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Biden implements new COVID-19 policies

vladapitner
news editor

As President Biden starts his first presidential term, he has gone straight into action regarding battling the coronavirus pandemic.

Some of Biden's measures that have been in discussion involve a strict federal mask mandate, an implementation of a new Transition COVID-19 Advisory Board and a plan to disperse 100 million vaccines within his first 100 days in office.

Biden signed an executive order mask mandate requiring masks to be worn at all times on all federal property in hopes of reducing the rising death toll of the pandemic.

"I agree on a mask mandate all over the United States," Emily Christiansen, a sophomore, said. "Even if masks aren't 100 percent effective, they're protecting people; they're still protecting the immune compromised."

The mask mandate includes places such as natural parks and public transportation systems.

"Even if I get COVID and I won't die because I'm a perfectly healthy 15-year-old girl, my sister who has diabetes could get it and die," Christiansen said. "I'd rather wear a mask to keep her safe, I'm not worried about myself. I'm more worried about her. I think everyone should be more worried about their family and about their friends."

Another part of Biden's coronavirus policies includes an advisory board that was established by public healthcare workers and staffed by certified doctors and former government officials.

"The more opinions that we can hear right now the better," Dylan Shearon, a social studies teacher,



PHOTO COURTESY OF • THE WHITE HOUSE

MASK ON- Biden has been developing plans to help combat the coronavirus pandemic. These plans have been said to eventually bring this global pandemic to an end.

said. "Because we need to have multiple approaches to this issue."

The board will discuss a federal vaccine distribution, diagnostic testing, responses to highly transmissible coronavirus variants and personal protective equipment for medical workers.

"Having multiple sets of hands tackling COVID in the government is sure to help solve this issue," Matthew Keegan, a senior, said. "The more brains we have working together, the better."

Biden said he wants to have 100 million vaccines given out within the country during his first 100 days in office, which would mean

about one out of every six Americans would receive the vaccine.

"I don't know how possible that is because there seems to be a large population of people who are against taking the vaccine," Keegan said. "I hope it happens because the more people are vaccinated, the closer we are to getting back to normal life."

Several countries, including New Zealand and South Korea, have followed strict lockdowns and mask mandates resulting in a dramatic decrease in COVID-19 cases, therefore opening the country back up to a semi-normal lifestyle.

"We have seen in other countries

that have had intense lockdowns and mask mandates that their COVID-19 cases have decreased but ours have kept increasing because President Trump wasn't doing anything about it," Christiansen said. "Hopefully with President Biden's new plan, the cases will decrease along with the deaths."

Many remain hopeful in finally putting an end to this global pandemic which has brought countless repercussions to global economies and overall public safety.

"I have a feeling we are getting close to solving this once and for all," Keegan said. "I'm excited for a COVID-free future."

U.S. vs. Australia, tale of two lockdowns

peterchandler
staff writer

As the world approaches the one-year mark for the global pandemic, the way different Governments choose to quarantine is shown in a different light.

Each country decided which way was best to tackle the coronavirus, and each choice had its own consequences. Restrictions administered in Australia gave insight into this line of thinking.

"We are in the middle of Stage 4 restrictions," Sally Capp, Lord Mayor of Melbourne, Australia, said in a press release. "We need to do the right thing and listen to our safety and health experts for the safety of everybody."

When Melbourne entered the Stage 4-lockdown, most businesses closed, there was a nightly curfew and residents were ordered to stay within five kilometers of their home.

"I would 100 percent rather go through the half year in extreme

lockdown and have low cases," Leena Albustami, a sophomore, said. "Even though it might be annoying at the time, in the long run it's more effective."

Jan. 6 through 19, Victoria, Australia has had 31 total cases with a population of 6.359 million. In that same time-frame, Massachusetts, with a population of 6.893 million, got 79,324 new cases.

Trading more restrictions for less cases seems to be an effective strategy at diminishing the total cases. While this may be true, returning to a normal life is another factor that needs to be taken into account.

"We need to hear an acknowledgment from our federal government that they understand the disproportionate impact of this pandemic on the Melbourne city economy," Capp said. "Know that they will invest with us on reviving our city and our economy, because it's also an investment in the national recovery."

A shared way of dealing with the economic aspects of COVID-19

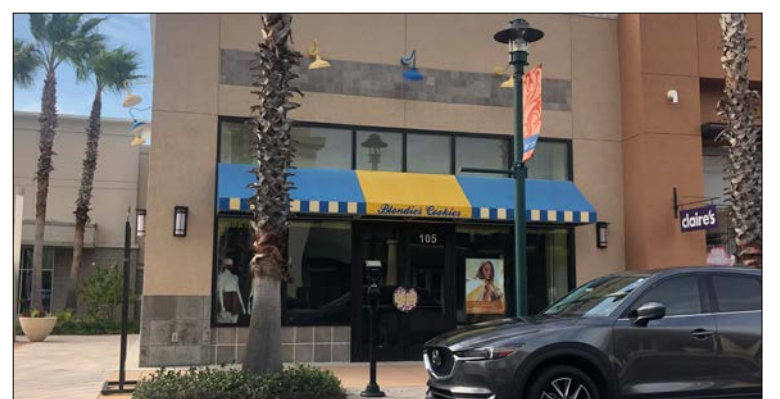


PHOTO BY • AUDREY BEST

CLOSED INDEFINITELY- More businesses are closing in the U.S. while Australia is just beginning to open up. This has been detrimental for local business owners.

would be the use of stimulus checks. Stimulus packages have been sent across both countries to jump start their economies.

That money is intended to be spent on basic needs so they are immediately available. It also allowed for the prices of necessities to be affordable for those who have suffered from unemploy-

ment or low income as a result of the pandemic.

"The future will very much depend on how much social mixing resumes, and what kind of prevention we do," Joseph Wu, a disease modeler at the University of Hong Kong, said at the University of Hong Kong. "We're in for the long haul."

Constant shuffling of richest man

danarobinson
staff writer

Quick question, who is the richest person in the world? You might want to answer quickly, because the answer may change by the end of this sentence.

Elon Musk, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Tesla and SpaceX, became the richest person in the world on Jan. 8 when shares of Tesla rose, increasing his net worth to be more than the CEO of Amazon and Blue Origin, Jeff Bezos.

"How strange," Musk replied to a tweet stating his new status. "Well, back to work ..."

The spot was lost and regained on the following Tuesday while Bezos took back his position on Wednesday. This tremendous growth from Musk is coming after he was cash poor in 2020.

"I am selling almost all physical possessions," Musk tweeted on May 1. "Will own no house."

The two CEOs have been in a rivalry for around 15 years now, before their companies were huge and before their aerospace companies launched anything.

"In the beginning, I actually wouldn't even let my friends invest because everyone would lose their money," Musk said during an interview at South by Southwest in 2018. "I thought I'd rather lose my own money."

Musk came a long way to become CEO of two companies and he is still under that title.

"He's kind of like the real life Tony Stark," Brady Hoffman, a



senior, said. "Without the hero part."

Bezos, however, recently released a statement stepping down from his position of CEO.

"I'm excited to announce that this Q3 I'll transition to Executive Chair of the Amazon Board and Andy Jassy will become CEO,"

Bezos said in a letter to employees. "In the Executive Chair role, I intend to focus my energies and attention on new products and early initiatives. Andy is well known inside the company and has been at Amazon almost as long as I have. He will be an outstanding leader, and he has my

full confidence."

This transition comes with the news of Amazon's first \$100 billion quarter, with the company's stock up around 70 percent in the past 12 months.

"The executive change was decided in consultation with Amazon's board of directors," Brian

Olsavsky, Amazon's chief financial officer, said on a media call. "Bezos will remain very involved and have his fingerprints on lots of different parts of the company and Jassy is a visionary leader who will bring his own skill set but Amazon expects a lot of continuity with the transition."

Bitcoin creates big advancements in stock market

oliviahammill
staff writer

A recent cryptocurrency called Bitcoin has gained popularity and has completely changed the game for the stock market.

Bitcoin was created in January of 2009 and is a virtual cash system that allows anyone to buy and trade buy and trade items all over the world. The new currency has gained the interest of many investors.

This has also gained the attention of the younger generation specifically, who hope to gain a profit off this rising trend, through investing in the company.

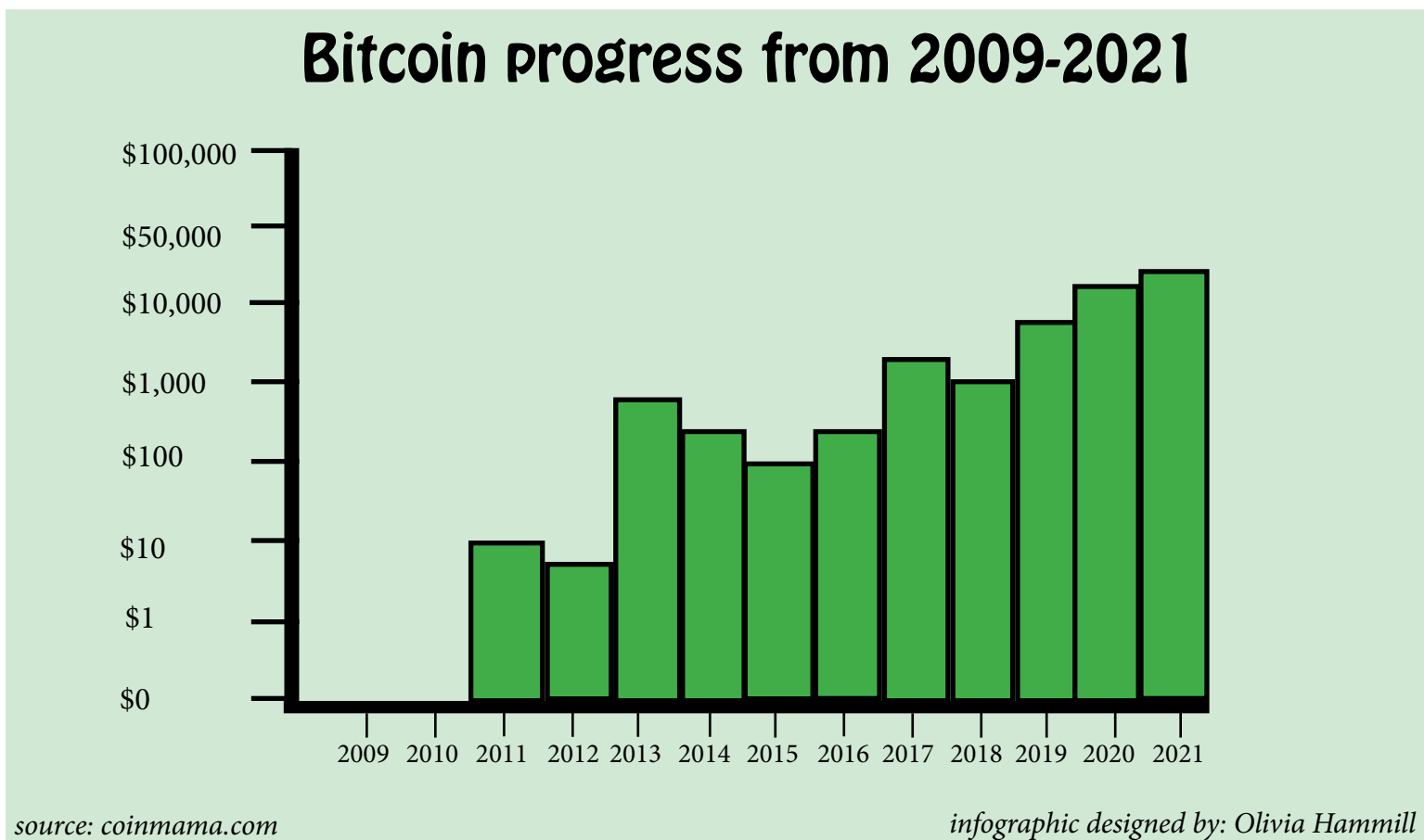
"I would invest in Bitcoin because I think cryptocurrency is rising to create a one world currency," Ella Molinari, a junior, said.

Bitcoin is predicted to skyrocket in 2021. With this leap, it may help put an exponential amount of money in investors pocket, however, this comes with a cost.

Bitcoin fluctuates based on the stock market, so when the stock market goes down, Bitcoin's price plummets, leaving investors to lose an extreme amount of money and wasting their time.

"I don't think investors will benefit," Thomas Walter, a senior, said. "It's a stock that when people invest in it, they don't really know what they are investing in and that can lead to a lack of trust and tanking stocks in the long term."

As the stock market continues



to fluctuate, people become more uncertain about Bitcoin's success rate, leaving the company to possibly lose future investors. The current investors still have hope that the company will reach its highest value yet of \$100,000.

"Knowing that Bitcoin recently went down in value, I don't

think Bitcoin will reach the value the investors predict it to go up to," Chloe Kim, a sophomore, said.

Some even predict that Bitcoin will end up being the most popular one world currency due to the massive uprise in new investors and since it is more established than other cryptocurrencies. Bitcoin is currently the most

well-known cryptocurrency in the stock market, which makes it the most desired cryptocurrency to invest in

"I think it will be the most invested in," Walter said. "Cryptocurrency is a niche in the market, and Bitcoin was one of the first to occupy it."

Bitcoin has not always been as successful as it is today. In 2017, dropped to it's all-time low in val-

ue, depreciating value 12 percent. This greatly impacted investors, some even lost all their money and became bankrupt.

"You should definitely put a certain amount of money into Bitcoin to make sure you have your own money on the side," Kim said. "Just to make sure that you don't lose all of your money and you can still support yourself when the stocks crash."

JUNGLE LIFE

Providing the most engaging story of the edition

Speech and Debate club continues to showcase talents despite pandemic

tarynbartley
associate editor-in-chief

The Speech and Debate club has been a spot of pride for some time through its successes, however, it too faced some challenges this year, causing a virtual shift.

"COVID-19 has impacted Speech and Debate just as much as other clubs and athletics here at school," Brooke Dekle, Speech and Debate captain and senior, said. "In past years, all of our competitions would be held in person, at high schools in our area. They would be large events with many students, coaches and parents. Now students stay home to compete and are not with their teammates, coaches and other competitors."

Despite the complications that the pandemic has caused this year, even more notably, it significantly disrupted operations last spring, when school was let out in mid-March.

Even with these challenges, there are still many opportunities for the program to continue to thrive, and they continue to do so.

"Last year, right before COVID hit, we were the district champions for Speech and Debate," Jennifer Bell, Speech and Debate coach, said. "We had a dozen students qualify for the National Tournament, which ended up getting canceled, sadly, and we've had a number of individual awards already this year, including our team captain Brooke Dekle, who has been a breakout success in Student Congress."

With hard work and an im-

mense amount of time dedicated, this program has continued to outshine itself every single year and serve as a point of honor and fulfillment for those involved.

"I am very proud of what my team has been able to accomplish," Parker Toso, Speech and Debate manager and junior, said. "I personally have been able to train two people that have gone to nationals and I can tell that everyone in the club has improved their speaking skills and are going to go far in life beyond the club. I am definitely more proud of me and my teammates' accomplishments than any other extracurriculars I am in at school."

Even with all the effort put in by students, there is always a driving force for motivation. Jennifer Bell has been the sponsor of Speech and Debate for 20 years and seems to serve as an amazing coach to these dedicated students.

"We owe so much of our success to Mrs. Bell," Dekle said. "She has worked tirelessly to keep this club functioning, while making it a fun and safe space for students from all areas of the school. It is truly unlike any other club offered at Wharton, and we can credit that all to her."

The respect and admiration is not a one-way street. Bell shares her continued appreciation of her students and competitors, not only in terms of success, but also characteristic displays.

"Obviously, our competitive successes are fantastic, but the thing I'm most proud of is the quality of human beings that make up our team," Bell said. "They are universally supportive of each other, and always root for each other's success. And, perhaps most importantly, even students who don't come home with trophies still walk away with communication skills that will serve them for their entire lives."



PHOTO COURTESY OF • BROOKE DEKLE

COMPETITION- Brooke Dekle prepares for a virtual Speech and Debate competition. Speech and Debate has been holding virtual competitions and tournaments since last March.

Pivoting back to successes, there is definitely no lack of students walking away with trophies. The Speech and Debate team has proved to be one of the most successful in the state, and show no

sign of relinquishing their title.

"Another major accomplishment in the club is for the last two years we have won districts, which is a large achievement because we are a public school in a group of mostly private schools so we have less resources devoted to our group," Toso said.

Many changes throughout the school year have led to bumps in the road, and hopes remain high that nothing can stop these students from thriving in any way possible, from freshmen members to seniors, they are determined to prevail.

"New recruits have been very enthusiastic and eager to learn and work," Dekle said. "The veteran members have been flexible and have adapted really well to the changes. Despite all the chaos, it looks like we are going to have a very successful year. Our main goal is to make our members the best speakers possible and to help them be more confident in their speaking abilities. I also hope we can win first place at our final major tournament, Grand Finals."

With the dedication of these students, they prove the idea of Speech and Debate being a group of highly intelligent people to be correct every moment they can.

While many other clubs simply 'gave up' the last quarter of the

previous school year and determined that resuming this school year would be better, Speech and Debate continued to modify their method of operation in anticipation of the year to come.

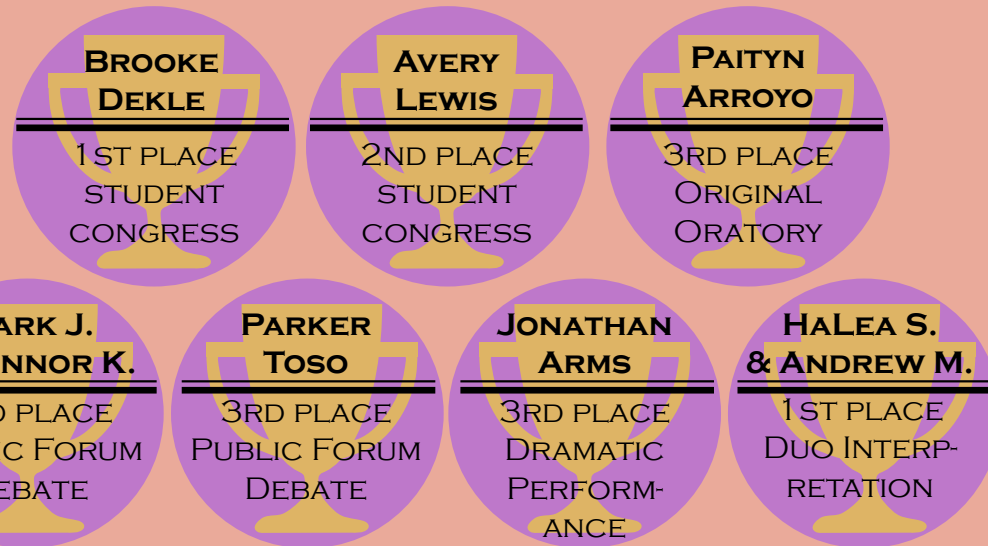
"By our very natures, we are a pretty adaptable bunch," Bell said. "We got a chance to become familiar with the tech during the fourth quarter last year. So, honestly, the transition hasn't been all that hard for us."

As this year continues, the organization continues to grow and expand their horizons, with extensive ambitions as far as what is to come. They hope to lengthen their list of accomplishments in order to show all the hard work they put into this club.

Overall though, the general consensus in the group is that it isn't about winning, it isn't about the trophies or ribbons or travel. It's not even simply about debate. This club is about refining speech skills as well as simply bringing people together.

"You will not find a more close knit group of people from so many backgrounds anywhere else at Wharton," Toso said. "I have met friends in this club that I will keep for life, and I look forward to my continued participation and leadership of such a great club."

Star Competitors



*source: Jennifer Bell

infographic designed by: Taryn Bartley

One educator's journey from intern to teacher

oliviaeduc
staff writer

The transition from intern to teacher can be difficult yet rewarding for new teachers. Especially when things are constantly changing in the world of education.

Michelle Both, a social studies teacher that teaches AP human geography, U.S. government and Pre AP world culture, underwent this transition just under two years ago when she was hired for the 2019-2020 school year.

Both attended the University of South Florida (USF) and became an intern as a part of USF's education program.

"I went to the USF and it pushed me to get a higher education," Both said.

After she was hired to be a full-time teacher, she continued to attend college classes throughout her first year of teaching.

"It's cooled down a little since I'm out of school," Both said. "It's interesting, it is definitely keeping me busy"

When she became an intern, her assigned teacher to mentor and coach her on how to run a classroom was Nancy McDonald, a fellow social studies teacher.

"I met her in December before she became an intern, so I've

known her for just over two years," McDonald said.

This opportunity led to a professional relationship between the two in and out of the classroom.

"It was awesome having her as an intern, she was such a good intern," McDonald said. "We take care of each other and bounce ideas together."

Both was motivated by her peers and some of her family members who have helped support her.

"I was inspired by my grandpa who's a professor and by Mrs. McDonald who pushed me

through to become a teacher," Both said.

Both has used her position to create connections with her students to keep them engaged and comfortable.

"She has not only created a professional relationship, but also a personable relationship with me," Cooper Priest, a freshman, said.

Since she just graduated and is a young teacher, she uses this to her advantage and knows how to keep students engaged in fun and age-appropriate ways.

"Since she's younger she can relate to us and teach us in a way that's relevant," Priest said.

With her being a younger teacher, she has also shared her wealth of knowledge with her co-workers that are tailored to her stu-



PHOTO BY • VLADA PITNER

LEARNING TIME - Michelle Both helps out freshman Blerona Mahmuti in A.P. Human Geography. Her teaching style has allowed her to bond with students.

dents learning needs, which has allowed new methods of teaching to be brought into action in the social studies department.

"We were able to create fun lesson ideas with each other while she was my intern and now, we still share our lesson plans," McDonald said.

McDonald has also encouraged Both to take more opportunities

to advance her career in education

"I encouraged her to apply to be an AP said reader and she was accepted a few months ago," McDonald said.

Both has been able to impact so many students and other teachers' lives, and hopefully she'll be able to continue her positive impacts for many more years to come through teaching students

and encouraging them to do their best in school.

"I wanted to become a teacher to be a role model for kids who didn't have any in their lives," Both said.

Both has used all her resources and skills she's learned in college and has applied them into the classroom, allowing students to learn in a creative way.

CARES Act extends sick pay for teachers

hannahcraig
staff writer

The Coronavirus Aid Relief and Security (CARES) Act came as a necessity for those impacted by the coronavirus, including small businesses.

The CARES act was a \$2.2 trillion stimulus bill passed by Congress in March to provide assistance for workers, small businesses and families during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"It helped lots of people who were struggling to pay rent, so they still have a home," Jesus Arozamena, a sophomore, said. "People need money for basic needs,"

According to home.treasury.gov, the act provided relief for American households with adults whose income was less than \$99,000.

The Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) was also enacted in March. According to dol.gov, the act required numerous employers to provide their employees with paid sick or medical leave, due to the pandemic, until Dec. 31, 2020.

The U.S. Department of Labor said the act includes "two weeks (up to 80 hours) of paid sick leave at the employee's regular rate of pay where the employee is unable to work because the employee is quarantined."

This allowed teachers to be able to quarantine, or take care of their

families via paid sick leave, if impacted by the coronavirus.

"If they (teachers) don't have the sick time available, because maybe they've used it all already, that means that they don't get paid for that day," Merrill Connor, an English teacher, said.

However, there is good news for teachers in Hillsborough County.

The superintendent stated in an email on Jan. 12 that Hillsborough County will extend the support from the FFCRA Act until June 30.

"The CARES Act will supply money for masks and wipes," Connor said. "It can be used in many ways to help our district financially."

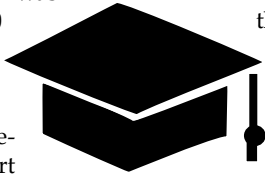
The CARES Act was set to expire on Dec. 26. However, on Dec. 27, former President Donald Trump signed the Consolidated Appropriations Act.

This includes the extension of the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance, which was originally included in the CARES Act as well as the Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation program, which expired on July 31.

On Jan. 14, then President-elect Joe Biden proposed his economic plan for the pandemic. This includes \$1.9 trillion for stimulus checks, emergency funding for small businesses and money towards the COVID-19 vaccine.

Biden's stimulus checks will include \$1,400 on top of the \$600 that was approved on Dec. 27.

"Having to quarantine for two weeks might be hard on teachers' families," Melissa Olsen, a senior,



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Opinion piece: Much needed changes for how students learn about Black history

alliemassey
associate editor-in-chief

Schools have dropped the ball when it comes to the teaching of Black history.

Every year in the month of February, students are taught a shallow and repetitive curriculum that fails to highlight the rich history of Black people.

During our elementary school years, Black History Month felt like a celebration and a valuable time period where teachers were more dedicated to educating all students about this subset of history.

It was during this time that we were taught about the Civil Rights movement and famous Black figures we know today, such as Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Rosa Parks.

However, as time went on, the month began to seem like less of a

priority and more of a chore as the teaching of our history became less intentional. Lessons went from interactive PowerPoints and trivia to two-minute videos, then eventually nothing at all.

Aside from the same handful of notable figures, schools fail to teach us about the vast history behind Afro-Americans.

For many students the tidbit of information given during this time is the only exposure we get to African American history. This has left many Black students with a superficial understanding of their culture and left it up to the community to educate us.

Clubs, family and community organizations such as churches and youth groups have had to take it upon themselves to inform Black youth on their roots.

It should not be the sole responsibility of the Black community to

educate one another on our history when minority students are expected to master a whitewashed history book every day.

A simple conversation is easy to have and it doesn't hurt to interrupt a lesson plan for these important discussions. This neglect teaches minority students that our history is not important.

Despite this, there are some teachers who set an example and act on their own volition to include Black history in their lessons during the month, even if it's just for a class period.

Black people have had an enormous role throughout all of history and continue to break barriers every day. It's sad to see how many of us are unaware of just how much of an impact our people have had.

Black history is more than civil rights and slavery. It's full of just as many, if not more, inventors, educators, trail blazers and pioneers as white history, yet many today know nothing about them. These are Black figures that have

stood right alongside who we see in history books, yet their names go unheard.

In light of the revolutionary racial climate, the conversations African Americans have been trying to spark for decades are finally being heard and reform is surfacing in many ways.

Now, we see a growing appreciation for Black culture as people are more willing to have these conversations. This marks just one of the first steps in restoring the value of our history that the education system has failed to instill in its students.

Schools should take this opportunity to follow along, rethink how Black history is being taught

in their classrooms and normalize its teaching year-round.

Black history should not be confined to just Black History Month, especially with the lack of information we are being given as is.

Today we see figures like Kizzmekia Corbett, a Black female who

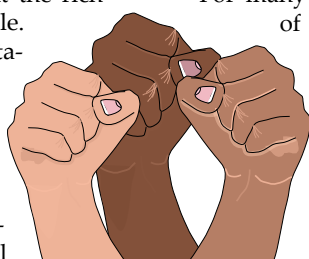
was one of the leading scientists in the development of the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine, making modern Black history.

If schools continue with this teaching trend the value of monumental points in history like these will go unseen.

History is being written every day and schools cannot continue to fail its students by robbing them of its full story.

"It should not be the sole responsibility of the Black community to educate one another on our history when minority students are expected to master a whitewashed history book every day."

ALLIE MASSEY



Kizzmekia Corbett part in team responsible for successful COVID-19 Moderna vaccine

danarobinson & tarynbartley
staff writer & associate editor-in-chief

Kizzmekia (Kizzy) Corbett is a black woman in a mostly white male dominated industry who played a significant role in the development of the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine.

"The very vaccine that's one of the two that has absolutely exquisite levels was actually developed in my institute's vaccine research center by a team of scientists led by Dr. Barney Graham and his close colleague, Dr. Kizzmekia Corbett, or Kizzy Corbett," Dr. Anthony Fauci told a forum hosted by the National Urban League.

Corbett is part of a team at the National Institute of Health that worked with Moderna, a company that has developed a more than 90 percent effective vaccine against the coronavirus.

"About a quarter of the public remains vaccine hesitant, saying they probably or definitely would not get a COVID-19 vaccine even if it were available for free and deemed safe by scientists," A Kaiser Family Foundation study reported. "Importantly, 35 percent of black adults say they definitely or probably would not get vaccinated."

These fears come from long-time mistreatment of black people in this country, not only socially, but medically. This includes areas such as the Tuskegee Syphilis Study in the 1930s and the HIV/AIDS epidemic in the 1980s.

"I believe that the collaboration of black women will be a great advantage in the validity of the covid vaccine," Haley Chambers, a senior, said. "There has been a history of racial prejudices and misconceptions in medicine, es-

pecially involving women of color, so having Kizzmekia Corbett at the forefront of this issue will largely increase not only the visibility of young people of color in science fields, but will also elevate the standard of the vaccine to ensure that a wider demographic is comfortable with recent developments."

The issue of low black vaccination rates is one that Corbett provides hope for by potentially normalizing the idea for the black population and fostering trust.

"This overarching mistrust of the medical institution in general is something that is being highlighted now because of the dire circumstances of which we're in," Corbett said in an interview with Dr. Sanjay Gupta, CNN Chief Medical Correspondent. "It is not news to me, because I'm black and I have a black family and I am well-read on the history of injustice when it comes to medicine in the black community."

A report by the U.S Department of Health and Human Services published in 2015 provided statistics that show health disparities between races.

"In 2004, life expectancy at birth for the white population was 5.2 years longer than for the black population," the report reads. "By 2014, the difference had narrowed to 3.4 years."

Differences in medical care, education and careers between races have been prevalent for a while, but that is something Corbett is hoping to promote change in.

Though black people make up 11 percent of the American workforce, they only account for 9 percent of the Science, Technology, Engineering and Technology (STEM) specific personnel (pew-socialtrends.org).

"Advancements in the inclusion of black scientists in STEM fields

allow for far more progress in ensuring that scientific developments aid every member in our society," Chambers said. "The historical bias against women and people of color in STEM have affected not only those who work in these fields, but also those that they serve (such as the Tuskegee Syphilis Experiment). Having members in STEM, especially in the medical field, help to alleviate these racial obstacles and galva-

nize more confidence in scientific discoveries."

Fauci has praised her as a key figure for the development of and increased use of a coronavirus vaccine.

"Kizzy is an African American scientist who is right at the forefront of the development of the vaccine," Fauci said.

For many young or STEM-bound black children and women, people like Kizzmekia can

make a huge difference and serve as an inspiration.

"It's important for people to see people looking like them, like themselves, who can be involved," Freeman Hrabowski, president of the University of Maryland, Baltimore from which Corbett graduated. "If it's about women, or if it's about blacks because it shows that you've got people who understand what you've gone through."

Black History: Then and Now

 Frederick Douglass 1818–1895 historical writer and abolitionist	 Harriet Tubman 1822–1913 critical in underground railroad	MLK Junior 1929–1968 major civil rights era leader
Amanda Gorman 1998– national youth poet laureate/activist	Stacey Abrams 1973– political figure and reform activist	Kizzmekia Corbett 1986– viral immunology for COVID-19

*sources: britannica.com and blackpast.org infographic designed by: Taryn Bartley

New COVID strain stirs fear

Paulina Giraldo
staffwriter

Just when the pandemic seemed to have started to calm down, it took a turn for the worst. A new strand of the coronavirus was discovered, creating a new sense of unrest around the world.

A little over a year ago, the virus that goes by the name COVID-19 was discovered. It spread so rapidly that it was soon declared to be a worldwide pandemic.

Now, more panic has arisen since the new strain was discovered.

According to healthline.com "A few weeks ago, news broke that a more transmissible strain of the coronavirus, the B.1.1.7 lineage, has been circling around the United Kingdom...The strain, thought to be up to 70 percent more transmissible than the original strain, thrust the United Kingdom into a lockdown. And the B.1.1.7 lineage has already been detected in several locations in the United States."

The second strain seems to be more contagious which means the virus will spread at a much quicker pace.

"I'm definitely more scared," Zoe Craig, a junior, said. "I've seen, even at school, more and more people are getting covid and the hospitalizations are at an all time high and that's pretty obvious that new strand is causing that, because it's more contagious so more people are getting it."



PHOTO BY • HANNAH CRAIG

THINKING ABOUT THE PRESENT- Jesus Arozamena is walking on the outdoor path. He was thinking about the new virus strain and how he can keep himself safe by taking new precautions.

Although panic is higher than ever, there are also two vaccines recently approved to combat the virus. In general, vaccines help your immune system to create proteins and antibodies that are able to fight diseases. They help build immunity so that you are less likely to get the virus.

According to FDA, "On December 11, 2020, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration issued the first emergency use authorization (EUA) for a vaccine for the prevention of coronavirus disease

2019 (COVID-19) ... The emergency use authorization allows the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine to be distributed in the U.S."

This new vaccine is 94 percent effective in preventing COVID-19, including the new strand. That is 30 percent more effective than the influenza vaccine.

"If you are looking at the science behind it and you are a gated, driven person, the results are there and it's clear that the vaccine is safe and I can tell first hand

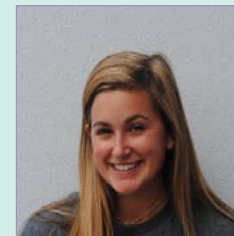
because my dad has gotten both doses and he has not had any big systems or side effects so i think the vaccine is safe," Craig said.

Many have also said they would get the vaccine if they could.

"I would try to build immunity as fast as possible," Taison Rocha, a sophomore, said.

This new strain poses a potential at even higher numbers of cases and infections, making it more important than ever to do the right thing. Everyone needs to do their part to stop the spread of it!

Reese's Roar



Covid vaccine distribution

reeseavery
staff writer

The end of the pandemic could be approaching, but the creation and distribution of the COVID-19 vaccine could be slowing us down.

The vaccine was created in under a year, and will only be effective if enough people are willing to receive it. Some are concerned the vaccine was rushed and is causing them to be hesitant when it comes to taking the vaccine.

However, the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines require getting both shots where as the Johnson and Johnson vaccine, that will soon be approved only requires one shot. But the company is already behind on production.

But on the other hand it's not like any American can go out and get the vaccine, Phase 1 is only allowing people over the age of 75 and medical workers to get the vaccine, and is dependent on the state. The most recent phase is now allowing teachers to get the vaccine as well.

So, although the vaccine is being distributed, it's not being distributed efficiently, and with the phases not very fast either.

One positive is the vaccine is being transported by plane, which I believe is more safe than on the road, where people could have easy access to stealing, or even worse, getting into a crash.

On the other hand, each state is only allowed a certain amount of vaccines per week, this is another way the distribution is slowing the process of the pandemic ending down.

Some side effects to the vaccine include, redness, swelling or pain around injection site, or getting a fever or feeling aching limbs a few days after is also common.


Moving forward, There are rumors that President Joe Biden will make the vaccine mandatory. This is a promising development because it will likely speed up the distribution process. But the inoculation was developed in such little time, it could have long term effects that we have yet to discover.

Overall, it's good that we have the vaccine, but I feel like there should have been more testing before release to the public. As well as it should have been released to everyone not sections of people with many different phases throughout the process. This is going to slow us down in moving forward to normal life again.

Coronavirus vaccine distribution

Hillsborough vaccine guidelines

 **Appointments are mandatory to get the first of two vaccine injections.**


 **Only residents ages 65 and up can get the vaccines.**

 **You must wear a mask to the appointment.**

National vaccine guidelines

 **Recommended for 18 years and up.**

 **Top priority is ages 75 and older.**

 **Another top priority is healthcare workers.**

How to stay safe from COVID-19

 **Wear your mask correctly (over mouth and nose).**

 **Wash hands and put on hand sanitizer.**

 **Monitor your health daily.**



*sources: hillsboroughcounty.org, cdc.gov

infographic designed by: Paulina Giraldo

Payton's Powow



COVID-19 Fatigue

paytonkenny
education editor

Education fatigue is a real struggle faced by students, especially this school year. The COVID-19 pandemic has affected many students, causing some to have to learn at home from a virtual format while others returned to brick and mortar.

Many students are experiencing education fatigue whether they are in person or e-learning. Some Zoom exhaustion symptoms include anxiety in online meetings, irritation and eye strain from constantly looking at a screen, according to psychiatrictimes.com. Numerous students have grown tired of remote learning and wish to switch back to brick and mortar.

Brick-and-mortar students also experience fatigue on a daily basis. Even though they do not stare at a screen all day, they are required to wear masks and social distance. Going to school is completely different from how it has been in years past.

Whether learning from an online platform or in school, some have said school isn't as challenging and the rigor of courses isn't the same. Many teachers give tests and quizzes online through Canvas instead of in class, while some teachers focus more on either e-learners or brick-and-mortar students and some kids don't even log in to their classes online.

Along with adjusting to new ways of learning due to the pandemic, many schools aren't allowed to have the same activities they would have during a normal school year. Homecoming, pep rallies and many sports games have been cancelled to keep students and faculty as safe as possible. Without having these activities, there is nothing to break up the monotony of school and not much to give students something to look forward to.

Many are trying to just get through this year and a lot is getting overlooked. Midterm exams were cancelled causing in-class review weeks and packets to be less important. This gave some students the chance to not pay as much attention in class, since they knew they weren't having an exam that would affect their final grade. Final exams are still undecided as to whether or not we are having them.

Students are tired of this and many are yearning for structure within their classes.

Students struggle in school while faced with COVID-19 quarantine

paytonkenny
education editor

The COVID-19 pandemic has altered everyone's lives, including how people received their education. Students were given the option of either returning back to school brick and mortar or returning through a virtual format via Zoom.

Those that chose brick and mortar were required to wear masks, social distance and take many safety precautions to ensure that both students and faculty were kept safe and healthy. Rules were set in place and specific guidelines were set in stone by the Hillsborough County School District of what to do if an individual in the school contracted COVID-19.

"I think it was a great idea for these rules to be put in place in order to protect students and staff," Aubrey Glover, a sophomore, said.

If a student or faculty member contracts the virus, they are to notify the school immediately to alert them of the new case. After, the school then goes into each class the student or teacher was in to look at seating charts to contact-trace who was near each other.

Everyone near the positive case then gets sent home and is put into a mandatory quarantine for 10 days, not allowed on school campus. The school then goes in and cleans the classroom before allowing others back inside.

Those brick and mortar students that were put into quarantine now



PHOTO BY • BROOKE REIF

HARD WORK Freshman Lauren Erickson works on her language arts work after getting back from quarantine. During her quarantine she couldn't join some of her classes because they weren't hybrid.

are forced to attend their classes from home, through Zoom, while they quarantine. Most teachers have hybrid classes where they have a combination of brick-and-mortar and e-learning students they teach daily. However, not all classrooms work this way.

"I have brick and mortar and not hybrid classes, so when they get quarantined, there isn't a daily link for them to join, however, I did create one for them," Cathy Caples, a physics teacher, said. "I created a Zoom link for them so,

if they choose, they can get online and explain to them the work that they are doing."

This has been a struggle for many students due to their Canvas crashing or the Zoom not working.

"The Zoom calls would lag a lot and I missed some information when the teacher was talking," Serenity Federspiel, a junior, said.

Due to this issue, some students feel behind with their work.

"I just started to get the work when I came back," Lauren Er-

ickson, a freshman, said. "Unfortunately, my Canvas wasn't working and I was unable to log in and join the Zooms so I do feel behind."

Now that teachers have been made more aware of this issue, many are creating continuous Zoom links for their quarantined students.

"If we can advocate more for these students during this particular time for the class to become hybrid for them, I think that will really help," Caples said.

Standardized Testing

Pros

1. Standardized testing is a metric for learning
2. Standardized testing helps pinpoint areas for improvement
3. Standardized tests can help schools evaluate progress
4. Standardized tests offer an objective measurement of education and a good metric to gauge areas for improvement
5. Standardized tests offer meaningful data to help students in marginalized groups

Cons







1. Test scores can impact confidence negatively
2. There's pressure to "teach to the test"
3. Scores don't provide a true picture of a student's ability
4. Standardized tests are unfair metrics for teacher evaluations
5. Standardized tests scores are not predictors of future success

*source: whitbyschool.org

infographic designed by: Payton Kenny

A PEACEFUL

The Process for Impeaching and Removing a President from Office

1.  The president commits an act that appears to be of treason, bribery, high crime, or other serious misdemeanor
2.  A member of the House of Representatives submits an official inquiry of impeachment
3.  A judiciary committee in the House reviews the inquiry to decide whether there's enough evidence to pursue impeachment
4.  Members of the House vote on articles of impeachment. If at least 218 vote in favor, the president is impeached
5.  The House appoints members of the Senate to hold a trial. At least 67 senators must vote in favor of conviction
6.  If a 2/3 vote is reached by the Senate, the president is convicted and removed from office

*source: thevisualcommunicationguy.com

infographic designed by: *Callie Zack*

Capitol Hill riot halts political process, sparks controversy

calliezack
editor-in-chief

A mob of former President Donald Trump's supporters rushed the United States Capitol in an attempt to stop the Electoral College vote count on Jan. 6.

At the time, Congress was meeting in a joint session to verify whether then President-elect Joe Biden would be officially inaugurated on Jan. 20.

On the morning of the Capitol Hill riot, Trump spoke at a "Save America Rally," where he explained to his supporters how he wouldn't accept Biden's win and neither should they.

"We will never give up, we will never concede," Trump said. "You don't concede when there's theft involved."

Trump and his supporters have repeatedly expressed their concerns of voter fraud to the American public. They have made allegations that Pennsylvania reported more votes than voters who cast ballots and that a plethora of fraudulent ballots in Biden's favor were added to the results overnight.

In addition to these claims, Trump has brought up the fact that some courts didn't examine evidence of voter fraud.

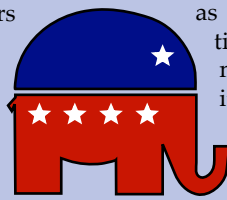
"If you follow what happened, I think that there was enough evidence in at least five states to show that the vote should've been called into question," David Aldred, a history and law teacher, said. "I don't subscribe to the theory that there needed to be widespread fraud for there to be a question."

However, while some have said that voter fraud contributed to Biden's win, others said how Trump has used his position as a bully pulpit to falsely ingrain into the American people's minds that the 2020 election results were illegitimate.

"The idea that the election was fraudulent has been perpetuated even prior to the election," McKenna Padilla, a junior, said.

"When a high powered authoritative figure with a large following encourages the idea of a flawed election, their followers will advocate for them and for change that benefits that leader."

Following the rally, pro-Trump rioters broke into the Capitol, many waving Trump, Gadsden and "Blue Lives Matter" flags while donned in red, white and blue clothing. Throngs of them stole property, paraded through the halls and sat inside of lawmakers' offices, mocking them. In addition to these criminal acts, five people were confirmed dead as a result of this insurrection, which included a member of the U.S. Capitol Police.



This has led many to question why exactly the police weren't more prepared for this riot, when there was sufficient evidence to back up that this invasion would take place, including an official warning from the FBI the day prior.

Political activists have stated online their exasperation over the stark contrast in how Black Lives Matter protests were quickly and violently shut down by law enforcement in the summer, yet the pro-Trump mob was able to rather easily breach the Capitol.

"The mob should've never been able to make it even as remotely close to the Capitol as they did," Padilla said. "We witnessed rioters burst through barricades, pepper-spray Capitol police, smash windows, pound on doors and ransack offices."

Many have condemned Trump, citing how his inflammatory language is what allowed the Capitol Hill riot to take place. They have said that by telling his followers that "if you don't fight like hell you're not going to have a country anymore," he encouraged violence.

However, others said that his speech was misinterpreted and that the former President didn't persuade his supporters to rampage the Capitol.

"If you're asking me personally, I don't think there was a direct incitement," Aldred said. "But unfortunately, it's such a politically charged environment, that people are hearing the things that they want to hear and it's very difficult to report any kind of objective truth."

Some commented that even if Trump didn't directly incite violence, he made a mistake by not urging his followers to go home sooner.

"I feel like he could have done a better job of telling them to go back, instead of after the fact telling them and trying to save face," Alex Sobczak, a senior, said.

On Jan. 13, Trump was impeached for a second time, making him the first President in U.S. history to be impeached more than once. The article used against Trump was "incitement of insurrection."

The resolution states that the president "willfully made statements that encouraged — and foreseeably resulted in — imminent lawless action at the Capitol."

All of the House Democrats voted to impeach him, along with 10 Republicans, which resulted in a vote of 232 to 197.

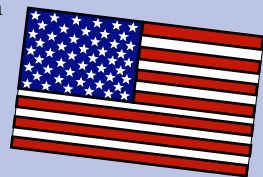
Some said how they agree with the House's decision.

"We need a president who will quell the riots rather than incite them, and we shouldn't have to wait until more acts of domestic terrorism to do so," Padilla said.

However, others stated how this article of impeachment will set the precedent that a President may be impeached to carry out a party's political agenda.

"It's not an impeachable offense," Aldred said. "Impeachment is constitutional and not political, and this is obviously politically motivated."

On Feb. 14, 57 senators voted to convict Trump, which didn't meet the two-thirds threshold, and thus marks the second time Trump was acquitted in an impeachment trial.



A TIMELINE OF: One Term U.S. Presidents

JOHN QUINCY ADAMS
(1825-1829)

BENJAMIN HARRIS
(1889-1893)

JOHN ADAMS
(1797-1801)

MARTIN VAN BUREN
(1837-1841)

WILLIAM

*source: thoughtco.com

TRANSITION?

Democrats secure all 3 branches of government

tarynbartley
associate editor-in-chief

The United States underwent its 46th transfer of power on Wednesday, Jan. 20. Although it is up for debate on whether this was a peaceful transition, like the other 45, it did occur successfully as President Joe Biden has been in office for about a month now.

"I was concerned that there could be a possible attempt to assassinate Biden and Harris," Elise Gonzalez, a music teacher, said.

Gonzalez's concerns were not alone. Many had the same worries in light of the Capitol insurrection on Jan. 6.

The inauguration went on and only a few minutes before noon, Biden was officially sworn in by Chief Justice John Roberts. Biden is the second Catholic president, the only other being John F. Kennedy. The inauguration looked

vastly different this year due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic.

"It was odd seeing it so empty," Paityn Arroyo, a senior, said. "But I was proud that they took precautions in regards to the pandemic."

Tensions have been high in the U.S. ever since the 2016 election and have only been on the rise since the pandemic has begun. The public has perceived the Trump administration as unsupportive toward most minority groups, such as women, people of color and the LGBTQ+ community.

"For me, the highlight of the inauguration was watching Kamala Harris being sworn in," Gonzalez

said. "It was such an emotional moment for me. Honestly, I was holding back tears of joy. So many times throughout my life I have been told, 'no, you can't do that, you are not a boy' or 'that's a man's job.' Now there truly are no limits to young girls' dreams. I've waited so long to see a woman succeed in such a high power position."

Harris was also inaugurated as Vice President, making her the first woman, and the first POC Vice President in the history of the country.

One opinion that seems to remain constant among many is that we as a country will diminish the idolization of our politicians.

"I think that there are many

qualities that could make Biden the right person for the job," Arroyo said. "I hope that America holds him accountable just as we do other politicians and that he holds up to his promises."

In regards to other politics, Jan. 20 was a historic day for another reason. The final three senators were sworn into office, which included Jon Ossoff and Raphael Warnock of Georgia and Alex Padilla of California. This now sets the Senate at 50 Republicans and 50 Democrats, and with the Vice President as a tie-breaking vote, Democrats officially have control of both houses of Congress, as well as the executive branch.

"I think we are moving in the right direction for America, but

if our country remains split and forgets the big picture we will only move backwards," Arroyo said.

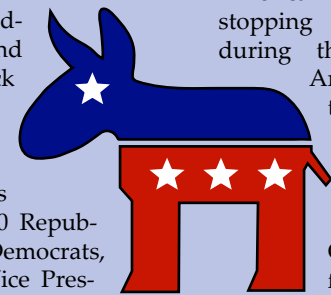
Many fear that Democrats will potentially move too far to the left or do nothing in order to progress the country.

Marking this new chapter of American history was a show stopping oration performed during the inauguration by Amanda Gorman, National Youth Poet Laureate, named "The Hill We Climb."

"And yes we are far from polished," Gorman recited. "Far from pristine. But that doesn't mean we are striving to form a union that is perfect. We are striving to forge a union with purpose, to compose a country committed to all cultures, colors, characters and conditions of man."

"I've waited so long to see a woman succeed in such a high power position"

ELISE GONZALEZ
MUSIC TEACHER



How has the Capitol riot affected our country?

Andrew O'Brien
Science teacher



"I think it shows a model in which tyranny and violence is awarded and almost accepted."

Scott Taylor
Sophomore



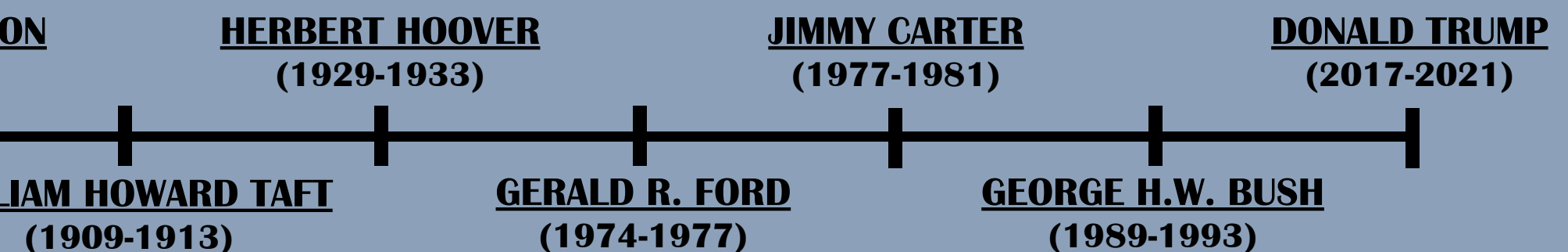
"This shows us who the trashy people are. The people who go above and beyond for no reason."

Isabella Ancheta
Sophomore



"I feel like people are starting to generalize and take away meaning from human rights."

infographic designed by: Izzy Speer



infographic designed by: Callie Zack

HOTSPOT:

Crumbl Cookie opens by Tampa Premium Outlets

fallonlavine
staff writer

Many different businesses are opening up right across from the Tampa Premium Outlets, which has a variety of stores and restaurants to eat, drink, and shop at.

Crumbl Cookies, a growing franchise, was one of those businesses that opened in early November in the Cypress Creek Town Center. The founders' main concept was to build restaurants across the nation where customers could walk in and see employees mix, bake, and prepare fresh cookies in an open kitchen.

According to their website, the franchise was founded in 2017 and then expanded to over 75 locations in 11 states.

"One thing attracted me Cookies was variety of dif-cookies," McKayla Velasquez, a senior, said. "Each one was unique and different than what I've ever seen before. Crumbl Cookies has a fun and outgoing vibe with their unique names for each cookie and the

presentation of their desserts."

The dessert shop has a menu with a wide variety of different flavors that changes every week. Some of these flavors include carrot cake, peanut butter chocolate chip, and lemon poppy seed. The flavors are always changing, however, a few key favorites, such as warm chocolate chip and chilled sugar cookie, are always on the menu.

Not only does Crumbl offer cookies, but they also have a variety of ice cream flavors. Some of these include salted caramel, smores, and Vanilla. Crumbl is known for ensuring that all of its ingredients are carefully chosen so that customers have the highest quality cookies available.

Crumbl has been the new spot for families and friends

to enjoy cookies and ice cream. During the pandemic, the dessert shop has been taking many precautions to ensure that their employees and customers are safe.

"You won't have to wait long for your order, and they make the cookies fresh," Ashlie Delgado, a junior, said. "They'll have your order on a tablet or online, and all the customers and workers are re-



PHOTO BY • FALLON LAVINE

COOKIE TIME- Crumbl Cookie attracts many customers and gets them to try their various types of cookies. The store opened on Nov. 5 in Wesley Chapel and has become the new hotspot for friends to enjoy desserts.

quired to wear their masks."

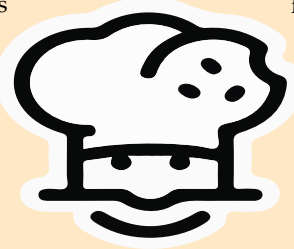
The dessert shop has many easy ways for customers to order cookies which include delivery, curbside and online pickup. Their prices for cookies are available for \$3 a cookie, \$10 for a box of four, and \$25 per dozen.

"When I ordered I was able

to watch them make my order which was cool and was out within minutes," Samantha McCrary, a senior, said. "Every employee wore mask correctly, and socially distanced. On the floor, they also provided stickers that were six feet apart telling everyone where they can stand. Crumbl seemed as

tough they kept up to date with trends since everything seemed aesthetically pleasing."

Crumbl is open from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. Monday through Thursdays and 8 a.m. to 12 a.m. on Fridays and Saturdays. Allowing friends and families to enjoy the variety of flavors of cookies.



Crumbl Cookie



order here

*milk chocolate chip and chilled sugar cookie
other new flavors change every week. (more info on crumbl's website)*

*ice cream flavors:
salted caramel, cookies & cream, s'mores. (more info on crumbl's website)*



hours:

*Monday-Thursday:
8 a.m. - 10 p.m.
Friday-Saturday:
8 a.m. - 12 a.m.
Sunday: closed*

location:

2522 Sierra Center Blvd, Lutz, FL 33559

*source: crumblcookies.com

infographic designed by: Fallon Lavine

Disney+ renews 'The Mandalorian'

lorenafilgueira
entertainment editor

After two successful seasons, Disney+ has renewed their original series "The Mandalorian" for a third. Spoiler alert to those who have not yet watched any part of the Star Wars franchise.

The show takes place after the 1983 film "Return of the Jedi," a time when the old Galactic Empire has fallen and its remnants are still fighting for control of parts of the old regime. These old forces played a huge part of Season 1 and remain a constant threat in Season 2.

"It is hard to guess as to what the remnant of forces of the empire have at their disposal," Braedyn Hodges, a junior, said.

As excitement lingers in the air for Season 3, there are some cliffhangers that should be addressed.

During the last episodes of Season 2, fans saw the character Boba Fett make an appearance. In the last episode, there was an end credit scene leaving many viewers wondering what's next.

"At the end of 'The Mandalorian,' Boba Fett kills a Min-King (Bib Fortuna), leading to Boba Fett taking the throne," Kelvin Ayala-Gonzalez, a junior, said. "This scene indicated there is going to be a new series, but this time it's about Boba Fett, and is titled 'The Story of Boba Fett.' In previous Star Wars movies, Boba Fett was known as a bounty hunter, but now this clip has fans thinking this is probably going to show how Boba Fett came to find

himself in the service of Jabba the Hutt."

With Moff Gideon, the main villain in Season 1, being

captured, the remnants of the empire appear to have been taken under proper control.

However, in previous films, it has been shown that the empire is not one to ever back down from a fight, even after they've seemingly been defeated.

"Well the empire will make a comeback, to get their revenge on the new republic and other alliance forces," Ayala-Gonzalez said.

Considering there are a series of events yet to come in the show,

"I really enjoyed the series, it gives the fans a background of how it was back when the films began..."

KELVIN AYALA GONZALEZ
JUNIOR



PHOTO BY • AUDREY BEST

REQUESTING EMERGENCY LANDING- Fans of the Disney+ original series, "The Mandalorian," can go to Disney's Star Wars World to see replicas of scenes in the show. Watchers continue to anticipate what is to come in Season 3.

and a number of scenes fans have predicted will happen in the upcoming season, considering Grogu, known by many as Baby Yoda, is now in the custody of Luke Skywalker.

"I believe Grogu will get partial Jedi youngling training," Hodges said. "Even though he is 50, he is still a baby in Yoda years. Luke would have to train him according to his body's growth.

Hopefully it is enough for him to survive Kylo Ren's rampage at Luke's Jedi Academy, which at the moment is uncertain."

"The Mandalorian" series has had a great impact on many Star Wars fans by not only giving them a better understanding of what happened between the films "Return of the Jedi" and "The Force Awakens," but by providing them with an extension to

keep enjoying the series.

"I enjoyed the series," Ayala-Gonzalez said. "It gives fans a background of how it was back when the films began and how it started the movie 'Return of the Jedi.' 'The Mandalorian' is a good show to watch if you want to know how the galactic universe was before the fall of the Empire and how it rose up to power again."

Netflix releases new drama series

lorenafilgueira
entertainment editor

Netflix granted their audience with an unexpected present on Christmas day — an Original Series titled "Bridgerton." A fair warning to spoilers for those who have not yet seen the show.

The show takes place during the regency period in London, in the 1800s, and focuses on the Bridgerton family, as well as each member's journey in finding their own place in society.

While only having a total of eight episodes for the first season, each

one takes those watching through a series of plot twists and cliffhangers leaving

its audience wanting more.

"I really liked the show," Alexis Prouty, a junior, said. "In some ways it was a learning experience and in other ways it was different from the 1810s and that time period because of what would now be considered controversial. They modernized it in a way which I didn't mind at all, and I think that needs to be done in more shows that are set in this time period."

Throughout the show there are topics that have been deemed controversial, such as the inclusion of interracial marriages and the gender roles that were pre-

sented which were unconventional to the time period.

In reality, biracial marriages were not accepted and were deemed illegal during the time period the show is set in. These relationships would not become legal until 1976.

"I personally really like the way that they added interracial relationships to the show," Alexis Brewis, a freshman, said. "Despite the fact it was set in the 1800s, I think it made it very enjoyable and I like the fact that they 'shifted history.'"

While taking into consideration that males and females have been

treated differently since the beginning of time, during this time period there were stan-

dards that women were held to, such as finding a husband when they came of age and keeping their opinions to themselves.

However, throughout the whole series, the main character Daphne continuously makes it known to her peers that just because she is a woman does not mean she cannot think nor speak for herself.

"As the show takes place in 1813 there are definitely some societal rules that are a lot stricter specifically for women," Pouty said. "I understand that these were older times and the older way of thinking, but if we are talking about

"...Despite the fact that it was set in the 1800s, I think it made it very enjoyable and I like how they 'shifted history.'"

ALEXIS BREWIS
FRESHMAN



PHOTO BY • LORENA FILGUEIRA

HIGHLIGHT OF THE SEASON- A student watches the new romantic drama series. "Bridgerton" has been a popular show among teenagers this year.

just in general and those societal rules, I personally believe that a lot of these standards were stupid. Eloise Bridgerton, a character in the show, stands at a more feminist point of view by stating she does not want to get married, and I stand by her in the way she thinks."

Despite all of the controversial topics brought up within each episode, the series received a 90 percent on Rotten Tomatoes and 96 percent of Google users liked

this show.

"I think the producers and/or directors could have been a bit more historically accurate," Prouty said. "While they did do a pretty good job of trying to keep a lot of historically accurate, some outfits could have been better and the same with certain events."

Within the short time that the first season has been released, Netflix has renewed "Bridgerton" for a second season.

Watchers are expecting a new

whirlwind of emotions to happen, with plot holes to be filled, new stories to be unraveled and more characters to be developed.

"In Season 2, I think the next social season will begin and it will be more aimed toward the younger siblings and women who did not marry this season," Brewis said. "Another story line that might continue is the search for who Lady Whistledown is, along with trying to find out who killed Mr. Featherington."

New safer way to watch movies; rent theaters

izzyspeer
staff writer

Before COVID-19 struck, movie theaters were all the rage. As a popular spot for date nights, high school hangouts and family gatherings, they were always overcrowded and full of life.

Yet after being forced to shut down, one would expect tumbleweeds to blow across the theater parking lots.

Once the movies reopened, many people avoided going to public screenings because it was seen as a high-risk zone.

"It's hard to go to the movie theaters", Allyson Phelps, a sophomore said. "Everyone is scared of getting sick due to COVID."

With this nearly causing them to have to close their doors once again, movie theater owners came up with an innovative and sanitary way of keeping business alive.

Customers now have the option to rent a whole auditorium to themselves. They can bring a group of friends and family and have their own private screening experience, where one won't have to worry about saving seats or noisy talkers. Best of all, they won't be in dangerous proximity to others.

"I think it's a really cool concept," Rose Bayatmakou, a sophomore, said. "It's really safe for COVID reasons and it's really fun to go with your friends."

Nearby theaters such as AMC have begun to offer this service.



PHOTO BY • FALLON LAVINE

POPCORN TIME AMC theaters allow customers to rent their own room. This has created an ever-flowing source of income and brought business back to the struggling industry.

Prices will vary depending on movie type and theater location.

According to the AMC website, theater rentals for "fan fave films (cost) \$99 plus tax or new releases starting at \$149 plus tax."

AMC theaters allow a private party of up to 20 people which, when averaged out, equals about \$5 per person.

Some have mixed opinions on whether these are fair prices for

the services they receive.

"They could bring the price down because we still have to pay for snacks," Michael Martin, a sophomore, said. "They should bring the price of the new movies down."

However, not all students are against the theater's up-charge, given the circumstances.

"If you're holding a big party it's reasonable," Tyler Harris, a

senior, said. "I understand that there's probably going to be an up-charge because the movie theaters aren't really generating any revenue anymore."

Renting a movie theater is typically used for special events such as birthday parties. Many individuals see it as a one-time experience, not just something they would randomly splurge on in everyday life.

"It would be worth it for a birthday party or an event," Matthias Garcia, a senior, said. "Without a purpose for it there's no point."

This could pose as an issue to profit margins if theaters are only being filled on certain occasions. But people's craving to get out again will drive them back to the theaters.

"I just want to go back to the movies," Martin said.

Popular streaming service, Netflix, erases many loved shows, movies during final months of 2020

saratalbot
staff writer

Netflix is a popular streaming service that provides a wide variety of shows and movies. However, many people are becoming increasingly disappointed in this mainstream app.

After months of talk about different shows potentially being deleted, it finally happened and a people were very shocked and upset about the occurrence.

"'Malcolm in The Middle' was a good show and they deleted it for no reason," Tyler Forman, a senior, said.

Many shows were removed from Netflix, which caused anguish for some people that use the app on a regular basis. They are missing a numerous amount of their favorites that they used to watch all of the time.

Some popular Netflix shows that have been taken off are the hit Netflix show, 'The Office', the classic movie 'Back to the Future', and another popular show 'Pride and Prejudice'.

"It sucks," Sophia Thomasson, a sophomore, said. "Netflix is a lot more boring now because there aren't as many interesting shows to watch."

Over the many years that Netflix has been running, a lot of shows have come and gone throughout that amount of time. People enjoy Netflix due to its easy accessibility and functionality.



*source: www.pcmag.com

infographic designed by: Sara Talbot

With the deletion of some of the favorite shows of the users of Netflix, they now have to look for other ways to stream them.

"Now I really don't want to use my other streaming services because Netflix is so much easier," Conner Leech, a freshman, said.

The changes to Netflix's array of show and movie options have been affecting viewers in a plethora of ways; they are experiencing

different emotions and have to go to other streaming services to be able to watch their favorite shows.

"I can't watch my favorite shows," Mackenzie Hoffman, a sophomore, said. "Now I'll have to watch Hulu, which has so many ads and is very inconvenient for me."

Many find it as a hassle to go to other apps and create new subscriptions in order to be able to

enjoy the shows that they would watch regularly in their daily routines.

People are getting upset over the decline in their favorite picks on the popular streaming app.

"It made me so angry because I love those shows and they were just gone after a day," Janiya Lamar, a sophomore, said.

Since Netflix is removing so many movies and shows, they try

to add more of their own productions to fill up the feed. They have started to add original shows, which people seem to think do not always hit the mark.

Some movies that Netflix has removed are Walt Disney's 'Ralph Breaks the Internet: Wreck it Ralph 2', Sony Pictures Animation's 'Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse', and Warner Bros. Picture's 'Superman Returns'.

2020-21 BLUE & WHITE

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Pandemic axes needed standardized tests

bellarittle
staff writer

Our entire lives, standardized testing has trained us to do better on future tests. Within the past few months, Hillsborough County has canceled semester tests not once, but twice.

These tests do a great job helping students prepare for similar assessments like AP exams and End of Course Assessments (EOCs). These tests are important to pass because they give college credit or are needed in order to graduate.

Standardized testing relieves some stress put on students by giving us an idea of how the next couple of exams will be like. When the county removed semester testing, it caused our other exams like yearly AP exams to sneak up on us.

Not having tests to help prepare can be hard to handle as a student trying to pass their most important exams.

Completing daily assignments and huge review packets is stressful enough. Taking away one way of preparation does not make it any better on students.

Not only does standardized testing prepare students for future tests, but it can also help later when going to college. They can show growth and what is needed to work on prior to going to college.



PHOTO BY • BROOKE REIF

TEST TIME Junior Meagan Hale works on an assignment in class. Teachers have had to try to alternative ways to test their students due to the lack of standardized testing.

If test results show that a kid is weak in a certain subject, it can encourage you to step away from it while thinking of a major.

The testing also gives an opportunity for students to compare themselves to others and set a goal to where someone wants to get to.

Some may have the view that standardized tests are unnecessary and wanted to remove them. They believed it was possible to

find another way of testing students' academic abilities.

However, after decades of standardized testing, a more efficient way to go about this has still not been produced.

Standardized testing has helped many students improve academically. While learning in a class, kids believe they are learning for a purpose, to be tested on what they know so they are prepared.

If taken away, some of the stu-

dents may feel that if they do not want pursue this subject to college, there is no point in paying attention and putting in the effort.

The lack of desire to learn will soon cause the students to slip. This can even include not wanting to be involved in other extracurricular activities like sports.

Removing tests would cause a setback in education. Students rely on assessments to set a basis for future grades.

COVID-19: Senior Vlada Pitner's personal experience through coronavirus infection

vladapitner
news editor

The coronavirus has consumed the lives of us all worldwide, and I fell victim to this virus in early October.

While I've had my fair share of common illnesses, COVID-19 made me the most sick I had ever been.

I have always considered myself to be fairly healthy. I took care of myself, I always ate balanced meals and I always stayed fairly physically fit. I was not considered to be immunocompromised, but I still made sure to follow the precautions necessary, especially out in public.

I washed my hands often, wore my mask and avoided crowds. However, I was blissfully ignorant and believed that because I was healthy and only went out to go to school and the gym, that I was invincible to this virus.

I took my health for granted, and woke up one temperate day in October to a horrible dry cough. That was my only symptom and I was fully functioning.

I thought nothing of it and it didn't raise a concern to my mom who has always been a very health-conscious person. Later in the day, I noticeably grew weaker. I just wanted to lay down and started to feel slightly congested. I am prone to getting sick from stress, so I thought my body was just telling me to rest and take a break.

The thought that I would have the virus never crossed my mind.

I thought I didn't have to worry about getting sick with it, I didn't think it could happen to me.

The next day, I was beyond miserable. My body was aching and I was running a fever of 102 degrees.

Chills are normal when running a fever, it's your body trying to fight it off. I was shivering so much, and no amount of blankets could keep me still.

I immediately went to get tested at a drive-through pharmacy at which I would have to do the test myself. It wasn't as bad as the media has made it out to seem. I had to stick a long q-tip up both of my nostrils and twirl it around each side for about 30 seconds. I would be getting my results two days later.

The days leading up, I was confident I just had the flu. However on my third day, I completely lost my sense of smell.

This was the most bizarre symptom as an entire sense was gone, I found it difficult to connect with the world. I tried to rationalize and tell myself that it was just the congestion, but when I got my test results back and looked at the bright red letters that said "positive," I felt instant shock.

My way of coping has always been through laughter and humor and for some reason when I found out I was COVID-19 positive, all I could do was laugh because it was unbelievable to me. My laughter was then cut short as



ILLUSTRATION BY • TAYLOR KALISZEWSKI

it was too hard to breathe.

It felt as if my symptoms worsened every day for the following two weeks. I went to my doctor several times and was prescribed an inhaler. Anytime I got up to use the restroom, I got an instant head rush and would become out of breath when walking.

For the first week and a half, I lost my appetite, and as a result, lost a lot of weight. I felt so brittle and useless. It was painful even trying to go to sleep. I would try to attend my Zooms to keep track of school but even opening my laptop took all my energy away from me.

Needless to say, it was a horrible experience, but luckily I got better

and after a long two-week battle, my symptoms eventually stopped escalating.

Several months passed and here I am, back to normal on the surface, yet still facing lasting effects. I still face slight struggles with my breathing and even though I got my sense of smell back after two months, it's not as strong as it was before.

Coronavirus is real and can creep up on anyone even when they think they are safe. It's necessary to take precautions to protect yourself and others.

Symptomatic or asymptomatic, coronavirus affects us all and it is critical to help do our parts to one day end this pandemic.

COVID-19 fatigue increases among all age groups as pandemic reaches 1-year mark

luluarteaga
staff writer

As the Covid-19 pandemic is nearing its one year anniversary, fatigue rises, affecting all age groups.

March 13, 2020, the date last school year went online, and every day after that has been surrounded by non-stop talk of lockdowns, masks, CDC requirements, death ... the list goes on.

While the prominent issue of the Covid-19 virus itself has first handedly brought a massive amount of unfortunate death and sickness, it has slowly but surely brought an immense amount of fatigue regarding the subject and situation.

News networks of all sorts have spent the past year reporting cases day and night, and the fatigue regarding constant talk of Covid-19 has brought has gone unnoticed. Although the pandemic is very much an ongoing issue, many people around the world have taken steps to move towards the "new normal."

With restaurants, amusement

parks, theatres and many businesses opening back up, social gatherings to an extent have significantly helped cure this fatigue. Many people have also found comfort in being able to enjoy live sports once again.

As the CDC approves vaccinations worldwide, more hope is seen regarding nearing the end of the tunnel once and for all.

Although many people have been able to overcome the fatigue that Covid-19 has brought along, many others have unfortunately not been able to. This has led to increased mental health issues among many.

Even though there's a vast majority of individuals who have found ways to safely and comfortably adapt to today's new norms, many are still strictly quarantining for endless reasons. For these individuals, overcoming Covid-19 fatigue may seem like an impossible task regardless of what is going on outside. However, there are ways to overcome said fatigue, whether it be watching the news less, reading self-growth books, or taking on a new hobby, fatigue can be overcome in both situations.

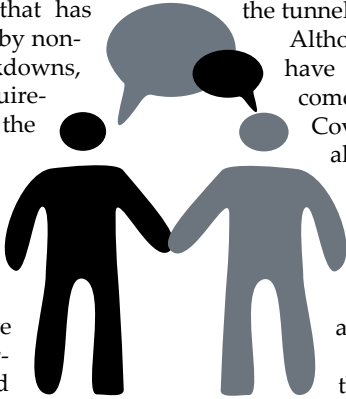


PHOTO BY • LULU ARTEAGA

FATIGUE LEVELS- All age groups are experiencing Covid-19 fatigue as it nears its one year anniversary. Hope is accomplished with the news of the vaccine.

Highschooler's, especially seniors may be having an extra hard time dealing with the reality of Covid-19. Many seniors are having to miss out on pep rallies, homecoming, prom, and possibly graduation ceremonies.

Times like these are when all age groups should come together,

radiate positivity, and push through with what is left of our Covid-19 battle.

With time, normalcy will become a reality once again. For now however, it's important to follow the safety measures advised by the CDC.

Although the past few months

have been rough, the vaccine has brought a new sign of hope to many. Not only does it eliminate the worry of the spread of Covid-19, but it signifies a step toward normalcy once again; a world in which the pandemic is not the first thought in people's heads.

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GAME DAY:



Senior Frank Micallef commits to play baseball at University of South Florida

alliemassey

associate editor-in-chief

Frank Micallef, a senior baseball player, has decided to take his athletic career to the next level.

On Jan. 6, Micallef committed to play as a catcher at the University of South Florida (USF).

"I think it's absolutely great," Victor Hoffman, Micallef's high school baseball coach, said. "Anytime a guy can go to a local school and we can continue to watch him and see him

grow as a player is great." Micallef plays for both the school and Florida

Travel Ball, which is a travel team based out of Kissimmee where he's played since eighth grade. He credits his love for the game as the driving force behind his baseball career thus far.

"I can honestly say I have never been bored of baseball," Micallef said. "My passion for it just continues to grow. I know a lot of my friends who stopped playing baseball and didn't want to play in college because they just

didn't have that desire, but I'm always wanting to get better, so I want to do this for as long as possible."

The catcher has been playing the game nearly all his life, with his father being his first coach.

Micallef played a few other sports along the way such as cross country and flag football, yet he has always kept his focus on baseball.

"I started playing T-ball when I was four," Micallef said. "I don't know how I started, but I just know that I never stopped. When you're younger, you try everything in baseball, so I always did everything growing up, but around middle school is when I started

seriously catching. By the time my sophomore year came, I was just a catcher. I've put a lot of time and effort into that and now I've committed."

Over the years, Micallef has grown as a player, which has impacted him both on and off the field.

"Obviously I've gotten bigger, stronger and faster," Micallef said. "But mentally, I've figured out how to compose myself. My freshman year I could barely



PHOTO COURTESY OF • FRANK MICALLEF

TAKING THE NEXT STEP- Senior baseball player Frank Micallef poses at school for his signing event. Micallef has signed and committed to play as a catcher at the University of South Florida.

catch the ball because I was so nervous, but now I'm comfortable and can take whatever situation I need to."

Both Micallef and his teammates can agree that baseball has allowed him to connect with his team and make some of his best friends. "Frank is all you can ask for as

a teammate," Jackson Perkins, a senior baseball player, said.

"He's always picking you up on the field. You can tell he wants the whole team to do well, not just himself. I think he'll do a great job playing at USF because he's really fit for college baseball. He has a natural ability to go out and make friends and he's just a personable guy whose

hard work is going to take him a long way."

Micallef plans to study finance or business at USF, while he actively continues to grow and pursue a career in baseball professionally. Micallef has said how excited he is to go off to college and pursue his life-long dreams.

"He'll do whatever he has to do to play," Hoffman said. "He's doing a great job; we're proud of him."



PHOTO COURTESY OF • FRANK MICALLEF

SIGN ME UP- Micallef celebrates his commitment with an at-home signing. He had two signing events to share the moment with family and friends.

Micallef's Athletic Career

- Plays with Florida Travel Ball Tucci 2021 alongside the school
- Perfect Game grade of 8.5
*perfectgame.org
- Denotes him as potential draft pick and high level college prospect
- Began playing baseball at 4 years old
- His dad was his first coach
- Has focused on being a catcher since middle school

*source: Frank Micallef

infographic designed by: Allie Massey

**Audrey's
Answers**



Tampa Bowl

audreybest
sports editor

Super Bowl 55 will be taking place this year in Tampa, the home of the Tampa Bay Buccaneers. This year will not only be a long-awaited superbowl game for the Buccaneers but also a home event.

A team has never, in football history, played at its home stadium during the Super Bowl, but that changes this year. There will also be implications from the COVID-19 pandemic during this year's game, in order to keep everyone safe at all costs.

There are still many unknowns about what the capacity will be like for the game, as well as which events may or may not be able to happen during Super Bowl week, such as a pregame tailgate, NFL player autograph session and live pregame show.

The league and health officials remain in discussion over how to handle the Super Bowl week festivities, which are all expected to take place on a 2-3 mile stretch along the Tampa Riverwalk and will be including music, food and other entertainment. Some elements could end up being scaled down, but no decisions have been made.

Normally around this time in years past, everything, including hotels, would be sold out in Tampa and in surrounding areas for this event. However, due to the coronavirus, bookings and reservations for next February do not reflect its usual and expected traditions.

COVID-19 has impacted several plans, including sponsoring and pre-Super Bowl activities.

NFL officials have yet to say who will entertain during the halftime performance and who will sing the national anthem, and if it will be performed at the stadium or through video.

While unfortunately the festivities will not be the same as past years, the NFL will have a COVID-19 plan put into place to ensure safety for all members of the event.

Participants will be required to sign a health promise, wear masks and follow all social distancing guidelines. Guests will also need to sign up for different time slots for events.

The NFL aims to honor health care workers at the Super Bowl as a thank-you for their efforts to keep everyone safe and healthy during the pandemic.

This year, who will be able to play is just one of the questions surrounding the Super Bowl in Tampa.

Senior sprinter runs through the finish line after recovery

brookereif
staff writer

A pounding heartbeat is to be expected when stress levels are high on the line before racing.

Though nerves are normal before running in a track meet, Tavis Wilson, a senior sprinter, knew his pounding heartbeat wasn't as normal as he thought when he wasn't able to obtain his normal heart rate, even after he finished running.

"It started my sophomore year," Wilson said. "Everyone gets nervous for track meets right, but my heart was beating super fast and it was hard for me to breathe."

Following this experience, he suspected whatever was going on was more serious than just nerves. After a visit with the doctor, he found out he had a heart condition that required surgery and an extensive recovery.

"The recovery was hard," Wilson said, "It's my sport and I wanted to get back into it but I was told to stop working out and all physical activity."

To be so eager to get back to such a difficult sport shows what a hard-working athlete Wilson

is. To go through a recovery lasting his junior year and return for practice, just as excited, as if he never missed a day is evidence of Wilson's resilience.

His hard work and determination has paid off and reflected not only in his fast times but his coach's recognition as well.

"Better than his times, his personality, his work ethic, all those things he makes the whole group better," Kyle LoJacono, Boys track coach and newspaper advisor, said.

Many of his coaches and teammates agree, his positive mentality helps everyone around him.

After an intense injury and recovery Wilson trained harder than ever to regain his physical ability and now he's continuing to improve even more.

"I was gonna go crazy; I'm ready and it's my time to shine now," Wilson said.

Tavis starts his senior track season on Feb.12 at home, also being senior night, against Wiregrass Ranch and Cambridge Christian. He's expected to compete in the 100 meters, along with the 200 meters, 4x100-meter relay and long jump events this season, according to LoJacono.



PHOTO BY • BROOKE REIF

LOVING THE SPRINT- Tavis Wilson practices for future track meets. Wilson recovered from an intense injury to get right back to running at his best.

Road back home; Buccaneers battle through playoffs for home Super Bowl championship

williamhine
staff writer

After a 13-year playoff drought, the Tampa Bay Buccaneers became the first team to play the Super Bowl at home.

The last time the Bucs made the playoffs was in 2007, where they were defeated by the New York Giants in the first round. This year, however, was different.

"I'm proud of how the offense performed against Washington," Ethan Stinnett, a sophomore, said.

The Buccaneers defeated the Washington Football Team 31-23 in the first round of the playoffs. In this matchup, The Bucs threw for 365 yards, rushed for 142 yards, and scored four touchdowns.

"Tom Brady has been the Quarterback we needed," Stinnett said, "he makes the simple plays."

Tom Brady replaced ex-Buccaneers Quarterback, Jameis Winston. Brady had a clean game, throwing 22 for 40, 381 yards, two touchdowns, and no interceptions. He finished the game with a 104.3 rating while averaging 9.5 yards a play.

"I liked Winston, but Brady brings experience onto the field," Jaret Colmen, a junior, said.

The Bucs had their first winning season in nine years, with much credit going to their offseason additions. The Bucs signed the 21-year-veteran Brady and 10-year veteran Rob Gronkowski, giving them a new look at Quarterback and a new weapon for their offense.

Although the offense has been a big part of their success, their

defense has stepped up this year.

In 2018, The Buccaneers defense ranked 27th in total defense. In 2019, they hired Todd Bowles, who has turned their defense from the 27th ranked to the sixth-ranked defense in 2020.

"The defense really helps our offense maintain the game," Coleman said.

Their defense is ranked top 10 in points allowed and sixth in turnover margin with plus eight.

"The team is starting to form," Crum said, "they have a great balance of offense and defense."

The Buccaneers then had to travel to New Orleans to play in their first divisional game since 2003, where they went on to later win the Super Bowl.

Tampa Bay beat the Saints in a 30-20 victory to advance to the NFC championship. A key player in this game was Bucs running back Leonard Fournette. Fournette finished with 107 total yards, 63 rushings, and 44 receiving.

"He really opens up the passing game with his ability to shoot through gaps," Anthony Arroyo, a freshman, said.

The defense showed their dominance by causing 4 turnovers against the saints, three interceptions, and one fumble recovery. Buccaneers linebacker, Devin White, was the top defensive player in this game, with 11 tackles and an interception that set up the Bucs to score.

On Jan. 24, the buccaneers launched their way to the Super Bowl with a 31-26 victory against the Green Bay Packers.

"In the first half our defense was on point and we were dominating," Arroyo said.



PHOTO BY • WILLIAM HINELINE

GOING HOME- Ryan Godbold and his dad watch the Super Bowl live from the stadium. Bucs fans got to enjoy the Super Bowl from Raymond James.

In the first half, the Bucs were up 21-10, with a buzzer-beater 39-yard touchdown. Tom Brady went 13 for 22, with 197 yards, two touchdowns, and zero interceptions. Their defense had one interception to set up the last touchdown of the half.

"We started to play sloppy and we got too calm," Arroyo said.

In the second half, the Bucs offense slowed down, throwing three interceptions and scoring only 10 points. Their defense however was still dominant causing

two more interceptions and keeping the packers to only 6 points off 3 turnovers. With 2:37 seconds left in the fourth, the bucs defense was able to hold the Packers to a field goal, keeping the Bucs in the lead.

The Buccaneers ended their journey beating the chiefs in Super Bowl 55 in Tampa, Florida.

"I finally get to watch us play for it all," Coleman said.

The Bucs beat the Chiefs 31-9, with Tom Brady winning Super Bowl MVP.