'" He believes that if Puerto Rico was to become independent, it would need a 10-year plan to maintain the island.

Although there hasn't been any legislative action on Puerto Rico's standing, there has been conversation surrounding this controversial issue. Rossello has demonstrated an interest in statehood in a tweet stating: "Yes, we are wonderful people: we have weaved American Flag, the fabric of our nation, with our sacrifice and valor fighting in every war since WWI. We are Americans, we are your citizens."

The future of Puerto Rico is undecided and unclear, but it's important that Puerto Ricans understand the past.

"What Puerto Ricans are missing out on is self-awareness," Cruz said. "We need to know our history, know everything that has really been done to us and understand the political history behind our oppression."



Puerto Ricans around the world.

Most Puerto Rican youth, like Sebastian Caneles, know this issue inside and out. The fifteen-year-old freshman at Fenway High is the child of two parents from Puerto Rico, and he wears his Puerto Rican flag with pride on culture days at his school. Caneles believes that it would be in Puerto Rico's best interest to become a state.

"I feel like if Puerto Rico becomes an independent country it

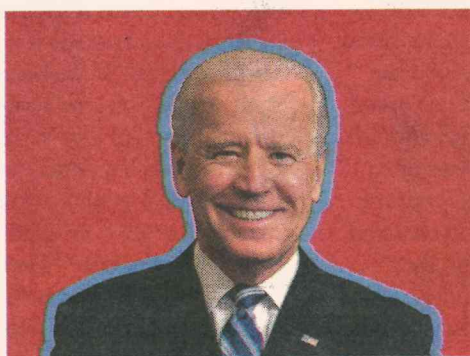
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2020: CHOOSE YOUR FIGHTER

A GEN-Z GUIDE TO THE DEMOCRATIC PRIMARY

By: Jacob Downey // Staff Writer

With the 2020 presidential elections rapidly approaching, an entire new generation of voters will be given the task of choosing our next commander in chief. This may seem like a daunting task, especially after the polarizing results of the 2016 election. In order to best prepare this new generation of voters for what is literally the fate of the free world, it is important to hit the ground running with researching and supporting our candidates of choice. With the Republican party already having Donald Trump in office, it is unlikely the president will face much opposition from his own party as he seeks reelection. On the other hand, the Democratic party has already had more than 20 contenders throw their hats into the ring. It is up in the air who will actually end up mattering and who will end up 2020's Jeb Bush. Here's your guide to some of the biggest names in the race.



JOE BIDEN: UNCLE AMERICA

You know him as: Former U.S. Vice-President

The VP to 44 is back with Oval Office ambitions. Having run twice before in 1988 and 2008, Biden has the experience needed to run a campaign. As a white, centrist male and a throwback to the Obama-era, Biden has garnered an intergenerational fan base of boomers, millennials and even the Gen-Z kids who grew up on the Obiden bromance. This however, might also be his downfall, as some say he represents a dated version of the Democratic Party that is a definite turn-off to younger, more progressive voters.

Platform Highlights: Rebuilding the middle class, recommitting to our global allies, protecting voting rights



BERNIE SANDERS: GRANDPA AMERICA

You know him as: U.S. Senator, Vt. Taking the biggest L of 2016, Sanders lost the Democratic presidential nomination in favor of Hillary Clinton. Sanders, like Biden, has intergenerational backing and significant political experience, but is perceived as out of touch by some younger Americans. Policy wise, Sanders identifies as a Democratic Socialist, a title that can sound scary to some. As a Democratic Socialist, Sanders is dedicated to addressing social inequality, advocating for programs like universal health care and free college tuition.

Platform Highlights: Universal health care, expansion of social security, Green New Deal



ELIZABETH WARREN: THE HOMETEAM

You know her as: U.S. Senator, Mass. Having served as a Massachusetts senator since 2013, Elizabeth Warren brings yet another flavor in this prospective presidential sundae. Warren has a detailed game plan outlining exactly how she's going to enact her agenda as president. From collapsing corruption on Capitol Hill, to supporting middle class families, to enstating foreign policy "for all," her diplomatic attitude and persistence have won many over.

Platform Highlights: Support for Planned Parenthood, Diplomatic Foreign Policy, Anti-Corruption



KAMALA HARRIS: THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY

You know her as: U.S. Senator, Calif. “Speaking truth, demanding justice”: this is how Sen. Kamala Harris’ website describes her. Supporting platforms of increased minimum-wage and tax cuts for the middle class, Harris is steadfast in her beliefs. Recently, Harris called out Biden for the 1994 “crime bill” he pushed as generating mass incarceration, showing she is not afraid to critique her opponents. Similar to Buttigieg, critics have cited her inexperience as a major obstacle she will have to overcome, having yet to serve a complete term on the federal level.

Platform Highlights: Combating climate change, free college, assault weapons ban



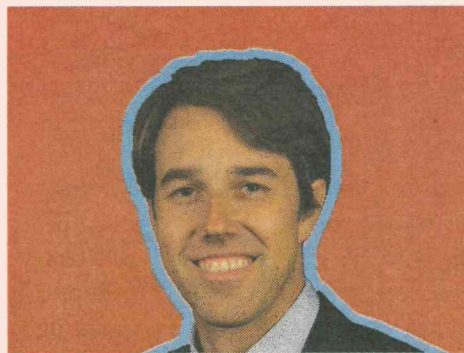
PETE BUTTIGIEG: THE MAYOR

You know him as: Mayor, South Bend, Ind.

Mayor, veteran, last name that no two

people pronounce the same way, all titles given to one Peter Buttigieg—but should president be the latest addition to his already lofty resume? Buttigieg is certainly an attractive candidate to younger voters, being barely of age to take office himself and standing firm on policies like affordable health care and combating climate change. His veteran status and experience in local government also give him some props, but for some, it cannot be overlooked that “Mayor Pete” is just that: a mayor of a small town in Indiana. While Buttigieg still has significantly more political experience than our current POTUS, it is still a subject of debate as to whether or not he is currently capable of commander in chief status. Despite this shortcoming, he is certainly progressive, and not just in the buzzword sense. Buttigieg’s stance of “We cannot find greatness in the past” will be something to think about as we draw ever closer to 2020.

Platform Highlights: “Medicare for All Who Want It,” debt-free college, federal investment in infrastructure



BETO O'ROURKE: THE SOUTHERN SK8R BOI

You know him as: Former U.S. Representative, Texas, 16th District From his objectively weird punk rock days to wooshing through Whataburger on his skateboard, Beto O'Rourke has left an impression on

young voters as a politician they could get along with. His awkward charm and relatability have earned O'Rourke a sizeable fanbase. A grassroots politician, O'Rourke refuses to accept any money from corporate PACs, and has publicly denounced “pay-to-play” politics. Allegedly, he's also a really good tipper, so make of that what you will.

Platform Highlights: Ethical campaign finance, universal healthcare, strengthening unions



ANDREW YANG: THE WILD CARD

You know him as: a startup CEO Andrew Yang is a candidate with some particularly peculiar primary platforms. Yang has focused on automation and universal basic income. He has made some utterly bizarre statements such as “If I’m in the White House, oh boy are we going to have some fun in terms of the cryptocurrency community” and “All you need is self-driving cars to destabilize society.” His aggressive push for universal basic income is a source of great contention, with some arguing that it will support low-income families, while others argue that it will devalue the dollar. Regardless, Yang’s long shot campaign will be, if nothing else, fun to watch play out.

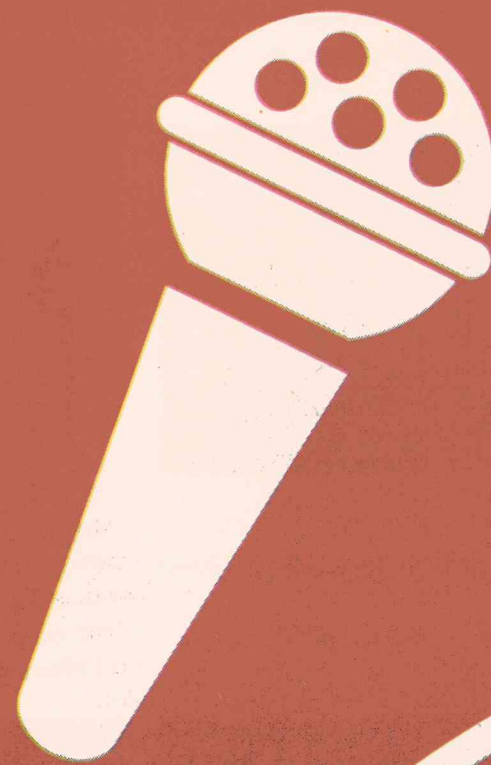
Platform Highlights: Universal basic income, Medicare for all, “human-centered capitalism”

PASS THE MIC

ABOUT CASTLE SQUARE TENANTS ORGANIZATION:

The CSTO Teen Program is a paid internship program for Boston youth ages 14-19 which uses social justice as a catalyst for art, media and design. The Teen Program engineers a foundation of learning, builds workforce skills and provides exciting opportunities while fostering engaged citizens. Held in CSTO's safe spaces, our young people develop healthy relationships with their peers and adults while learning the necessary skills to become successful, thriving members of society.

Learn more about the Teen Program and how to apply at www.cstoboston.org/teen-program.



FOR CSTO FOUNDER ANN MOY, COMMUNITY COMES FIRST

By: Darren Seto // Pass the Mic Reporter

On the afternoon of a warm Sunday, Ann Moy, wearing a gray sweater and simple, elegant jewelry, returns from her weekend job at Chinatown's China Pearl restaurant. Moy presently works three different jobs. In addition to working at China Pearl on the weekends, Moy has been a volunteer board member at the Castle Square Tenants Organization for over 30 years. She's also volunteered on the Chinatown Land Trust Committee for four years.

Growing up with her older brother and sisters, Moy gained maturity through her siblings. She watched how they interacted with people, and noticed the ways they dealt with problems. She was always interested in teaching, so after she graduated from BPS, she pursued a bachelor's in education at Boston State College and received her master's in education at Lesley College. She loves kids and was inspired to teach by her mom, who loved to study but never had a chance to teach in China. She also was inspired by watching her nieces and nephews grow up. Her BPS elementary teachers inspired her to go into teaching too.

After graduating from college, Moy worked as a senior social worker at Villa Victoria in the South End. Then, she had another opportunity to work at Acorn Day Care Center and taught for two-and-a-half years before she landed a teaching job with Boston Public Schools in a brand new class called Early Childhood Special Needs in 1985. Moy would go on to have a 33-year career with BPS.

In 1987, the Castle Square Apartments were being sold

to a developer, so Moy and her colleague Debbie Backus formed a tenants' group called the Castle Square Tenants Organization.

"My goal is to just come in and help out as much as I can," she said.

She wanted to learn more about the sale and get involved so she could help her community and advocate for the tenants. She was a secretary on the CSTO board, and then later became the president, the position she holds today.

On the weekends, she continues working at China Pearl because she loves to interact with people she meets from near and far.

Throughout Moy's career, she has been blessed to work with people who gave her smiles, laughter, encouragement and support. She has worked with people who have different perspectives and different personalities, but she always stays focused on the goal, despite her challenges. She solves problems through open communication with the team, allowing them to find a common solution.

As I leave Moy's office, I feel moved

by her words and thoughts. I felt that she was passionate about helping the community and learned a lot from her understanding of working with other people. "I hope people come back to CSTO generation after generation and bring new ideas to their community and carry on the tradition in CSTO," said Moy. She wants to set a precedent in the community for the next generations to follow.



TIMMY HOGAN ON HOW RESELLING IMPACTS "THE CULTURE"

By: Kenny He // Pass the Mic Reporter

I took the escalator at the Galleria Mall up to the second floor. After turning the corner, I saw a line of people waiting outside of Foot Locker. I knew what they were here for: reserved sneakers that customers didn't pick up. I saw Timmy Hogan, next to Elijah Hardaway Drizzy, a fellow sneakerhead, cracking jokes about the people in line, like, "Ooooh I'm telling you're a reseller." We had nothing to do but sit around until 3 p.m. when Foot Locker started letting the unclaimed pairs go.

Hogan began reselling sneakers in 2012, at the age of 12. "I used to go to conventions to sell my shoes and I sold through Facebook pages," he said. Secondary markets were a little slow back then because smartphones and the internet were not as far-reaching then as they are today. If you didn't have money for physical advertisements, you didn't get much traffic. So, Hogan didn't get big until 2017.

"I made around \$120,000 in 2018 through reselling and \$40,000 so far in 2019," he said. Now, in 2019, there are online marketplaces like StockX and GOAT that dictate the price of a product. They are the middlemen between retail stores and anyone else who couldn't purchase the shoe initially.

A few months back, there was a special release of the Nike SB Dunk "Green Lobster" that was exclusive to Boston. Hogan was lucky to be one of the first people lined up at Concepts. This shoe was a collaboration between Concepts and Nike. He got one pair by camping outside Concepts and another pair on the website. A few days before the release, the price of a pair dropped from nearly \$1,500 to \$400. Hogan sold both pairs for around \$500, about market price.

Online markets like StockX and GOAT have pros and cons. A majority of the items listed there dip within the first week of their release.

"It's kinda bad cause it drives down the market," Hogan said. "I remember like a few years ago before StockX and GOAT were there, [the] market was high on a lot of items."

Often, people panic and sell for whatever money they can get back. An example is the regional exclusive Yeezy Boost 350 "Clay." On drop day, the price actually surged. But after Adidas orders started being delivered, prices started dropping. A size 10 in mens went from over \$400 to around \$350.

Hogan managed to get his hands on 33 pairs. If he sold all of his pairs, he would make about five grand in profits. However, he's deciding to wait.

"Hold them cause they're just gonna go up in price over time," he said. He's predicting that within six months, some sizes for the Clays will reach \$800.

There is often controversy with high-

demand brands like Supreme, Adidas, Nike, Bape and Off-White. Some claim these brands are taking product away from fans and collectors, thus ruining the culture. Others complain that they couldn't get a pair because of resellers.

However, high demand makes it harder for everyone to cop, not just resellers. "I'm a reseller myself so reselling doesn't really bother me. If you want to be a collector, be a collector," Hogan said.

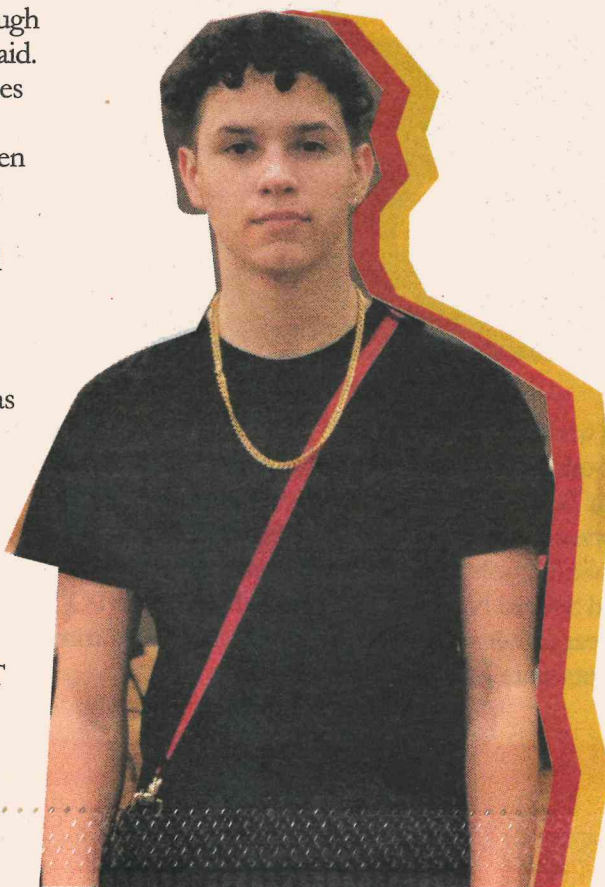
Extremely high-profile releases like the Air Jordan 1 "Solefly" and the upcoming Air Jordan 1 "Travis Scott" continue to cause conflict between sneakerheads, as some have resorted to selling fakes for profit.

It is almost impossible to tell a fake pair from a real pair without comparing or using a black light. "I think fakes are the most terrible thing in this game, not only does it mess with resellers, [but] it also messes with collectors as well because if they buy a shoe they've wanted for a long time and its fake, that's terrible," Hogan said.

At the recent sneaker convention Boston Got Sole, the event was hosting a raffle for a pair of the Travis 1s. It turns out that their pair was fake. "There was an outstanding amount of people walking around with fake "Travis Scott" Air Jordan 1s that are currently selling around \$2,000, although the host of the event did well with blocking them out," Hogan said.

Drizzy and Scott Stornaielo, owner of The Vault Lifestyle Boutique in Lynn, busted about four people with fake "Travis Scott" 1s during the two-day event.

At the end of the day, it's harder to make a living from reselling nowadays. As the sneaker consumer market grows, the stock is spread among more people, allowing fewer people to have excessive amounts of product. "Buying all Clays \$500!" Hogan said jokingly in the Foot Locker, and we walked out into the spring breeze.



LIV YANG FINDS FREEDOM IN NAIL ART

By: Link Nguyen //
Pass the Mic Reporter



Lisa Estrella “Liv” Yang is a courageous Asian American business owner in the nail industry. She grew up in Sheboygan, Wisconsin, and felt different from the other kids. In this society, Yang was different from the other kids. She came to the United States as a refugee, and most of her peers couldn’t relate to her experience of post-war trauma. Additionally, very few spoke her native language of Hmong, creating a cultural barrier.

Yang started doing nails when she was in elementary school as a way to cope with bullying and depression. She was able to express herself through nail art.

“You can show different facets of yourself depending on the occasion and still be true to yourself,” she wrote in an email. “I am grateful for my ability to express myself through nail art because that medium offers so many textures, colors, and embellishments that are interchangeable depending on the mood.”

Her inspiration for creating press-on nails originated from her very first makeup social where she witnessed how nail polish positively affected people in her refugee community, the Hmong people who fled to the U.S. for shelter after the Vietnam War.

Yang attended the University of Wisconsin-Madison. There, she created a pro-self-esteem movement which attracted young women from all over campus to talk about beauty standards over a nail

polish session. In 2014, Yang was selected top four out of over 16,000 competitors for an all-expenses-paid trip to New York City in Sally Hansen’s nationwide “I Heart Nail Art” competition. As a queer Southeast Asian woman, Yang always felt like she didn’t fit in. She lived in a state where the population was 80 percent white and only 2 percent Asian. The definition of “beautiful” in her community was white beauty.

“Growing up I felt excluded from the definition of ‘beautiful’ because rarely did I ever see a darker-skin Asian woman who was short and average size,” Yang wrote. Her experience of not being able to fit into a “one-size-fits-all” mold brought her to Boston, where she started the company Faceted Beauty, which will sell unique press-on nails through an app.

Yang faced many challenges throughout her nail journey and as founder and CEO of Faceted Beauty. “There are so many uncertainties as a startup,” she wrote. “My role as Founder and CEO is mitigating risk every day to ensure the survival of the company. Challenges can range from finding new customers to finding the right talent for the Faceted Beauty team.” However, her challenges taught her how to manage failure and how to get back up.

As an entrepreneur, Yang enjoys going through the process of bringing positivity into people’s lives with nail art. She has always been “proud to be joining a long history of courageous Asian and Asian American business owners in the nail industry.” Now, Yang is getting ready to launch Faceted Beauty in fall 2019, to promote their mission that “beauty goes beyond a one size fits all.”

I met up with Jaden Fergus at the gym in the middle of Boston Latin Academy, and we walked to the upper library to find a quiet place for the interview. He was wearing a black Anti-Social Social Club hoodie and khakis. We pulled chairs from the closest table and sat across from each other.

"I've always had an interest in flying since I was a little kid and I pursued that," Fergus said. He started flight school at Beverly Regional Airport in 2014, taking one-on-one lessons as a sixth grader. After Fergus got accepted into BLA in 2014, he started a new hobby, photography. At first, he took pictures with a friend who took urban exploration or "urbex" photographs of rooftops and abandoned buildings. From there he started taking pictures of people, thinking that if they wanted their pictures taken and he could do the honor of making them look good, he could make money from it. People learn about him through connections, word of mouth and social media, so most of his gigs are paid shoots.

Being a student pilot is very difficult. Fergus has to take on a lot of responsibilities as a student at BLA and a young pilot. "Honestly, everything about being a pilot is challenging, but like anything else you do, you practice and get better at it," he said.

As he overcomes these challenges with practice, he enjoys flying more and more. His favorite part about being a pilot is the freedom of it. He's able to go places that many can't, such as flying to Cape Cod to just grab some lunch and fly back.

Fergus learned to make time to balance school, his photography gigs and flying. He is regularly booking photo shoots and finds that making money by doing something you love is the easiest and most fun way.

"The plan is to do commercial piloting for the rest of my life," Fergus said. "I will be getting my license in December." All of his experiences as a pilot have been very eye-opening and he's loved every moment of it.

STUDENT PHOTOGRAPHER AND PILOT JADEN FERGUS ENJOYS HIS FREEDOM

By: Wendy Zhu // Pass the Mic Reporter



MICHAEL HANSON BALANCES CREATIVITY WITH DISCIPLINE

By: Jessie Li // Pass the Mic Reporter

As Michael Hanson walks into the photography lab filled with iMacs, he sits down at his usual desk located at the center of the room. His tall figure defines him as a football player in a photography lab. As we start talking, I learn that one of his favorite quotes is, "Discipline equals freedom," from a writer he follows. Hanson explained that the more disciplined you are, the more you're able to stay on schedule. As a photography teacher and a football coach at North Quincy High School, the most challenging part of his career is time management.

There never seems to be enough time for him to introduce different assignments to students, therefore he has to modify lesson plans. With the lesson plans, grading, staging shows and students' artwork events, Hanson said he "wished there [were] more hours in the day."

To ensure he has more time, Hanson follows an efficient daily schedule. He usually prepares for the day the night before. Having a



busy morning, he wakes up early and brings his three children to school before going to work. His afterschool schedule varies at different times of the school year. For instance, in the fall he's the position coach of varsity football and offensive coordinator for the JVs.

Despite the busy schedule, he still has priorities. "My main goal is to help each student become a stronger, more creative communicator," said Hanson. With the understanding that not every one of his students is going into the arts, the classes he teaches can provide useful life skills that can apply to any career path. Students can communicate their personal and unique ideas using the art he teaches, and he believes that any art is the artist trying to convey an idea to the audiences. The arts also encourage a person's creativity. Hanson believes his students should explore topics they are personally interested in. "The best way to ensure success and creativity is to chase what you're really into," he said.

What inspires Hanson is many of his great teachers and coaches. They shaped the course of Hanson's life and provided redirection when he needed it. Hanson believes being a teacher simply means being a positive presence in other people's lives. "[Teaching] really is the great occupation I can think of," he said.

JILLIAN KILCOYNE'S JOURNEY TO TEACHING

By: Winnie Ruan // Pass the Mic Reporter

When I entered the room, my math teacher Jillian Kilcoyne looked like she was prepared, standing tall and confident. She was wearing something professional, a shirt and a skirt, and sitting on her desk looking ready with her hands crossed.

Kilcoyne is originally from Worcester. Her first job was a cashier at Walgreens.

"I went to a private school in Worcester for high school and Emmanuel College," she said. Kilcoyne studied education and math because she was very passionate about studying and teaching math when she was younger.

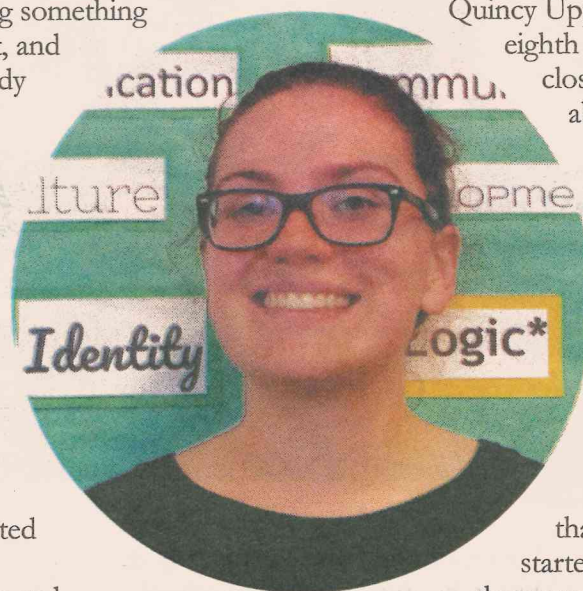
At one point, Kilcoyne wanted to quit.

"I wanted to drop education and didn't want to become a teacher anymore because mathematics was a lot of work and it was very difficult," she said. "A lot of my friends

supported me so I continued."

She is currently teaching ninth graders at the Josiah Quincy Upper School. I had her twice for eighth and ninth grade so I'm kind of close with her. She is nice and cares about the students by asking, "How are you doing?" and "Are you okay?" She sometimes buys us candy and snacks. Being a teacher needs a lot of patience, which she has, but teaching freshmen is quite interesting. She tries her best to teach new things to the class and get them developed for the future.

At the end of the interview, I thanked Kilcoyne again. After, she started putting some of the chairs up that weren't already on the tables. Then, she erased the whiteboard. She went back on her laptop and continued doing stuff that teachers do.



THE ZOO IS CAITLIN REARDON'S CLASSROOM

By: April Attride // Pass the Mic Reporter



Caitlin Reardon wakes up in the morning and gets ready for another day of excitement and positive smiles to start off the morning. Reardon is an educator at the Franklin Park Zoo. She teaches people of all ages about the animals at the zoo with the hope that they might become more interested in animals.

Reardon was introduced to animals at a very young age. "My uncle has worked with animals his whole life, so I was fortunate to be around exotic species since I was young," she said. "I loved being around them so much that I knew I wanted to go to school for something revolving around animals."

Now, Reardon gets to change people's view on animals and make them see the better in them, along with making them want to get involved. She loves to work with the 5-and-6-year-olds because she loves to see them learning. It brings her joy to hear them share what they've learned.

"I love speaking to them about animals because of their excitement," she said. "They always want to share everything they know. Whenever I am able to work with this age group, the children's enthusiasm in learning about the animals always brings a smile to my face."

Reardon has worked with turtles, snakes, lizards, small birds, ferrets, rabbits, foxes, sloths and a few others, but like many people, she loves all animals. But, there's one that holds her heart. "My favorite animal is the jaguar, which we have at our Stone Zoo location," she said. "My favorite jaguar fact is that they have the largest jaws out of all the big cats, which means they are able to crush their prey's skulls. [Also,] Jaguars' fur is quite coarse, which allows for the rain to slide down their fur as it would on a raincoat."

Reardon is proud to be part of the zoo team. She loves to encourage an interest in animals in all the people she comes into contact with at the zoo. "I love both of our zoos and the amazing animals [who] call our zoos home," she said. "As long as we continue to educate guests and spark their interest in new species and conservation topics, I will continue to be proud of this job."

CARLA BETHANCOURT HOPES FOR PEACE AND QUIET IN A NEW APARTMENT

By: Darwin Soto // Pass The Mic Reporter



It was 4:46 pm when I walked into Carla Bethancourt's apartment, which was mostly empty except for a bed and some chairs because she is getting ready to move to Brookline. She walked out of her room in her casual, comfortable home clothes.

Bethancourt went to West Roxbury Academy for high school. She moved to an apartment building in Hyde Park—where I also live—when she was 20-years-old. "I moved to Hyde Park because it was more peaceful. It was a bigger apartment, and since I was still going to school I liked the fact it was closer to the train station," she said.

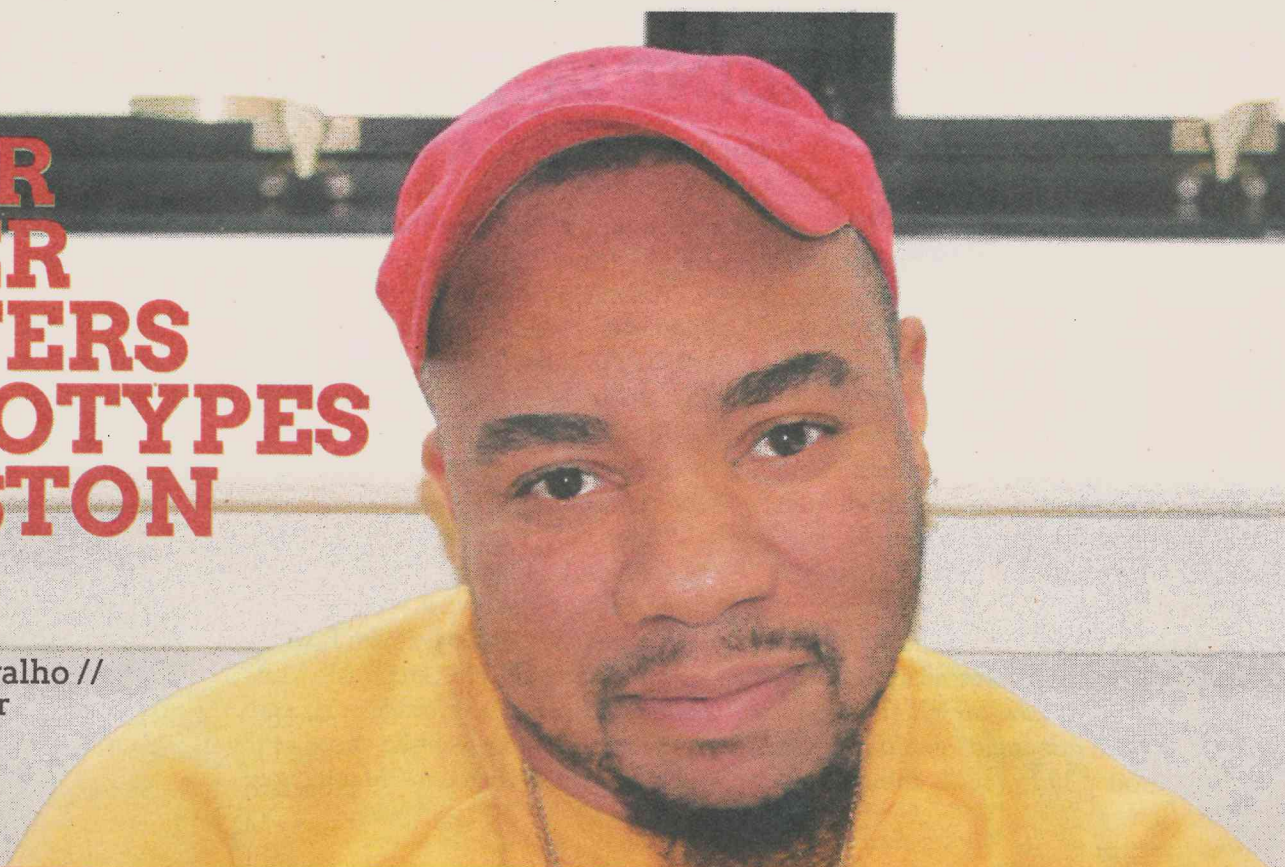
When she first moved into the building 10 years ago, she started to notice bad things such as neighbors playing loud music and the stairs being dirty. "I don't remember how many neighbors I've had or how many times I had to call 911 on them to put the music down," she said.

Bethancourt tried to fix the loud music issue herself. "I've spoken to the Hyde Park committee and gave them information about what's going on in my building specifically, but none of that worked," she said. Instead, she just got used to the music and decided to ignore it until she moves out.

Bethancourt is now 30-years-old and works full-time at Bank of America. Before she got to where she is in life right now, she struggled a little bit by working at Stop & Shop and many other low-paying jobs. She is now looking forward to a new start in Brookline.

KAMAR PORTER SHATTERS STEREOTYPES AT BOSTON GLASS

By: Albertina De Carvalho //
Pass the Mic Reporter



The first thing that I noticed when I walked into Boston GLASS was the loud music of the Vogue Hour, a program dedicated to the art of voguing, or “a highly stylized form of dance created by black and Latino LGBTQ communities,” according to the National Museum of African American History and Culture. Right away, this seemed to me like a safe space, where LGBTQ youth can look for support free of judgment. It seemed like a place where people respect and support each other.

“Don’t mind it, it is like this every Monday and Tuesday,” said Kamar Porter.

Porter is the prevention network coordinator at Boston GLASS. He tests people for HIV and STIs, and refers people to housing, behavioral health specialists and clinics.

Boston GLASS is a community center that provides LGBTQ youth

of color services like education and connections to other providers and community organizations. Its focus is on individuals in the LGBTQ+ community, a term GLASS uses to refer to people who are gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, Two-Spirit, intersex, asexual, pansexual, living with HIV or are a part of other sexual and gender minorities. Boston GLASS provides services and programs such as a drop-in center, behavioral health services, prevention services, a mentorship program, youth leadership development and community education. They provide workshops as well, from Vogue Hour, to creative writing, to yoga.

Porter grew up in Boston GLASS. At age 16, he started on the outreach team. Some years later, after a staff member pushed him to continue his education, Porter became the health educator, and later, the prevention network coordinator.

What Porter likes the most about GLASS is that you can be here and be you. To understand youth is to have been in their shoes, he says, dealing with things like transitioning and homelessness. His goal is for the youth to be the best they can be, and to be inspired and follow their dreams.

Porter gets the most satisfaction out of his work when he makes people happy and supports them. The worst part, he says, is when youth age out and he no longer sees them.

Every time I go to GLASS it’s to see the youth doing the Vogue Hour, which is incredible for me. It introduced me to a completely different world that I personally would love to be a part of.

As I left Boston GLASS, I saw people being themselves without any judgment. This is the work that Porter does.

“I love working at Boston GLASS,” he said.

THOMAS MABINE IS A SERIOUS CLASS CLOWN

By: Mark Osorio // Pass the Mic Reporter

Thomas Mabine sits in the lobby waiting upon my arrival. I'm walking to the community center in Roxbury, almost 10 minutes late due to MBTA issues. As his manager is blowing up my phone, I continue to walk faster. As I arrive at the center, Mabine greets me with so much enthusiasm, like I wasn't 10 minutes late. The 20-year-old comedian is about 6 feet tall, and he has short black hair. He is wearing the sweater of a friend that he was promoting.

My first time watching one of Mabine's videos on Instagram was hilarious. It was a video of him eating off his friend's plate and his friend got "mad" and threw the tray of food at him. I really thought he

was funny. When I got the chance to meet him I was so excited.

Mabine grew up in the South End, and he started entertaining almost a year ago. Most of his life, he was a class clown and that's how he got into being a comedian. Mabine went to Fenway High, and he used to play basketball before he started to entertain others.

"All my life, I was a class clown," Mabine said. "I like making people laugh, I don't know, I just love it."

Mabine did not have a plan B when starting his comedian career. Also, his mom did not have any faith in his career — she did not like what he chose as his path. "My mom hated it," Mabine said.

"People would come up to her like, 'Yo, your son is doing this and that,' making fun of me." But, Mabine explained that her feelings slowly changed. "Now it's a positive. She still [doesn't] like it, but she wants me to have a backup plan."

Mabine and I leave the center so we can go take pictures. We start in front of the building, and his manager says they would look nice on the track across the street. We go, and they come out amazingly. As we finish up, Mabine talks about getting in contact with friends to make more skits. He tells me about comedy, "You can do it, just be consistent and have faith in yourself. You can do it."



THOMAS VASCENSOLOS TALKS TEACHING

By: Salma Sharifnoor // Pass the Mic Reporter

As citizens, it is our duty to attend school. There are teachers showing up every day educating youth, even if the youth don't want to be there. I think sometimes we fail to realize how lucky we are to have teachers who care. Eager to learn more about teaching in BPS, I sat down with my former history teacher, Thomas Vascensoles, who currently works at the John D. O'Bryant.

WERE YOU BORN IN BOSTON?

Technically no, I was born in the Boston area. Cambridge to be specific.

SO DID YOU DECIDE TO MOVE HERE FOR OPPORTUNITIES?

Well right now I live in Somerville and I decided to work in Boston because Boston has a lot of teaching jobs. I knew I wanted to be a teacher, so I applied for various positions in and around Boston, and I just so happened to receive an offer within Boston itself.

WAS TEACHING ALWAYS YOUR DREAM JOB?

It actually was not always my dream job. When I was very young, I thought about potentially becoming a doctor, then I realized I wasn't really passionate about that. So I decided to go into finance and accounting, and I did that for a few years. I'm still passionate when it comes to economics and finance and just keeping up with what's going on in the news and the economy, but for a full-time job, I decided to become a teacher.

WHAT INSPIRES YOU IN YOUR WORK?

Some of my teachers growing up. I also read many books on teaching and education and that pushed me into the education field.

WHAT IS THE ACHIEVEMENT YOU'RE MOST PROUD OF?

I'm actually the first person in my family to graduate from college, and then I went on to obtain a master's degree. I'm very proud of that.

BOSTON'S RAP SCENE IS SMALL, BUT TALENTED

By: Francis Mejia // Staff Writer

"There is a lot of talent here, but a small market, which often leaves people left out of music as a real financial opportunity." These are the words of Eroc, a Boston rapper who is making a difference in the rap game. Since rap has become more widespread, there are a lot more rappers popping up everywhere in Massachusetts.

Eroc is the stage name of Ernesto Arroyo-Montano, a proud Puerto Rican and father of three. Arroyo-Montano's parents migrated to Boston from Puerto Rico in 1981, and he currently lives in Dorchester.

The city of Boston isn't what would pop in your head when you think of rap music. One successful rapper in the history of Boston is Mark Wahlberg, or should I say, "Marky Mark." This leads to my point about Boston not being a really big rap scene when one of the most famous Boston rappers is Mark Wahlberg, best known for acting in various movies like the Transformers franchise.

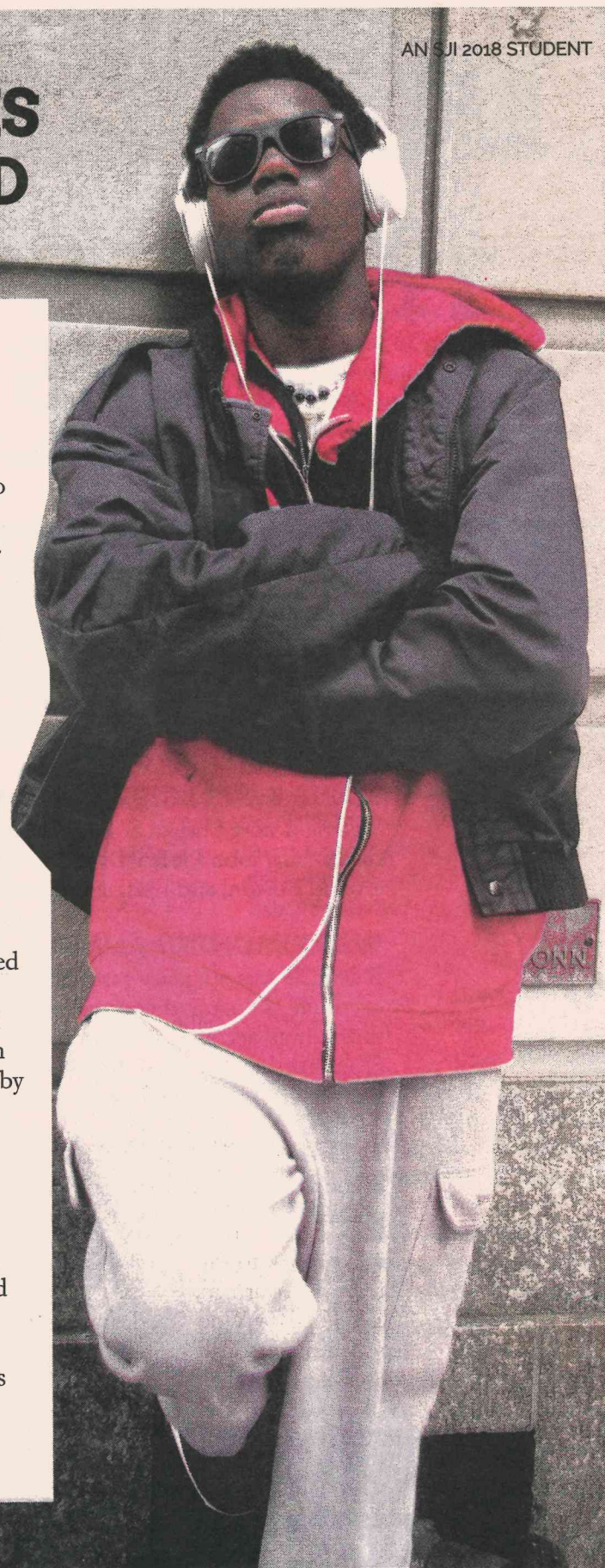
Music producers that look for upcoming rappers usually look in places like New York and Los Angeles, and don't realize there are more voices in different cities. Part of this is because of the influence of New York City. Everything related to rap connects to New York, anything from your favorite rapper's rapper can connect back to the Big Apple.

Josh the Word, a rapper living in Brooklyn emphasized the importance of New York when it comes to his musical career. "I moved to New York for real after college, mostly cause a lot of people I was making music with at the time were moving here too," he said. What I took from Josh's response is that people that want to pursue a career in the rap industry usually move to New York as a way to get recognized by producers.

Even though New York has a big rap scene, the Boston rap scene is now becoming more recognized, and Michael Christmas is a great example of this. Christmas is a Boston rapper mostly known for his album "What a Weird Day." He is one of those rappers that is most known for how relatable his songs can be to almost anyone in Boston. Christmas raps about his personal experience with Boston, his past and everyday life.

The Boston rap scene is like a hidden treasure—it takes some time to find but when you do it is worth the effort. The important messages that come out of the songs show you the potential these people have. Definitely check out Michael Christmas and Eroc's music so you can fully understand the potential the Boston rap scene has.

AN SJI 2018 STUDENT





YOUR GUIDE TO THE SINGING AND SILLINESS OF STARKID

By: Malia McClerklin // Staff Writer

Imagine a vast dark stage, empty except for actor Darren Criss, wearing a circular pair of glasses and staring solemnly into the audience. As it cuts to a close-up of our leading man, he begins to sing passionately...about going back to Hogwarts. The audience, Criss' college classmates at the University of Michigan, burst into laughter at the ridiculousness of it all. This is how the 2009 sensation "A Very Potter Musical" begins.

"StarKid" is a name that usually rings a bell in the ears of passionate theater nerds. It's a musical theater production group, best known for "A Very Potter Musical," that has been churning out shows for the past ten years. Their musicals usually consist of over-the-line hilarity and irreverence, a remarkable cast to fall in love with and an entrancing storyline. While not as fancy as Broadway, StarKid is

nothing to turn your nose up at—they know how to put on a good show every time they hit the stage. Described as the "future of musical theater" by The Chicago Tribune, "a viral sensation" by Vanity Fair, and "brilliant" by Entertainment Weekly, StarKid actually radiates more and more charm with every new project.

The best part about StarKid? They generously upload professionally-filmed performances of their shows to their YouTube channel only a few months after the show closes. Unlike Broadway fans, who have to rely on a pixelated bootleg to get a glimpse at their favorite musical being performed on the stage only to have YouTube delete it three days later, StarKid fans have all their productions right at their fingertips, making it easy to binge. So what are you waiting for? Here are a few must-see StarKid musicals in no particular order.

A VERY POTTER MUSICAL

Lead actors: Darren Criss, Joey Richter, Lauren Lopez

Song you won't be able to get out of your head: "Granger Danger"

Best Line: "I'm the boy who lived. Not died. God."

It would be criminal not to begin with the musical that started it all. StarKid was founded in 2009 by Criss, Brian Holden, Matt Lang and Nick Lang at the University of Michigan. They were a group of theater students, yes, but they were also all massive Harry Potter nerds. So, they blended their two passions and created this Harry Potter satire musical. AVPM is a re-imagining of the Harry Potter franchise, satirical and self-aware. In the StarKid version of the popular story, Lord Voldemort, with his soul attached to Professor Quirrell, tries to get revenge on Potter by killing him in the Triwizard Tournament. Criss, now a celebrated actor, singer and Golden Globe winner, plays The Boy Who Lived, and masters Harry's charming and occasionally obnoxious and egotistical personality. The show contains several running gags, such as Draco Malfoy's obsession with the competing wizarding school, PigFarts, a romance between Quirrell and Voldemort and no one caring about Hufflepuff. This is the definitive first StarKid musical to watch; it is the most recognizable and arguably the most iconic.



THE TRAIL TO OREGON!

Lead Actors: Jeff Blim, Rachael Soglin, Joey Richter, Lauren Lopez, Jaime Lyn Beatty, Corey Dorris

Song you won't be able to get out of your head: "Your Wagon Is On Fire"

Best Line: "I've literally eaten everything that I've come across."

You've got dysentery! This spoof of 1970s computer game "The Oregon Trail" is interactive, meaning audience participation is essential. The audience is given the fun responsibility of naming each character in this cast, just like one would if they were playing the computer game. This means that no two shows are the same. This musical follows a father, his uptight wife and their two kids as they venture on from Missouri to Oregon in the 1840s on a busted wagon pulled by a mutant ox. Of course, everything that could possibly go wrong on the trail does, and chaos ensues. At the end of the show, the audience gets to vote on which of the five alternate endings come to pass. All five endings have been filmed and an online viewer can click on the ending they prefer. With the ridiculous humor, audience participation and amazing soundtrack, "The Trail to Oregon!" is an especially fun musical that is definitely worth a watch for a giggle.

THE GUY WHO DIDN'T LIKE MUSICALS

Lead actors: Jon Matteson, Robert Manion, Lauren Lopez, Jaime Lynn Beatty

Song you won't be able to get out of your head: "Show Stopping Number"

Best Line: "SING THE BEGINNING OF MOANA!"

For all the horror fans out there, StarKid has got your back. With a perfect balance of horror and hilarity, this B-movie sci-fi parody makes for the perfect Halloween popcorn musical. This apocalypse parody starts off as a dry-humored comedy about an average grumpy guy at his day job, but it quickly turns ominous when the characters figure out that the small town of Hatchedfield is slowly transforming into a musical. I know it doesn't sound scary—in fact, it starts out funny—but "The Guy Who Didn't Like Musicals" quickly pulls the carpet from underneath you and becomes gut-wrenchingly horrifying. As ridiculous as the plot of "the world is turning into a musical, DUN DUN DUN" sounds, StarKid masterfully balances the horror and seriousness with comedy and parody. I like to refer to it "Invasion of the Body Snatchers...With Singing!"

TWISTED

Lead actors: Dylan Saunders, Rachael Soglin, Jeff Blim, Meredith Stepien

Song you won't be able to get out of your head: "Follow The Golden Rule"

Best Line: "I'm not just some silly side character here only to illustrate Princess Jasmine's reluctance to get married!"

Edgy Disney villain apologists everywhere would be drawn into the stance "Twisted" takes. "Twisted" follows the story of Aladdin in an entirely warped way you have never seen it before. In this version, Jafar is the misunderstood benevolent hero, whose story has simply been twisted. He is tortured by Aladdin, a womanizing scum of the earth, who the bratty and spoiled Jasmine is desperately in love with. The musical is a clear nod to "Wicked," but it's a lot more exaggerated and insane. Viewers get to explore what Jafar's past may have been like, and witness events that the Disney movie does not include. "Twisted" is enough to make viewers angry on Jafar's behalf. While an obvious mockery of Disney, the musical still finds a way to capture Disney magic through its songs and lovable cheesiness.

If none of these pique your interest, StarKid has nine other filmed original musicals I have not even mentioned yet, of varying topics and genres. After burning through what I felt like was hundreds of Broadway musicals, diving into StarKid saved me from my musical drought. It gave me eleven new musicals to obsess over and eleven new soundtracks to listen to. StarKid offers a Broadway feel minus the pretension. It is aware of its silliness and never takes itself too seriously. For those who are looking for a fun afternoon and want to turn off their brains and enjoy some light-hearted humor, StarKid is the perfect place to turn. Their YouTube channel is "Team StarKid"—go there, and the rest is at your fingertips.

On May 9, around 175 people showed their support for student literacy by coming out to Pros&Conversation, WriteBoston's only annual fundraiser. Mariella Murillo, student journalist and sophomore at Boston Arts Academy, delivered a passionate speech about finding her voice in writing. She received a standing ovation—the only one of the evening. We think it's safe to say that her speech was an inspiration.

The following is an excerpt from Mariella's keynote speech:

Ever since I was young, I have loved to read, write and tell stories. My mother loves to brag about how from a young age when she would read to me, I knew exactly when to turn the page. I remember the first chapter book I read (Magic Tree House #8, Midnight on the Moon), and knowing even then that I wanted to make stories just like that one. Over the years, I have made up hundreds of characters my brother and cousins would pick when we would play games and go on adventures.

As I grew older and dress-up became less appealing, I knew I had to find another way to get these stories out. So, I would write versions of my life as it was happening in a diary, or would even take characters that exist in the real world, my own friends and family, and put them into new worlds that I had created—essentially just fanfiction of the people in my life.

However, you can't really go up

to your teacher or friends with your journal and ask "Hey, is this any good?" I was never able to figure out how to take the bits and pieces of my writing and make it into something an audience can enjoy, or even understand. So, my characters stayed as characters, never entering a story. I had scenes planned out in my head, but trouble finding how to make them fit in a bigger picture. It was like having the pieces of a bridge, but not the tools I needed to put it together. I had the ideas and I had the skill, but I wished I had fresh eyes to help push me and mold what was in my brain into something well done. That's why, in fall 2017, I joined Teens in Print.

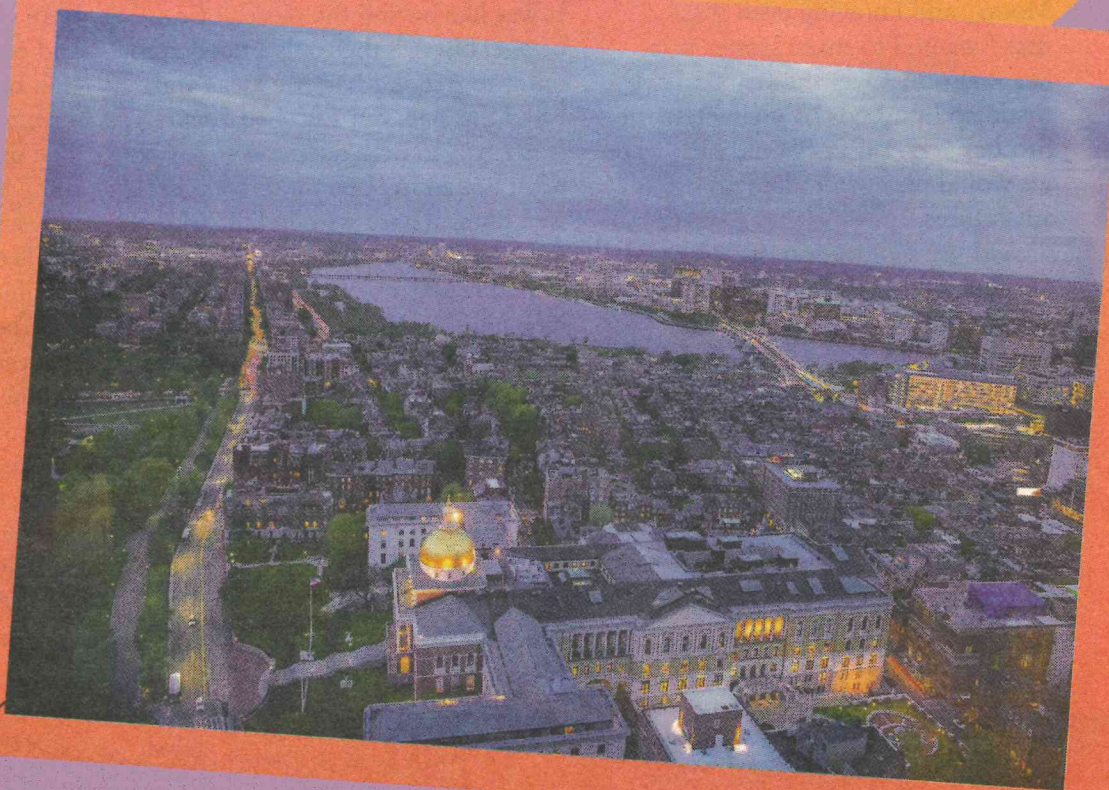
I still remember my first meeting—I was greeted with the coolest conference room I had ever been in. But, to be honest, I had never been in a conference room before. I will never forget that I was instantly treated as an individual. The Teens in Print staff welcomed me despite knowing nothing about me, or what I could bring to the table; they were ready and willing to

help me become the best writer I can be. With the Teens in Print staff supporting me, I finally had the help I needed to finish a piece of writing that made sense, told a story, and could be read and understood by an audience. Writing articles for Teens in Print allows me to be creative while still giving me the roots I need to for writing in school and college.

Without Teens in Print, I would have continued through high school and college believing that I had to wait before I could truly share my writing with others in a realistic way. The day when I would be able to fulfill the dreams of a little girl lost in her fantasy novels. And now that day is every day for me, as I stand before you as a published journalist, with people coming up to me and expressing how much they enjoy my writing. Being exposed to journalism is the first stepping stone of reaching the future I want as a writer. Impacting people with my writing is something I have wanted to do ever since Mary Pope Osborne impacted me with her stories of a brother, sister and their magic tree house.



TiP journalist Jacob Downey moderates a panel discussion among the event's guest writers: Danielle Allen, Joshua Foer, Meredith Goldstein and Marjan Kamali.



The view from the UMass Club, the venue for this year's Pros&Conversation.



TiP journalists Tiffany Cespedes, Jacob Downey and Mariella Murillo interviewed guests at a "pop-up newsroom."

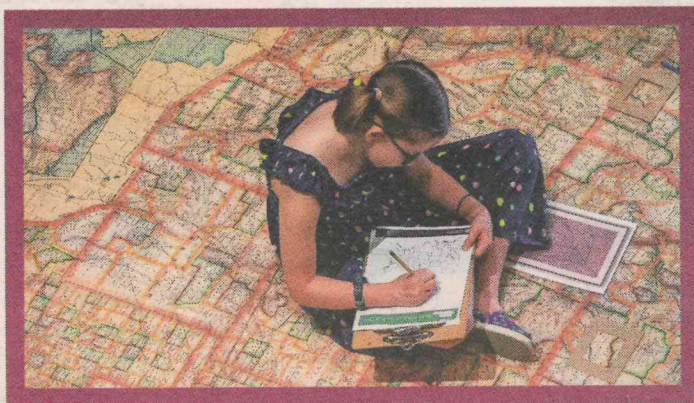
TiP journalist Amy Aguilar speaks with a guest.



DON'T MISS LIST

By: Jacob Downey, Masha Leyfer & Mariella Murillo // Staff Writers

Your guide to this summer's coolest culture.



VISIT: THE NORMAN LEVENTHAL MAP CENTER

Although it's only a single room, the Norman Leventhal Map Center, nestled in the Boston Public Library, squeezes in masterfully curated rotating exhibits. The information is presented in an accessible and engaging way, and there are small nooks with fun activities for children and adults alike. Previous exhibits have centered around maps as art and the history of Boston, while the one currently running is about westward expansion. Whether you consider yourself a map connoisseur or are just looking for a fun, quick and free (!) activity, this is the place for you if you enjoy art, history, good museums or just want to learn something new.

700 Boylston St., Boston.

MBTA: Green line at Copley



EAT: DOUBLE CHIN

Double Chin, located in Chinatown, is a Chinese restaurant with a sweet and relaxed aesthetic that will welcome you and your friends in for a good treat. Muted colors, pretty lights and even a porch swing make for a cozy setting reminiscent of a 2014 Tumblr bedroom. If you go with a few people, I recommend ordering an entree each, and sharing them among your friends. The crispy noodles with pork is a highlight—the balance of peanut oil, vegetables, and pork will have you munching until there's nothing left on your plate.

86 Harrison Ave., Boston.

MBTA: Orange line at Chinatown

LEVENTHAL: NORMAN B. LEVENTHAL MAP & EDUCATION CENTER AT THE BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY; DOUBLE CHIN: FACEBOOK; LA TAQUERIA: FACEBOOK; TEADO: NEWFOODIEONYOURBLOCK ON INSTAGRAM; MARVEL: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS; SPIDEMAN: MARVEL



EAT: LA TAQUERIA

In Hyde Park, La Taqueria is a small but colorful Mexican restaurant that you will find yourself entranced by. The atmosphere is set with appropriate songs in Spanish and stunning murals that make you feel like you're on the set of the popular joint all the friends go to eat at after school in a Disney sitcom. If there is anything I am a snob about, it is black beans (the best ones explode with flavor in your mouth with garlic-y hints and a pure bean taste), and La Taqueria satisfied my expectations and my stomach (but don't get it wrong, nothing can top the black beans mi abuela would make). The chewy and smokey steak fajita fill you right up, and the street corn was my personal favorite, with mouthwatering chipotle sauce pairing beautifully with the grilled cob.

636 Hyde Park Ave., Boston.

MBTA: 32 bus and others



DRINK: TEADO

Sitting in view of one of Chinatown's iconic gates, TeaDo offers appetizers, desserts and, of course, boba tea. TeaDo also has several board games including Jenga and Connect Four, so that you and a friend can enjoy some friendly competition as you sip on one of their specialty teas and munch some onigiri. Make sure to come back soon so you can try their dumplings, puddings and variety of milk, black and green teas.

8 Tyler St, Boston.

MBTA: Orange line at Chinatown



WATCH: SPIDER-MAN: FAR FROM HOME

(to the tune of the 60's Spider-Man theme)
Spider-Man, Spider-Man,
He's in Europe, Spider-Man.
That guy's a wizard; he can fly.
Nick Fury still, has just one eye.
Look out for "Spider-Man: Far From Home."
"Spider-Man: Far From Home," starring Tom Holland, Zendaya and Jake Gyllenhaal, premieres July 2.



PLAY: MARVEL'S ULTIMATE ALLIANCE 3: THE BLACK ORDER

Were you sitting in the theater watching Avengers: Endgame thinking, "Dang! How cool would it be if Miles Morales, Deadpool or Ms. Marvel were the ones punking Thanos?" Luckily, reality can now be whatever YOU want it to be with Marvel's Ultimate Alliance 3: The Black Order. The third installment of the classic UA series will allow you to assemble your own team in a race to collect all the Infinity Stones before the mad Titan, Thanos and his nefarious Black Order can get their hands on them.

Available for Nintendo Switch July 19.

ME

I ask myself sometimes what is right and what is wrong.
Yo soy de sangre Mexicana,
and will forever be. Pero I wonder,
does being born here make me mudblood,
like Hermione Granger in Harry Potter?
But then I sit, look at my skin, look at my hair and I see the eyes of
a fighter—
I see that I do so much for my family, who will always have their
hearts open.
And my wonder, am I half or am I full Mexican, comes to an end.
I will always be loyal to the country where my roots come from,
to the place my grandfather died, and the body of my godfather
was sent to.

MEXICO

Sí, I was born here in the U.S.,
my home almost 3.3 miles from here.
My heart will never beat to American colors pero
de Mexico na mas.
I may not have been born en la tierra santa,
but I grew up in a Mexican household.
Though my accent might not seem Mexican,
eso es porque, crecí en un area Dominicana all my life.
Though I never felt in the right place here in America,
or Roxbury,
I've only ever felt close to home while in East Boston, Revere,
Chelsea—
they are latinos close to mi tierra, not like those in Roxbury.
So my question is to where I belong,
where my heart takes me, which has lead me to open up today.

WHO?

You think you know me,
You think you're my friend, but you have it wrong.
You have no idea what my WHOLE story is.
You ask me,
“Why are you sad, what's wrong?”
Nothing's wrong, I peep and fall back.
It took me a few good blows to realize people's true colors
But here I am standing strong, overcoming things I thought I'd
never do.
So no, you're not my friend,
God is my friend, though I'm not always nice to him.
He's seen my ups and downs,
he knows my WHOLE story, and didn't stop loving me.
And those who know part leave ASAP
So the question is who am I?
A fighter
A soldier
A big sister
A daughter
More importantly, I am a Mexican.
With all the dirt the President hands on us, I only become prouder,
because he does not know each and every one of our stories.
So do you know who I am?
Pues eso si, que es un no.

by Amy Aguilar // Staff Writer

YOU DON'T KNOW ME

By: Nathan DeJesus // Contributing Writer

"Are they speaking about me? What if they don't like me? What if I don't pass my test and I won't be able to pass to the next grade?" "How do you feel today?" "... Good..."

These are the thoughts that go through my head on a daily basis. Because I was born with the developmental disorder autism, I find it extremely hard to speak about my emotions and feelings, even to the people closest to me. Autism affects one out of 63 American children, making it a common disorder. So why do I feel so alone with it?

I noticed that I was different when I was in public and the sounds of trains made me go insane and cover my ears and cry. I've noticed that the simple gesture of making eye contact when speaking to someone is like climbing Mount Everest for me. When I was four I did not speak. I was put into several varieties of therapy such as speech, music and regular therapy where they would ask me about my emotions, which to this day I still have a problem speaking about.

I was six when I met Julie. I was hesitant and didn't speak to her for about two weeks, but as I opened my book of life I realized that she understood me, and till this day is the only person I am comfortable sharing my emotions with. Julie would stay silent with me when I chose not to speak and would help me decipher problems when I couldn't control my emotions. When I was nine, Julie declared I was prepared enough to control my emotions. I was overjoyed and happy to feel like a free being. When I was nine my parents and I were at the esplanade for the annual fireworks show (a tolerable noise), and as we left it started to pour. I wanted to run to the station but my body just stood there trembling and I felt the tears coming. My father had to pick me up and cover me with his jacket while people stared as I cried in the rain. They did not know me and my story and my many small but mighty accomplishments before this incident.

By my own choice, I decided to transfer to a school closer to home during fourth grade and it was small, which made making friends easier. The school I was in before was too large and my autism made navigating the school feel like I was walking for hours. When I arrived it was thrilling, until a boy came up from behind me and humped me with a pencil between his legs during lunch one day. This was confusing, but I knew that it wasn't okay. This and several other bullying incidents caused me to be paranoid and scared about the other kids around me. I would wake up crying and pleading with my mom not to send me to school. This traumatizing experience forced me back into therapy at the age of 11, with a guy named Cooper. He also changed my life by helping me let go of the suspicion that everyone was out to get me.

We talked a lot, and this time around therapy felt a lot more mature. Because of Julie, I was able to express my emotions to a therapist much easier. After a bit, Cooper thought that I was ready to trust the world. So after a combined seven years of therapy, I've learned to truly appreciate the small feats. When I made my first friend in school I thought that was a call for celebration. So I write this essay to inform you, reader, that you are trustworthy, but to warn you that you do not know everyone's story. You have just walked in on one chapter of their book, and you have no right to judge without asking about their accomplishments and past.

**THANH PHO CO
HOI AN
HO CHI MINH
CITY**

By: Quynh
Anh Thach //
Contributing Writer

I love the city
I love the city buildings
I love weather here

ANIMALS

By: Cristiana Ramos
Timas Dos Santos //
Contributing Writer

Animals—they are
the best company, man's best
friend and part of life.

MATH

By: Danilson De Pina Da
Silveira // Contributing
Writer

Add and subtract stars
take notes, explore difference
khan academy.

ANIMALS

By: Dawens
Desroches //
Contributing Writer

Dolphin, elephant,
cat, bird, tiger, monkey, fox,
chicken, dog, lion.

SOCCER

By: Elias Sultan //
Contributing Writer

I do love to play
soccer, my favorite sport,
I like Ronaldo.

LOVE

By: Elili Sultan //
Contributing Writer

I love my mother
I have my family love
I love injera.

ME

By: Hafsha Akter //
Contributing Writer

I love my country
I like my garden flowers
I am a student.

WEATHER

By: Huy Le //
Contributing Writer

Today there is rain.
Snow storms—very dangerous.
The sun—very hot.

MY ART

By: Ksenia Clark //
Contributing Writer

I draw a dolphin,
multicolor drawing sky,
drawing school for kids.

FAMILY

By: Simone Resende
Pires // Contributing
Writer

I love my sisters
I have two sisters—all mine
my funny sisters.

FOOD

By: Tien Nguyen //
Contributing Writer

I like black milk tea
in Vietnam—pho very good
I love hamburger.

DESSERT

By: Dahyana Feliz Diaz
// Contributing Writer

The ice cream is cold,
ice cream has different flavors,
helado frio.

**SCIENCE IN A
NEW LANGUAGE**

By: Ery Mejia Vallana
// Contributing
Writer

My organism
experiments are the best,
give me a second.

WATERMELON

By: Fabrina
Abreu Rosario //
Contributing Writer

The reds are tasty,
the reds are my favorite part
the reds drip water.

WHAT I EAT

By: Fleiver Ramirez //
Contributing Writer

Yo como uva
me gusta el tomate
yo como sopa.

ISLAND

By: Paola Reyes Maria
// Contributing
Writer

The water is blue.
On the island there's cocoa
the wind is blowing.

JARDÍN

By: Yolainis Trinidad
Troncoso //
Contributing Writer

Me gusta rosas
las rosas son hermosas
rosas bonitas.

EL CIELO

By: Johan Arias de la
Cruz // Contributing
Writer

Cielo azul
la luna resplandece
estrellas grises.

LA PIZZA

By: Nikaulys
Suero Guzman //
Contributing Writer

La compran todos
me encanta la pizza
salsa tomate.

ANIMALS

By: Aneuris Mateo
Nova // Contributing
Writer

Snake is poisonous
Lion—King of the jungle
I love animals.