



PHOTO BY JULIA HICKSON

Students in AP Drawing working on Sustained Investigation piece #1.

## Fun or future: AP Art's role in schools

By JULIA HICKSON

To many the idea of taking an AP class with no required exam at the end to get your score sounds too good to be true, but to some, this is the reality.

AP Drawing and AP 2D Art and Design (AP2D) are unlike any other AP classes offered at Lane Tech as there is no final exam. Students work the entire school year to create a portfolio of artworks that they submit to College Board and in turn get back their AP score.

Although these classes are currently single periods, they were once double. This switch to shorter periods has proved to be difficult for teachers with the strict curriculums that they are meant to follow to reach the AP deadlines. "My only wish is that AP2D was still a double period course,"

said AP2D teacher Kelly Novak. "The additional time allowed students more one-on-one feedback, revision time, and in class exploration." This sentiment seems to be commonly shared among the two AP Art teachers. "I really wish we had more time," said AP Drawing teacher Liz Chisholm. "I feel like it made a huge difference to be able to just grind in and work on the work."

Despite the shortened class period, senior Frederick Dino still created a portfolio that allowed him to get a 5 for his AP score. His portfolio focused on "Illumination at Night" which, Dino said, "really focused on different light sources at night and the movement and vibrance of the city."

*Continued on Page 2*

## How district wide cuts affect Lane

By JONAS GRAY

The CPS district has been in a major budget deficit since the pandemic and it has only gotten worse in recent years as we are seeing the effects of it in Lane.

A budget deficit is when a government or organization's spending exceeds their funding, essentially putting them into a debt. This leaves said government or organization to need to find ways to close the deficit or risk borrowing money and ending up deeper in debt in the long run.

This year, CPS managed to close a \$734 million deficit. The major way that CPS is able to close that shortfall is by cutting spending in various areas as trying to raise money or revenue is too unreliable. This leaves schools with the budgets for things deemed non-essential cut. "We've seen in the last year, a cut affecting DL [Diverse Learners] staff, janitorial staff, maintenance staff, I mean, even material stuff, like the paper towel shortage, is sort of well known," said social sciences teacher Timothy Hopps. These cuts target many resources available to schools and can mean less services for students.

"We used to get a lot of federal funding around what they call 'out of school time' money, OST," said Assistant Principal Dr. Sarah Hanly. "And for the last several years, we've received, I don't

know, upwards, I'll say \$200K plus for out of school time money. And we use that money to pay for club sponsors, to pay for ACT prep, just lots of things where we can kind of provide outside of school time programming for students.

And this year, they cut that down dramatically to about a quarter of what we got."

One major reason for this was the pandemic, which put a strain on all services, but schools were given some money as they came out of the pandemic to help with the transition.

*Continued on Page 2*



PHOTO BY JONAS GRAY

**An out of order hand dryer on a second floor boys' bathroom. Without it there is now only one weak hand dryer in the bathroom.**



PHOTO COURTESY OF RONAN OWENS

Ronan Owens official commitment photo.

## Superscoring sport stress

By VALENTINA VIANNA

In the 30 athletic teams at Lane, filled with promising student athletes, several go on to continue with their sport during college.

It goes without saying that getting recruited to play a sport is immensely difficult. However, when the process is combined with the intense stress of studying, maintaining grades, ACT, and SAT testing, the additional concern for recruitment has a polarizing effect on whether athletes experience more or less stress.

When detailing why some student athletes with definite potential don't go on to swim in college,

Matthew O'Hagan, Lane Tech Boys Swim Team Coach, said "I think part of that is contributed to the fact that Lane is so rigorous academically, and then athletically, as well, that a lot of them just felt like they had done everything they needed to do."

Senior Ronan Owens, a D1 Baseball recruit for UMass, noted he felt more tired after school due to practices: "But I just focused on developing and I think that helped me not to stress too much on the SAT and I knew I didn't have to get as good of a score."

*Continued on Page 3*

## The Loop Puncher: attacks raise safety concerns in Chicago

By NIANI DARDEN

A man referred to as the "Loop Puncher" has been attacking pedestrians across Chicago over the past few months. A handful of unprovoked assaults have sparked debate over Chicago's bail conditions and overall safety.

While some of these instances have occurred in highly populated neighborhoods, such as Lincoln Park, River North, and the Loop, a handful have occurred on or in the vicinity of CTA stations and trains.

"I just get a bit more nervous and a bit more aware of my surroundings when I'm on CTA," said Addy Biggs, a senior at Lane Tech who has frequently taken public transportation.

In a viral video posted by Yara Afaneh on Tiktok, currently standing with 1.4 million views, Afaneh records the alleged Loop Puncher being arrested on Sept. 30 at the Loyola Red Line Station in Rogers Park. According to CBS news, the assailant's name is Derek Rucker, a 37-year-old man with an arrest record of at least 39 times dating back to 2012— all for assault and battery crimes.

*Continued on Page 2*



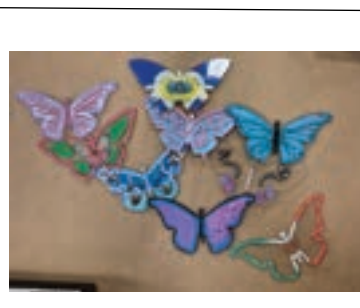
Fall Watchlist  
Page 5



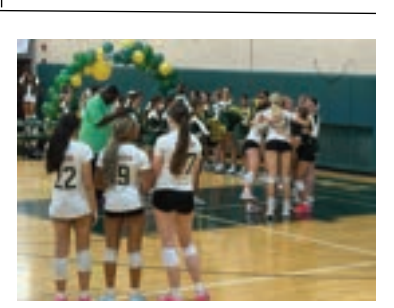
Standardized Testing  
Page 8



Sports Technology  
Page 12



La Pared de Esperanza  
Page 4



Girls Volleyball  
Page 12

# Fun or future: AP Art's role in schools

*Continued from Page 1*

Dino, who took AP2D last year, said that if there was still a double period for this class "I probably wouldn't have taken it."

This lack of a double period wasn't a hindrance to senior Kaline Adams who also scored a 5 with her portfolio when taking AP Drawing her junior year. Adams's inquiry question investigated the different ways of portraying her identity through self-portraiture.

"[The portfolio] was a little bit of abstract, a little bit of different aspects of personality and how different people could view me," Adams said.

Adams, who is an early admit to Illinois State University, shared her gratitude for the fact that she took AP Drawing her junior year.

"I think if you're planning on doing something art related in college, it's better to take it your junior year because seniors will scramble to get their portfolio done if they're using AP art as a means to create their portfolio," Adams said.

Annie Garcia is currently enrolled in AP Drawing in her junior year; however, she doesn't intend to pursue art in college.

"I took AP drawing just so I could showcase my artwork better and go up to my full potential, like show my full potential in drawing and be able to share what I wanted to share in my artwork," Garcia said.

This appears to be a commonly shared testament on the other side of the spectrum for students who don't intend to continue pursuing art in college.

"[The] score is whatever, [I'm] just taking it to have

a good time," said senior Alex Smith, who is currently in AP2D. Both Smith and Garcia said that they did not care what score they got this year in their AP Art classes.

"I honestly don't care about my AP score that much because I'm just making what I want to make," Garcia said. "So, if I get a bad score, I'm gonna be disappointed, but I'm not gonna freak out about it."

Smith also discussed a shared difficulty among all the students currently in AP2D.

"The original teacher who was supposed to be there wasn't there so we had some subs," Smith said. Despite this, he said the class has been a "good experience." The original teacher for this class, Kelly Novak, was in a motorbike accident while completing a Fund For Teachers fel-



PHOTO BY JULIA HICKSON

**Senior students: Maryn Kenny, Donovan Yoest, and Sydney Hoffman working on art pieces in AP Drawing.**

lowship in Vietnam, which has been a difficult time for her.

Despite these setbacks, Novak put a positive spin on the situation as she received much help from her peers. "One of the unexpected outcomes of the accident is realizing the depth of kindness strangers and loved ones can offer," No-

vak said.

Overall, students take AP art classes for a variety of reasons, and whether they intend to pursue art for their future endeavors or they took the class for fun, the teachers are eager for students to embark on their creative journeys in AP Drawing and AP 2D Art and Design.



PHOTO BY NIANI DARDEN

**Blue Line CTA train moving downtown.**

## The Loop Puncher: attacks raise safety concerns in Chicago

*Continued from Page 1*

Afaneh, a victim of Rucker, said, "He hit me on the back of my head with his fist" and "He's grabbed people sexually as well, not just punched them." Not more than 5 hours after being sent to county jail, Rucker's misdemeanor charges were approved, incarcerating him briefly but

shortly being released after establishing his court date - leaving him free until his court date on Oct. 30.

However, Rucker isn't the only face behind the Loop Puncher. A copycat attacker has begun to catch the attention of TikTok users, as his face has been circling around the app after being spotted pacing train

platforms.

Two years after Rucker's incidents in 2012, another man named William Livingston began similar assaults on Chicago citizens, racking up 17 arrests as of Oct. and becoming the new face of the "Loop Puncher" as of recent.

Both of the attackers have been let go under the SAFE-T Act (Safety, Accountability, Fairness, and Equity-Today Act). The law was issued in 2021, ending cash bail statewide as a way to promote fairness of income and race.

Illinois judges are now legally required to look into whether or not the charge of an offender meets the definition of a simple battery to determine if they are a public safety threat. Under state law, a simple battery refers to physical contact that causes no serious injuries.

Since these attacks are classified as simple batteries, these men are often incarcerated only briefly. And as these men continue to walk the streets of Chicago, many students at Lane Tech have expressed discomfort on the matter.

"I take the bus and I also take the train pretty frequently, as well," said Lane Tech senior Maeve Krikorian. "I feel like if people are getting inspired to punch other people on the train, then I don't see why they wouldn't branch out to other forms of transportation."

The problem lies here: the same laws that allow these men to be released, can also protect underprivileged individuals. In other states, legislatures have worked to separate different types of simple battery attacks.

Advocates for the separation hold concern for the victims, believing that without clarification the severity of the action will go unnoticed. According to Florida Politics, in Florida, lawmakers have argued separating "unwanted sexual touch" from simple battery, arguing that sexual assault must be met with harsher penalties. "If it's unwanted sexual touching, that's very different than simple battery, where somebody, for instance, may throw a glass of water in your face," said the Republican Rep.

Linda Chaney, member of Florida House of Representatives.

Some students believe the judicial system is failing to target larger issues.

"I think they're focused on the wrong crime," said Addy Biggs.

Other students, when coming across the Loop Puncher on social media, weren't surprised by the lack of efficiency of the judicial system or the actions of the attackers.

"I feel like there's always been crazy people attacking people on the Loop," said Aylish Irizarry.

As the CPD continues to ask citizens for help to report similar occurrences, residents are still left with concerns as attacks continue.

"I would tell them to have more police vigilance in high danger zones," Irizarry said.

Even as calls for stricter enforcement have grown, Chicagoans remain uneasy.

## How district wide cuts affect Lane

*Continued from Page 1*

"Well, I think the federal funding that was sent a long time ago was really to deal with like getting students reengaged, right?" Hanly said. "You guys have been so isolated, and so they were really trying to come up with programs to get you all back into buildings, back into extracurricular activities and whatnot, and wanted to make sure that the schools were funded for that."

Now, a lot of that extra funding has been drying up, along with national and state decisions about funding allocations that are bringing less and less money to CPS.

Hanly explained that this means that they cannot pay club sponsors for their time, and programs like ACT prep classes are likely possible, but they cannot do everything.

With all of these cuts and impacts, there is much anxiety around the future

among staff and students.

Vannessa Donnelly, a senior, spoke about these fears. "Especially my friends that are, like, really interested in art because, some programs that are the first to go on budget cuts are the art programs because they're seen as less important than like science programs or math programs," Donnelly said. "So definitely my friends that are really into art and theater. They're scared that their programs are going to

be cut."

According to WTTW, the Chicago Board of Education said they are prioritizing keeping cuts "out of the classroom" as much as they can.

"One [anxiety] is, like, people's jobs, you don't know what's happening especially around the end of the year, last year, and then over the summer, as people try to navigate like their jobs," Hopps said. "But I think in addition to that, from a student's per-

spective, especially among our DL students, knowing whether or not those services are going to be available or if they're going to have access to the staff and resources that they need."

According to WBEZ, earlier this year CPS cut 500 custodian jobs and cut about 250 special education teachers and 673 aides last spring.

It is still uncertain if more cuts are coming and how they will affect Lane in the coming years.

The Champion  
2025-26

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The Champion is a student produced newspaper published by the Journalism students at Lane Tech College Prep High School. The opinions expressed are not necessarily those shared by the staff, editors, faculty or administration.

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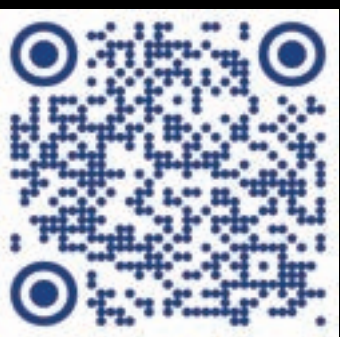
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# Superscoring sport stress

Continued from Page 1

Owens said he felt less pressure and a decrease in his stress level during the recruitment process.

"Yeah, definitely. I mean, I got a 1260, which definitely isn't the highest score, but I think that that did it," Owens said. "And I got into Georgetown with that. And I knew I wasn't going to have to stress too much about it."

Eleni Murray, a junior on the water polo team, said she felt as if there was both a relief and an addition of stress: "[Water polo] definitely does [relieve stress], but sometimes it creates more stress since it's a very hard process and

also I have to be very good at my sport to have it to fall back on."

Murray even acknowledged there was some distraction from SAT and ACT studying due to her sport. She said she experienced "a little bit [of distraction], because it's kind of stressful, but I know that I still need the good grades to qualify for these schools."

Similarly, O'Hagan noticed the part grades play in whether or not students continue on with their sport.

"Testing or grades in general is a big part of making sure that you get into the school you want to go to. If you are the fastest kid in the state and you want to go to

Stanford, but you don't have the grades to get into Stanford, well, then you're not going there," said O'Hagan.

Though grades themselves might alter the chances of athletes making it into a school the opposite can be true: making it into a more academically renowned school, that might not have a sport an athlete is looking to play.

O'Hagan recalled a student from a few years back as he said "Yeah, he went to Yale, and he wasn't fast enough to get on the team.

He swam club for a couple of years, things like that. But I think it just ends up being they're prioritizing their education first, which

I wholeheartedly believe in, and then they do athletics as a little bit more like on the back burner type thing."

Mila Maksimovic, a junior on the Lane Tech Girls Basketball team, said that if she were to be accepted into a school on merit rather than one she was recruited by she would attend the former.

"I feel like that's something that I can go further with, rather than basketball, because, I mean, you can always transfer if you play for it, but I'd rather just know that I have something," Maksimovic said.

This choice has been made previously by Jacob Galachinski, a swimmer, who chose not to con-

tinue swimming in college. "I don't think they're losing passion, like, Jacob Galachinski was, you know, a state qualifier, did really well, but he went to U of I, right? U of I doesn't have a men's swim program.

He wanted to go there for engineering," O'Hagan said. "A lot of them go to go to school first, so they go to a university, they want to go to U of I, they go to engineering, things like that, and then, you know, they either don't have a swim team or they're not fast enough [to be on the team for that school]."

## What it's really like to be a runner on the Lane Tech Cross Country team

By SARAH ROJAS

Cross Country is "one of the most inclusive sports," according to Youth Runner Magazine. With its no-cut policy and team-oriented culture, Lane Tech's team is often seen as a perfect way for students to get involved, make friends, and find a community at a large school like Lane. For many, it begins as a way to ease into high school life but over time it becomes something much more demanding and meaningful to runners.

Sophomore runner Allyson O'Donnell said she first joined the team "just to make friends freshman year." What began as a social opportunity has grown into something she truly enjoys.

"Now I do it to have fun," she says. "It's also nice to move around after school"

Still, cross country isn't always an easy sport to some people. The daily practices, long distance runs, and conditioning workouts can be physically rigorous. "At first I thought it was really hard," O'Donnell said. "Like the running

and going day-to-day, but now I'm used to the fact that I'm running a lot every day."

This routine, though, seems to bring the team closer together. When spending so much time running side by side through the same exhaustion and shared victories or losses, bonds naturally form. "The bond is really tight because we're spending so much time together," O'Donnell said. "Especially meets, it's almost like a trauma bond together."

Sophomore Suncilia "Sunny" Lilley echoed that sense of companionship. "Just the fact that you get better the more you run and you're with friends," she said, keeps her motivated. Lilley described her favorite moments not as races themselves, but rather what comes after.

"I best enjoy after meets when everyone's kind of crying and happy that it's over." It's a bittersweet mix of relief and pride that only these runners can understand.

Lilley agrees that cross country can be extremely mentally and physically demanding. She says, people who aren't part of cross

country don't understand "how tiring it is mentally and physically."

For Ella Vicknair, another sophomore on the team, the heart of cross country lies in the community aspect.

"I first wanted to join cross country because of the aspect of a community that I would be able to see every day after school," she said. "Every time in a race where me or one of my teammates runs a PR, we all kind of hug and we all start screaming after... we're all just all together celebrating. So that's really joyful."

Over time, Vicknair's appreciation for the sport has deepened. "My opinion for cross country and my love towards it stay the same because of the people that I met," she said. "They encouraged me to keep going and never give up on my dreams."

Behind the cheery team photos and race-day celebrations, the runners of Lane Tech's cross country team endure grueling practices, mental challenges, and pain but they also find the strongest friendships and rewarding victories of



PHOTO BY SARAH ROJAS

**The Lane Tech Cross Country girls team celebrates team spirit at Lane's pep rally.**

their high school years.

Cross country has shown itself to not be just a sport. Rather, it's a test of endurance, both at the

meets and within themselves, and the runners keep showing up, together, every day.

## Fall Ball and team chemistry

By HENRY LANDA-ZURI-MORTENSEN

Every fall, many Lane Tech baseball players participate in a less formal baseball program that is often referred to as Fall Ball.

Fall Ball serves as a sort of pre-season for Lane players, allowing players to get to know their team and be ready for the season. This, according to head coach Sean Freeman, is especially important considering the new mix of players that will make up teams come springtime.

"I definitely think it helps," Freeman said. According to Freeman, Fall Ball helps to accelerate team bonding and lay the groundwork for a regular season team that will perform well. "It's going to be a new mix of kids, you know...so for them to be able to start getting to know each other — especially with Lane being such a big school — is a good thing," Freeman said.

Freeman described Fall Ball as "very relaxed," with a focus on the

players getting out there and having fun. "I don't want them getting overloaded," said Freeman. "As a coach, I think there's a time that they need to focus on school and their friends and their family." Fall Ball provides players with an opportunity to do that while still being able to play.

"For that league, that's where I let them pick their team names and I, you know, kind of just let them mess around and have fun," Freeman said. "Like they coach the bases a lot of the time. You know, make the lineup or who's going to pitch or whatever. And that way they have some ownership of it as well."

Anton Martyniuk, a junior who played on the Frosh-Soph team last year, is in agreement with Freeman. "It's a much more relaxed league. It's just more fun, you know, interacting with your teammates in that way," he said. Martyniuk currently plays Fall Ball in the Cubs Nike RBI (Reviving Baseball in Inner Cities) league, a free MLB youth

outreach program designed to "increase participation and interest in baseball and softball among youth, promote greater inclusion of youth with diverse backgrounds into the mainstream of the game, increase [the]

number of talented athletes prepared to play in college and professionally, encourage academic achievement, [and] teach the value of teamwork," according to the Cubs RBI website.

But only Lane's Freshman and Frosh-Soph teams play in the Cubs RBI league; senior Rory Irwin and many of his Varsity teammates play in the Skokie Fall Baseball league along with their JV counterparts. But, according to Irwin, the team-building aspect is the same.

"It truly builds a sense of community," Irwin said, referencing the more relaxed leagues typical to the fall. "But you're around the game, and you're playing, and...it's good to be around it because when you're away for too long, you lose a lot of things that you had."



PHOTOS BY ANTON MARTYNIUK

**Above: Anton Martyniuk pitches for Lane.**

**Right: Lane's Freshman and Frosh-Soph teams play in the Cubs RBI league, a free MLB youth outreach program.**



## Students have created and sent hope in the ‘La Pared de Esperanza’ event

By ELAINE NGUYEN

Aaliyah Adedeji, a senior, decorated the butterfly with various paint markers to create rainbow stripes on one side and used a gold paint marker to color on the other side, where “the rainbow [is depicted] peeking through the other side.”

According to Adedeji, who was one of the students who participated in the La Pared de Esperanza event, the rainbow symbolized equality and inclusivity, and the “fun colors” symbolized hope. The gold symbolized optimism.

Adedeji said that she was very proud of decorating her butterfly. She said her butterfly looked very beautiful and that “it captured an amazing message,” with her wanting to spread positivity and hope.

The La Pared de Esperanza (The Wall of Hope) event occurred on Thursday and Friday, Oct. 9-10, during 3rd-6th lunch periods in the student cafeteria. In the during-school event, students decorated their butterflies with Gabriela Escobar, who is the Director of Culture and Climate.

According to the email sent by Escobar to the Lane Tech students on Oct. 7, the purpose of the La Pared de Esperanza event was to “take a moment to create something peaceful and meaningful” after stating “with all that’s happening in the world.”

She also said in an email, “In many cultures — especially in

Hispanic communities — butterflies symbolize hope, transformation, and the connection between life and spirit.”

Escobar said she thought about the La Pared de Esperanza event over the summer. “Students need a reminder and staff that everything will be OK and to never give up,” she said.

Escobar said she had prepared for the La Pared de Esperanza event by buying the butterflies and the markers over the summer and over the beginning of the school year, just in case a lot of students wanted to participate in the two days of the event.

Unlike other events at Lane Tech that were meant to celebrate the Hispanic Heritage Month, the La Pared de Esperanza event officially lasted for two days. The reason behind it was that Escobar wanted students to have an opportunity to take advantage of the activities.

There were students who were willing to support the Lane Tech cultural climate and to spread hope in the time when the United States was in a fragile state.

Adedeji said, “My reason to participate [in the La Pared de Esperanza event] is to spread hope especially in the time when we’re in, considering the political state of the United States right now especially in Chicago.” She said her goal is to help people realize that people in the world continue to have hope and that people should have faith with each other.

Another featured butterfly from the La Pared de Esperanza event was decorated by Yarisella Valle, who is a sophomore. She decorated the butterfly with blue and red paint markers to go for “the blueish red gradient ratio” and then added gems to its borders.

“I had a lot of fun,” Valle said. “I think I should do it [again next year] because Ms. Escobar took her time to organize materials and honestly it did not take time.”

Adedeji enjoyed participating in the La Pared de Esperanza event. “I felt very calm, very happy, and sociable because it’s a very chill vibe to see other people’s creativity shining through the fact it’s for a good cause makes it better,” she said.

Escobar sent an email to the Lane Tech students Oct. 14, stating that they can also come on Oct. 15 if they have not participated in the La Pared de Esperanza event and desired to decorate a butterfly.

In the same email, she also wrote, “Let’s close out Hispanic Heritage Month with color, creativity, and community.”

Escobar said her plan was to display the butterflies on the wall [by Door M] as soon as all of them were completed. They were going to be displayed all throughout the school year, to be used as “a reminder that we’re resilient and we’re strong as a community, and when we all come together, we make beautiful things happen.”



PHOTO BY ELAINE NGUYEN

Students were in the process of decorating their butterflies in the student cafeteria during 3rd period.



PHOTO BY ELAINE NGUYEN

Butterfly decorated by senior Aaliyah Adedeji. This butterfly had a rainbow on one side, signifying equality and inclusivity and a gold on another side, signifying optimism.

## ‘Adolescence’: a dark, twisted, and binge-worthy series

Review

By SOPHIE WU

The eight-time 2025 Emmy Award-winning limited series “Adolescence” has proven to be a phenomenal way to raise awareness of toxic masculinity in teenagers and the disturbing realities of the “manosphere.”

When the house of 13-year-old Jamie Miller has its door kicked down and searched for evidence, Jamie is accused and arrested for the murder of his classmate Katie Leonard. Throughout the police investigation, troubling details come to light that reflect realistic issues of toxic masculinity being facilitated by the internet and social media.

According to UN Women, the “manosphere” is a collection of forums, websites, and communities where men may connect with masculinity influencers and share their misogynistic, anti-feminist, and male supremacist views on society.

These discussions also tend to become increasingly radical as some men may misrepresent themselves as victims of society, expressing their justification of their extremist beliefs and violence against women.

What might appear to be ordinary comments left on Jamie’s Instagram posts turns out to be comments meant to insult him and tear down his self-esteem, feeding into the concept of the manosphere.

The comments included repetitive emojis such as the red 100

which dives into the pseudoscientific “80-20 Rule.” With no solid scientific basis, the 80-20 Rule refers to the idea that 80 percent of women are only attracted to 20 percent of men.

This idea suggests that women are only attracted to a small fraction of men who they think are physically attractive and financially well off. But this is also a way for men to mainly blame their lack of romantic success on women, sharing their resentment against them and feminist ideals while declaring that women are extremely shallow and materialistic.

Another common emoji which made its way into the comments section of Jamie’s posts would be kidney beans, which refer to him being an “incel.” According to CNN, the term “incel” means “involuntary celibate,” or someone who wants to engage in sexual activities, but is deemed undesirable because of their lack of sexual experience.

UN Women also describes this group of people as men who believe that they are entitled to sexual activity and that women are intentionally depriving them of it. These beliefs also continue to promote rape, assault, and mass violence.

Instead of focusing on the fast-paced moments of being convicted of murder, they slow things down—thoroughly showing the way he thinks and interprets his environment and how those aspects affect his behavior.

The school he attended is an incredibly unhealthy place where teachers barely teach material, and students are verbally and physically violent with one another—yelled at by their teachers, but never properly disciplined.

This portrayal of such a school really emphasized to me how this situation could have happened to anyone. Any student could have been the murderer and the victim. Each student is existing in an insanely toxic environment which fosters incessant bullying with insults infused with manosphere ideals.

Seven months after his arrest, during Jamie’s meeting with his court-issued psychologist, Briony, he exhibits fluctuating and inconsistent behavioral patterns.

This is something Owen Cooper, who plays Jamie, portrays with extraordinary depth and realism. His acting adds another dimension to his character as one who seems to understand the consequences of his actions, but doesn’t want to acknowledge them.

One moment he’s making ordinary conversation, the next he grows defensive, mocks Briony, restlessly fidgets, and lashes out.

When she asks him more questions about Katie and what happened between them, something Jamie said really struck a nerve with me.

He tells Briony that explicit images of Katie had been sent around the school, but this instance only made Jamie feel like

Katie might find him more desirable as she was also hitting a low point in her life.

As he described his meeting with Katie to Briony, Jamie convinced himself that because he hadn’t touched her, something he claimed other boys would have done, he was already much better than any other boy—but that isn’t an achievement, but rather being a decent human being.

It was at this point that Briony shifted and promptly concluded their meeting, leaving Jamie confused and upset as it seems he’s finally expressed thoughts he’s never shared with anyone else before.

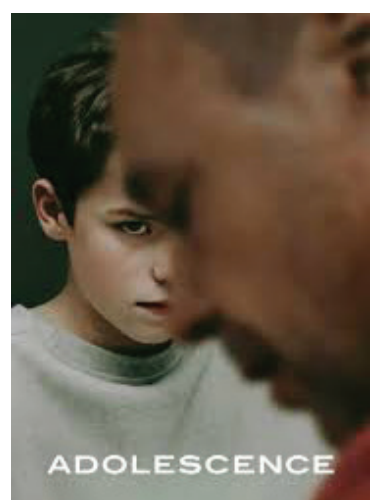
This abrupt loss of his confidant makes me think that he has more to share. Being at such an impressionable young age, he still could have learned and grown as a person with the right help and resources.

Another thought I’ve considered would be that this story could’ve ended in the death of a child in either scenario.

One version could’ve simply been how the events played out in the series with Jamie murdering Katie. But I also wondered if Katie wasn’t killed, if her bullying against Jamie could have resulted in his suicide?

There are also minor details scattered all throughout the series hinting toward Jamie’s thoughts on masculinity and how manosphere beliefs consumed him.

He chose his father to be his appropriate adult when he was being held in detention after his



Warp Films, Matriarch Productions, and Plan B Entertainment.

arrest. His room is painted a dark blue, possibly hinting toward the melancholy outlook he held on life, with an outer space and astronaut theme—a more stereotypically male dominated field.

But there were also hints that there were remnants of the old Jamie that remained, such as the drawings he hung up in his room, but didn’t take up that much space on his walls. And from one of the most powerful scenes in the series, when his father finally ventured into his room and kissed Jamie’s teddy bear, tucking him under the covers.

This really stood out to me symbolically as it seemed to portray how his family still saw Jamie: as an innocent little teddy bear. A teddy bear they eventually lost in his outer space bedspread, similar to how toxic masculinity poisoned his very being.

## The fall season is upon us: here's what to watch



Miramax Films



CBS and Warner Bros.



Warner Bros.



Canadian Broadcasting Co. and Netflix

By CHARLOTTE KNEER

Cinnamon, apple butter, pumpkin spice, and everything nice; fall is here. If you're like me, and are constantly searching for something to watch that fits the season, this list is for you. I've compiled eight movies and TV shows that emanate the vibe of the season. This watchlist is being broken into three different categories.

### Period Pieces

With countryside settings, dramatic romance, and old-world charm, these shows are perfect for cozy fall nights.

Our first movie is Greta Gerwig's 2019 adaptation of "Little Women". This piece is set in the years after the Civil War and tells the story of four sisters, with an all star cast helping Louisa May Alcott's 1868 novel come alive. Jo, Amy, Meg, and Beth each get their coming-of-age story coupled with romance and feminism. The display of walks in rolling fields, a sister's love of writing, and simple late Victorian fashion create a wonderful fall color scheme and

feel.

The second period piece is the TV show "Anne with an E", another late 1800s story adapted by a team of directors from Lucy Maud Montgomery's "Anne of Green Gables". This story follows Anne, an outspoken and slightly awkward orphan, in her teenage years as she seeks love, friendship, and peace. The beautiful scenery and heartfelt message make it a worthy fall watch.

### Dark Fall

These shows tie in the eerie feel of Halloween with increasingly dark weather, making them ideal for enjoying Spooky Season with a little more depth.

Starting off the dark fall category is "Wednesday", which recently released its second season, and follows an adaptation of the character Wednesday Addams. While attending Nevermore Academy, a boarding school for kids with magical abilities, Wednesday attempts to solve a spree of killings and unravel an old school mystery. Though passionate about her independence and consistently woeful mood, she bonds with

her roommate and is caught in a love triangle. Wednesday includes a dark color scheme and creepy feel that can both extend and add depth to Halloween viewing season.

Chris Wetz's "Twilight" is both a teen-romance and Vampire classic, with a telltale blue/gray color scheme and woodsy setting. The story follows Bella Swan and her interactions with her mysterious new classmate, Edward Cullen. "Twilight" sparked the iconic Team Edward vs. Team Jacob debate that continues to rock Millennials, yet remains the perfect "so-cringey-it's-good" movie to watch with modern friends.

Another teen drama with the spooky inclusion of vampires is Julie Plec's "The Vampire Diaries." The show follows the adventures of Elena Gilbert and her relationships with mysterious brothers Stefan and Damon Salvatore, who are both vampires. Their small town's supernatural history continuously brings drama for the group of teens, who include other vampires, vampire hunters, and a psychic. This fun fall watch has great suspense that gives the show a creepy vibe which fits right in

with Halloween and the season.

### Warm Fall

These quintessential fall watches feel like orange leaves and cups of cocoa, making them perfect for fall lovers everywhere.

As someone with the strong belief that anything set at a boarding school belongs on a fall watchlist, I consider the "Harry Potter" series required fall viewing. Whether you enjoy the childish warmth of the early movies or the more serious storytelling of Harry-all-grown-up, these adaptations of J.K. Rowling's classic book series are perfect for the autumn season. Cloaks, wands, and heavy books, Diagon Alley's storefronts and the candlelit dining hall of Hogwarts all exude a fall glow. Regardless of if you watch one installment or all seven, the escapades of Harry, Hermione, and Ron will always entertain with magic.

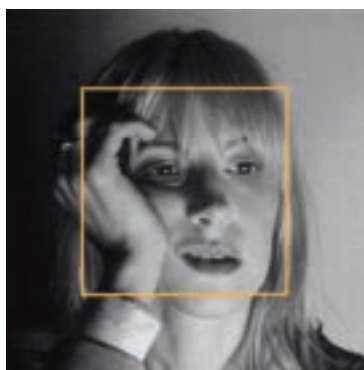
For viewers who enjoy heavier movies that will make you laugh, cry, and rethink all your life choices, Gus Van Sant's "Good Will Hunting" is for you. This film follows Will Hunting, a mathematical genius from the wrong

side of the tracks who chooses not to fulfill his potential. He is discovered by a professor and eventually forced to meet with a therapist, who are both committed to helping Will live a fuller life he couldn't have envisioned for himself. The story of friendship, growth, and imperfection is one that will honestly change your life and leave you with a warm feeling inside. The academia, color scheme, and stunning score all put you in a fall mood as you watch the incredible story.

And finally, I would be remiss if I didn't include the pinnacle of fall viewing: "Gilmore Girls." Amy Sherman's show following the iconic mother-daughter duo of Lorelai and Rory Gilmore features a romantic small town and immense pop culture references. The quick paced banter between all the characters tells the story of romances, friendships, and daily inconveniences that make the show such a fun watch. Not to mention the obsession with coffee, the town's adorable fall decor, and the 2000s fashion that give the show its iconic fall feel.

## Hayley Williams' 3rd album was well worth the wait

By JULIA HICKSON



Post Atlantic Music Label

"Long live public radio" reads the CD case containing singles "Mirtazapine" and "Glum" by Hayley Williams, frontwoman of the band Paramore, which first debuted on Nashville Public Radio Station WXP. In an uncommon album rollout, on July 28, 17 songs were released on hayley-williams.net, a website that was blocked by a wall requesting a 16 digit code.

Fans gained access to this code as a part of a new drop from her hair dye brand "Good Dye Young" for a neon yellow dye called "Ego." Based on the title of the hair color, fans began to assume the name of the album to be the same including the tracks "Kill Me," "True Believer," "Ego Death at a Bachelorette Party," "Mirtazapine," and "I

Won't Quit on You."

By July 30, the songs had been wiped from the website and fans were left with only the message "Thank you for listening." This was until Aug. 1 when all 17 tracks were singularly released onto streaming platforms each with their own unique cover art following the same yellow and black color scheme. This peculiar album rollout allowed fans to make their own playlists containing all of the singles in whichever order they felt most fitting.

Being Williams' first solo work since the release of "FLOWERS for VASES / descansos" (2021), fans were ecstatic for the release of new music, and this anticipation was well worth the wait.

The first single "Mirtazapine" is a love letter to antidepressants: "Here come my genie in a screwcap bottle / To grant me temporary solace," Williams sings and explains her gratitude towards this almost magical medicine.

While this particular song veers towards the playful and lighthearted side of topics, this feeling is sharply contrasted by the gut wrenching lyricism of "True Believer." Williams displays gruesome imagery as she sings, "They pose in Christmas cards with guns as big as all their chil-

dren / They say that Jesus is the way, but then they gave him a white face / So they don't have to pray to someone they deem lesser than them." An unmistakable dig at the current state of the world.

Within this song, Williams touches on the prevalence of racism in current times and relates it back to the past, showing how little change has been made as a society. "Strange fruit, hard bargain / Till the roots, Southern Gotham," Williams sings in reference to "Strange Fruit" by Billie Holiday, a hauntingly profound song that delves into the lynching of African Americans in the era of Jim Crow. Through this lyric, Williams highlights the fact that these issues of the past are still prevalent and occurring currently.

In "Ego Death at a Bachelorette Party," the title track of the album, Williams sings, "I'll be the biggest star at this bachelorette party bar." She paints the picture of her being invited to a bachelorette party back at her hometown and being unable to disconnect from her fame. As the song progresses, she becomes increasingly exasperated with her ups and downs in the world she has created for herself.

Williams also experiments with interpolation in this album, pulling lyrics from popular songs

and even from her own past projects. "Ice in my OJ" pulls its lyrics of the chorus "I'm spinning circles and I can't deny / Floating on your love like a butterfly / Got me jumping inside, thinking about you" from the song "Jumping Inside" by Mammoth City Messengers, a CD and comic book series which was Williams' first singing gig at the age of 13.

Hayley Williams' 3rd solo album was officially released on streaming platforms one month after she first released them onto her website, Aug. 28, under the title "Ego Death at a Bachelorette Party." With this release, Williams had one last surprise left for her fans, a new song that officially concluded the album "Parachute."

This song has quickly become my personal favorite and the perfect ending to an already spectacular album. As we are reeled in with the sharp clamoring of drums abruptly ending and leading into a soft piano, Williams tells the story of her love with fellow Paramore bandmate Taylor York. The drums return once again as we are led into the chorus: "I thought you were gonna catch me / I never stopped falling for you / Now I know better, never let me / Leave home without a parachute." Williams conveys the

### Album Review

sheer blindness felt as one falls so deeply into love, believing that the one she is meant to be with will come and save her.

Into the second verse, Williams' singing shifts almost into yelling as she presents her voice with anger unlike any other project she has released before. "Tell me what was the moment, you decided to give up / You could've told me what you wanted / I would've done / Anything." She screams out with resentment of how her lover hadn't saved her from her prior marriage sooner, regretful of her wasted time with the one she was truly meant to be with.

"Ego Death at a Bachelorette Party" as a whole is unlike any other project I have listened to before with its vast subject matter and layers of lyricism. It has quickly earned the title of being a "no skip album" and is entirely worth a listen in full. The production level and fan support has greatly increased from what it was at the release of her past two albums and one could only hope for this support for Hayley Williams to continue growing from now into the release of her future projects.

# Pep rally photo gallery

Photos by CAMDEN RUSH

The Lane Tech Flags perform their routine with marching band.



The Lane Tech marching band walks the track before their performance.



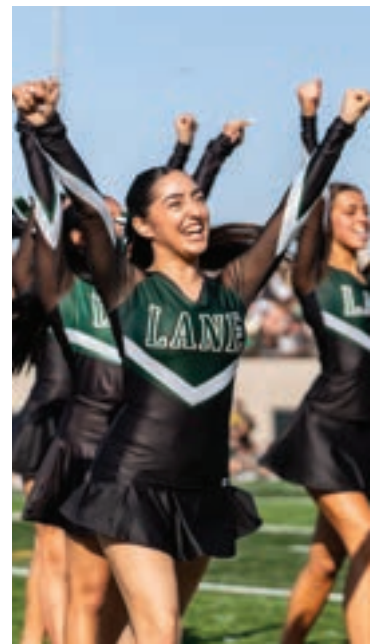
The Lane Tech "Champerettes" walk the track before their performance with marching band.



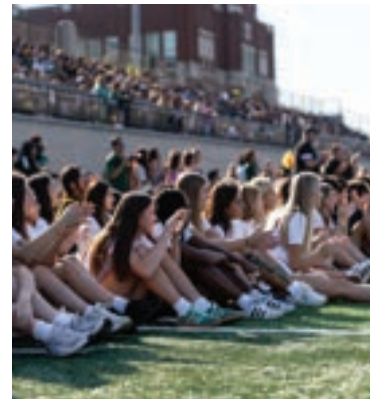
The Lane Tech Cheerleaders smile during their routine at pep rally.



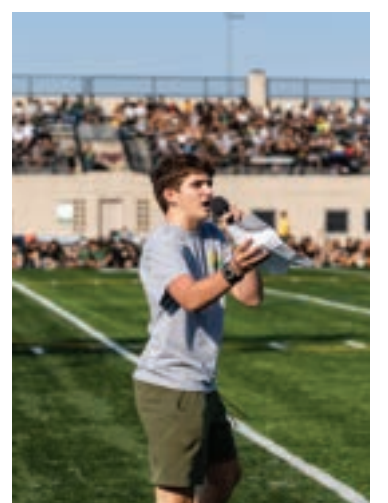
The Lane Tech Dance team performing at pep rally, with their senior dancers in front.



The girls Flag Football team poses during their walk.



The athletes sit on the field to watch the pep rally.



Student body President Gus Silberg announces the homecoming court winners.



The cheerleaders perform a stunt.



Athlete crowdsurfs with friends after the pep rally.



Members of the boys varsity soccer team pose after pep rally. They made it to the city finals this fall.



Photographer takes photos during the performances.



A member of the Lane Flags tossing her flag during their performance.



Members of the boys varsity lacrosse team pose at their spot on the field.



Dance team seniors during their performance.



The girls JV softball team poses after the pep rally.



Lane Tech Flags walking before their performance.



Football player performs with the marching band.



Members of the freshman, JV, and varsity basketball team pose with Coach Logalbo.



The girls cheer team poses after their performance at pep rally.

# Changing standards for standardized tests

By HANNAH SPERLING

Mandated, optional, digital, adaptive, streamlined, swapped.

All of these adjectives can be used to describe elements of the Scholastic Aptitude Test, commonly referred to as the SAT, and the American College Test, or ACT. However, with the high rate of change college admissions tests have experienced in recent years, it can be difficult to keep up with which tests these words apply to and in what ways.

One of the most local changes that has occurred was the shift from the SAT to the ACT being provided in school in the spring of 2025. Chair of the Lane Tech Counseling Department Meredith Bantz said that this shift occurred because “the state of Illinois pays for the students throughout the state to take a standardized test,” and when this contract expired, “the contract was renewed with ACT, not SAT.”

In a weekly message, State Superintendent of Education Tony Sanders said technical specifications and commitment to diversity are two of the highest weighted

considerations in procurement decisions, but the SAT and ACT were found to be similar on each front.

According to the Illinois State Board of Education’s website, affordability and the fact that the ACT includes a science section were deciding factors since this science sanction exempts Illinois Juniors from needing to take the federally mandated Science Accountability Assessment. With these benefits in mind, a six year contract with the ACT was struck.

Bantz said that Lane has retained the ability to provide additional standardized tests such as the Practice SAT, or PSAT, which is a decision that all teachers vote on at the beginning of each school year.

“When students take the PSAT in 11th grade, it’s for national merit qualifying purposes, and we want to be sure that we give our students that opportunity. So that’s why we still provide that, and or that’s why I always vote yes,” Bantz said. “Otherwise, if students want to qualify for national merit, they would have to find a different school that would allow them to test at their school.”

Lane’s Director of Assessments

and Programming Julio Izguerra said that another reason the PSAT has continued to be provided is for the sake of underclassmen. “Just so they have practice for those types of assessments,” Izguerra said. “So that way when they are juniors, they have already done it before.”

Izguerra said that the transition from the SAT to the ACT went relatively well on the school’s end, except for a network error. “If you were a junior last year, we had the issue April 18th where the ACT servers could not handle the amount of logins that the district was providing. So on their server end, there was an issue where they didn’t allow us to connect to it. So they corrected it. They offered a retake. They offered free vouchers for you to retake it in the summer, I believe, on a Saturday,” Izguerra said.

The main issue with this was that students who took or had partially completed the ACT in school were working with a different version of the test than those who had to take it outside of school at a later date.

*Continued on Page 9*



PHOTO BY HANNAH SPERLING

The College and Career Center is one place within Lane Tech that students can turn to for testing support.

# The rise and fall of Colleen Hoover

By DASH ROEM

Colleen Hoover, an American bestselling author, has written over 20 books which became widely popularized on TikTok, yet her books are commonly criticized for their content and marketing.

Much of Hoover’s fame can be attributed to the “BookTok” community on TikTok. Booktok is a group on TikTok filled with reading content creators who recommend typically young adult books to their followers, and has allowed various books to quickly gain popularity.

“It’s helped me connect with some of the books that I really like to read,” said sophomore Ella Vicknair. “I’ve found authors like Taylor Jenkins Reid and especially those books like [The] Seven Husbands [of Evelyn Hugo]. So many books that are my favorite books I have found through BookTok and I think that it’s a pretty awesome community and there are so many people that are willing to help and give recommendations.”

However, there is some push-back to BookTok’s influence. Junior Oliver DeMarea said, “I like anything that encourages reading but I’m sometimes concerned with the books specifically that BookTok is pushing and it’s not that — I think that people [should] read what they want to read but personally I wish that they would be uplifting other authors with different voices and maybe different messages.”

Furthermore, a very common criticism of Hoover’s books is that they glorify domestic violence.

Freshman Marlena Palos said that the abuse present in Hoover’s books has deterred her from read-

ing them. DeMarea said, “I’m not a snob, but I would say that I don’t understand the point of reading something that glorifies domestic abuse and is frankly poorly written when instead there are plenty of good romance novels that portray that complexity of real life relationships.”

DeMarea added that “it’s OK to depict domestic abuse since that is a facet of reality, but, from my understanding, her books glorify and almost paint it as normal in a relationship, which I find to be problematic.”

It is important to note that Hoover grew up in a household in which her father was abusive to her mother before their divorce when she was a toddler.

Another major critique of her novels is the young age of the readers the books are marketed towards. Oftentimes, her books are read by preteens, who are typically not considered mature enough to understand or identify an issue with the relationships depicted in her novels.

“I definitely think her books should not be marketed towards younger kids whatsoever, but I do think that maturity — it differs based on the person,” Vicknair said.

Additionally, Vicknair said, “it’s gonna make [children] think that this is OK — like this is an OK thing to be around and I don’t love that.” Palos agrees with Vicknair that children being exposed to this “heavy topic” is a negative thing.

Though DeMarea agrees that this marketing can be dangerous, he also said Hoover might be onto something.

“Maybe looking at why have they caught on, why are they so popular among the youth because

there might be something there that other authors are missing and they can take that aspect from her and maybe we could get novels that have the same attraction to the youth but do not have the problematic elements,” DeMarea said.

Due to the problematic nature of her books, some people have become opposed to reading them. Vicknair said, “I know she does have a fairly strong fanbase so I understand the appeal to some extent but it’s not something that I would personally read just because it doesn’t really align with the kind of stuff that I like to consume.”

DeMarea holds an even stronger standpoint: “I would rather people fill their head with nothing than fill their head with something problematic and frankly rather sexist and unhealthy.”

Hoover published her first novel — a novel originally intended to be a Christmas gift to her mother — at age 31 in 2012, and the book quickly became a bestseller, setting up her career as a young adult author. In 2022, Hoover sold 8.6 million print copies of her books, more than the bible in that year.

Since 2022, however, Hoover has not released any new novels. In these 3 years, Hoover’s largest success, “It Ends With Us,” was adapted into a film. Though this movie kept Hoover relevant despite her absence, opinions on the troublesome nature of her books reemerged, putting her under the heat once more.

After 4 years, Hoover has plans to release one titled “Woman Down” in early 2026.

“It’s a thriller, probably one of the darkest books I’ve written so far,” Hoover said in an interview with “Today.”



PHOTO BY JULIA HICKSON

Colleen Hoover’s books take up the entire top two rows of the BookTok section at target.



PHOTO BY JULIA HICKSON

Miniature Colleen Hoover Novel sold in a Mini-brands toy-a toy intended for young children.

# Standardized tests

*Continued from Page 8*

“What you guys took on the Saturday was the ACT national,” Izguerra said. “So it’s slightly different. The ACT national was the enhanced version, which is the newer version, which I hope we’re going to go to this coming spring, which does not include the science and I think writing either. So it’s actually shorter. So it doesn’t take as long. It has less questions. It gives you more time to answer those questions because it’s a shorter test. So the district one we took last year was the regular, the previous version.”

In reference to the new model of the national ACT, Izguerra said, “science is optional.”

Indeed, according to the ACT website, “Students can now choose to take the ACT National Saturday test with or without the science section.” However, according to the ISBE website, the Illinois State Board of Education has opted to include both science and writing as required sections in the Spring 2026 statewide administration of the ACT.

Bantz explained that this may continue to be beneficial for students’ college applications. “If it’s something you want to pursue in college, then I think it would make sense to take that portion to show that you have that skill set and can score well there,” Bantz said.

“They also reduced the answer choices for math,” Izguerra said. “Before, they would give you five choices. I think now they give you four.”

Edwin Gustinskas said that the PACT he took this fall, which emulates the old version of the ACT, was “just so fast, and there’s so many questions.” Likewise, Senior Zoie Kitson said that the first time she took the old ACT, she “definitely ran out of time on a bunch of sections.” Recognizing that this was a common complaint, the ACT said on their website that they reduced the length of the test by 44 questions overall.

Izguerra said that this has improved the testing experience because “It just kind of speeds up the exam to make it easier on students so they don’t have to sit there as

long. So it’s about 75 minutes shorter. If the district decides to take the enhanced version, that’s the difference they will have this school year.”

According to the SAT website, this test has also undergone substantive structural changes. The test fully transitioned to a digital format with adaptive questions in March of 2024, meaning that a student’s performance in the first module of a section determines the difficulty of the second module. Additionally, test duration was reduced from approximately three to two hours, reading passages were shortened, and students can expect to receive their scores sooner after test completion.

For students in the midst of curating their college applications, these changing test elements may have large impacts, especially as more and more colleges shift back to test required.

Bantz said that “it seems like schools like Ivy League schools and really highly selective schools are trending towards shifting back to requiring tests, with the exception of UChicago and California

schools — which were both, even pre-pandemic, finding that the test score wasn’t something that they thought was necessary for admissions. But yeah, otherwise I see the Ivies, Georgetown, all leaning back towards requiring a test again.”

Elaborating on the conditions of this trend, Bantz said, “I think there’s gonna be a huge portion of schools in that mid-range selectivity that stay test optional because they’re finding that it isn’t a huge factor in their admissions and that they’ve been getting a good quality of student without it.”

While colleges do consider submitted test scores in admissions, Izguerra said, “they just use it as [part of] an overall review of everything, which is your GPA, how rigorous your curriculum was while you were here, extracurricular activities, if you’re part of the newspaper, stuff like that. They just kind of want to filter out students that don’t meet their benchmark. That way they can pick the students that they feel like do meet that and will succeed at their school.”

Regardless, both Bantz and Izguerra said that Lane has and will

continue to provide students with the resources they need to be well prepared for these tests.

Bantz said that Lane administration does “encourage teachers to give some prep, especially leading into the months like up to winter break and after winter break, leading into the spring.”

Sophomore Ryan Cale said that this review has been provided in his English, trigonometry, and chemistry classes. “They’ve given me like grammar based questions, punctuation, and then my chemistry class gave me stuff about reading tables,” Cale said.

In-school support is provided outside of classes as well.

“Last year we had ACT prep classes. I believe it was after school and before school,” Izguerra said. “Students could sign up for ACT prep and it was before school started. So if you wanted to come in a period before and stay a period after, they did offer that.”

Students can look out for this sign-up in the winter as a way to prepare for the in-school ACT and PACT in the spring of 2026.

# Morning lines at Lane Tech

By SOPHIE WU

Every morning from 7:30-7:40 a.m., there are lines of about fifty students or more stretching from Lane Tech’s three open entrances onto the sidewalks encompassing the school. While some of these lines might feel daunting to stand through, there are many factors of Lane’s security protocols that remain unseen.

Head of Security Mr. Smith has taken a closer look at the length of the lines outside of the doors compared to previous years.

“What people don’t understand is that we still screen more people than anybody in CPS just because of our enrollment,” Smith said. “I know from 7:20 - 7:50, there’s a lot of people coming through. So the lines might look a little long then, but [it’s] a lot better than it has been in the past.”

Senior David Morowitz said he noticed that Lane’s entrances were very congested, especially on the

first day of school when there was a gun threat against Whitney Young High School. “But then I feel like that’s continued, which, of course, if it’s for our safety, I understand,” Morowitz said. “But then my question becomes: why not open more doors? Why not have more points of entry for students?”

According to Assistant Principal Hanly, early this year, Door J closest to Rockwell Street was closed due to a lack of student traffic coming through that entrance. But she also discussed the possibility of making alternative entrances available, ones that might be more popular.

However, Smith brought up the lack of staff availability to be stationed at those additional opened doors and whether or not more entrances would efficiently alleviate student traffic.

“If I ever open up another door, which is always a possibility down the line, I would have to do the re-

search and see what door I would think would have more traffic,” Smith said. “The stuff I look at is what’s going to take the pressure off the busiest door.”

But throughout the school day, there are oftentimes more lenient security checks for students coming in from having off-campus lunch as compared to the morning rush.

“It’s interesting that there’s definitely an imbalance in the presence of security throughout the day,” Morowitz said. “I’m not mad at not having to go through the bag checker during my lunch periods, but I do think it’s interesting to put so much pressure on students at the beginning of the day when it is probably just as important during lunch periods as they mentioned.”

And while Hanly said that security should be emphasizing checks on students during lunch periods, Smith says that they are working on a better way to tackle that sit-



PHOTO BY SOPHIE WU

Morning line outside Lane’s Door P at 7:40 a.m.

uation.

When asked about ways he would like to improve security and the measures that are taken, Smith said that he’s been planning on obtaining more advanced technology for the school. Hanly also greatly appreciates the bonds Lane’s staff and faculty have with students.

“Thankfully, kids report stuff to us and we’re able to contain it and we’ve never really had any sort of

crazy situations where we feel like we are in a lot of danger,” Hanly said. “We build relationships with the kids in a really good way that makes kids want to tell people things or report to people.”

Smitty also emphasized his gratitude for the bonds he’s made with students at Lane, saying that they are more important than the job. “I’m here to protect the school, but I’m also here to protect the students.”

# Men in Lit

By ELLIE SANDERSON

Walking the halls of Lane, you are sure to see a plethora of types of people: a talkative group of upper-classmen, a teacher trying to escape the sea of students, a lost freshman. Turning the corner and heading into an English classroom, though, much of this diversity seems to disappear.

Sophomore Ben Sweeney, currently in Writing Center Instructors I and in the Omega concentration, said that “there are so few guys. I think within Omega, that’s changing a little bit, I don’t know. But the gender ratios are crazy.”

Take the Creative Writing elective, for example, where the ratio lies at “about 20-8 girls to boys. And you know, some of [the] students are gender non-conforming and assigned female at birth, and we have to account for that. But the rough breakdown appears to be 5-2 girls to boys,” according to the

class’s teacher, Dane Haiken.

Encouraging women to pursue an education and career in STEM fields, while still a modern campaign, has been around for a little bit now; posters depicting a female bioengineer or astrophysicist often now cloak the walls of science labs. Diversity within research groups is known to increase the variety of research methods and questions asked, according to a Stanford study—but this attempt of inclusion does not yet reach the humanities.

Part of this gender separation may come from the lack of outreach of English electives, said senior Writing Center Instructors I student Jack Cherry. “Traditionally a guy is friends with more guys, and a girl is friends with more girls. So if [girls] take the class, then they tell their friends, so [the boys] know less about [the electives],” said Cherry.

While the marketing and out-

reach of classes may be important at Lane, women are consistently earning more bachelor’s degrees in the humanities than men at the national level, according to a study conducted by the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. Women are earning 62% of all humanities degrees, according to the same study.

Part of the lack of men in the humanities leads back to a broader societal issue, according to Sweeney. “There is the stereotype—the humanities are such a feminine field...like, to be creative or express oneself is feminine, is bad,” Sweeney said.

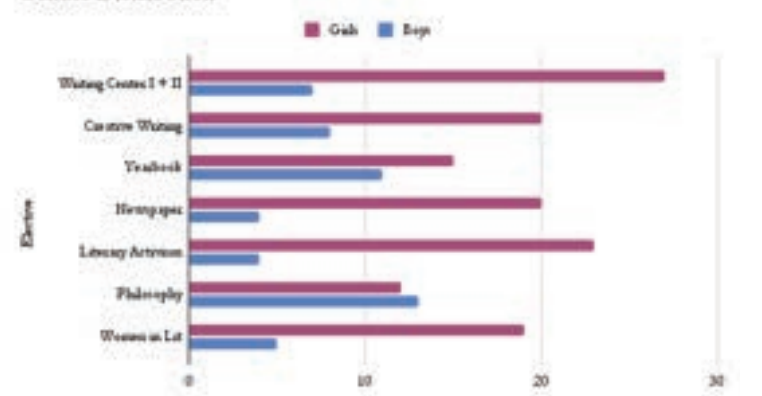
Despite the feminine stereotypes Sweeney mentioned, Haiken found a potential contrast from the historical background of writing—even though he said he is not in agreement with the associations he describes. “Writing in America has had a very sort of ‘macho’ association. You know, you think of

Ernest Hemingway. You know the hard drinking, sort of man’s man, who sits at a typewriter and smokes a cigarette, that sort of thing. I think that’s one thing that makes creative writing have less of a gender disparity,” said Haiken.

Not all English electives at Lane,

then, face the same issues, but it is still clear that a significantly larger number of girls and gender non-conforming students enroll in these classes; the Philosophy elective is the sole outlier as the only English elective with more boys enrolled than girls.

Gender Distribution



GRAPH CREATED BY ELLIE SANDERSON

Source: Students currently in English electives.

# Navigating the New Normal: School Safety in Today's World

By LILY ROYER

School shootings, ICE threats, religious differences, political divide, academic pressure, and the overall school climate are just some of many challenges students face as they walk into school every day.

The average prevalence of students who felt unsafe at school according to the National Library of Medicine was 19.4% and ranged from 6.1% to 69.1%.

Gabriela Escobar, the Director of Climate and Culture at Lane, defines school safety as “students coming to school and feeling safe on the way to school, feeling protected by the community, and then also walking into the building and knowing that there are people in this building who are working to maintain their safety.”

When students walk into the school building one of the first things security tells them is to put on their ID, quickly followed by a reminder to put phones away and put bags in the metal detectors. When you're at an airport the first noticeable thing, as you enter, are signs telling passengers to get IDs out and passports out. This is followed by security checkpoints asking people to put bags in metal detectors and phones and devices away. The only true difference between these interactions is that one gets you flying across the world while the other is the entrance to a school.

A Lane 10th grader, Chloe Cavanez begins questioning her safety especially since getting into the school building in the morning involves so much ruckus about backpacks. It evokes questions of why schools need so much security and if the buildings are safe in the first place. Cavanez said, “I'm becoming more uneasy since, even though we have metal detectors, I feel like there's still a way to sneak contraband or whatever, like inside the building.”

School shootings have reached new heights in recent years with reports of violence continuing a trend of high rates. According to ABC News shots

are being fired at schools in the U.S nearly twice a week on average. ABC News said, “according to statistics compiled by Everytown, there have been at least 90 incidents of gunfire on school grounds in 2025, resulting in 29 deaths and 69 injuries nationally, according to the group.”

In today's political climate, students may have to choose between going to school or staying at home based on one's different ethnic, religious or racial backgrounds since students may begin feeling unsafe due to their views or orientation.

Noa Raisner, a freshman at Lane, said in school and public buildings she feels unsafe since she is Jewish. “A lot of people right now are hating on Jews, and sometimes in other places, and even in Chicago, it's not safe for Jews,” Raisner said.

To make students feel safer, administrators are rewriting old security procedures for the safety of students inside and outside of the school building. NBC news reported that according to the members of the Chicago Teachers Union, in regards to ICE recently, “school staff members have organized teams to report and respond to Immigration and Customs Enforcement activity around their schools, including patrolling the area, keeping concerned parents informed and helping escort some families to and from school.”

Anyone can feel unsafe, but during this time Gabriela Escobar pointed out how people may feel targeted or scared for their safety.

“I feel like everyone is afraid, because if you're putting yourself out and you're uplifting a community that can't do much to defend themselves right now, you know you're putting yourself in danger, I think anyone would be scared, whether you're documented or undocumented. It's just a scary time,” Escobar said.

Lane Tech has a total of 16 security officers with one being Michael Smith, who is chief of security. Smith says they'll do all they have to keep students safe.

He fears violence in or around

Lane, whether gun violence or suspicious personnel. “I know the day that I don't have that fear, waking up or something in my mind of making the school space safer, that that one morning when I wake up and it's not the first thing on my mind, I'm going to retire, because I know, that, I know I'm ready to go,” Smith said.

To make the school feel safer, security encourages everyone to wear IDs so they can identify anyone in case of an emergency. “I always say IDs are important, because if something happens within the school, I'm going to do it,” Smith said. “I'm going to do everything to the best of my ability to protect all the students. And if I don't see you wearing an ID, you might accidentally get tackled in a situation that we never want to happen here.”

“I am always making sure security is checking IDs and, you know, walking around doing perimeter checks,” Smith said. “And one of my biggest worries is always not so much the people in the school, it's people around the school.”

To make the school safer Escobar encourages students to talk to teachers or counselors if they're struggling mentally and if needed reach out for help in the school community or outside of it. “I want to make it clear that I am a safe person for anyone who is going through something difficult, you know, whether it be immigration related or something else, and I will always do my best to try and direct someone that I am not capable of helping,” Escobar said.

Students are also encouraged to report sightings of suspicious personnel outside of school buildings, this being especially clear with a safety notice that was presented October 1st in advisory classrooms.

“Hopefully the kids that get to know me and our security team realize that we're here to protect them and that we do everything to the best of our ability to make sure the students feel safe and welcome,” Smith said.

Students attend school to learn and recently times have been more rocky. “We've got

5000 people in the building if you include staff, students, and everybody together. So you know, if we're all keeping this

building safe, you know, we're gonna do a really good job,” Smith said.

**Students entering the building October 22 at Door D in the morning, with security guard, Lourdes Rodriguez working the metal detectors.**

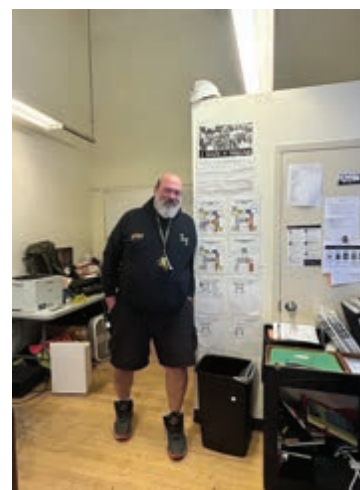
PHOTO BY LILY ROYER



**Security guards Mr. Michael “Smitty” Smith, Mr. Kyle Frapolly, and Ms. Jessica Holman gathered in front of Door M after admitting students inside.**



PHOTOS BY VALENTINA VIANNA



**Mr. Smith in the security office in front of the school floor plan. “I know the day that I don't have that fear—waking up or something in my mind of making the school space safer—that one morning when I wake up and it's not the first thing on my mind, I'm going to retire,” Smith said.**

## The Road Less Traveled Leads to the Oval Office

By ELLIE SANDERSON

Learning for a grade can earn you an A, but learning for yourself can earn you a job working for the president—this was one of many topics former Chief Data Scientist Dr. DJ Patil spoke to students about during a virtual visit to Civic Action through Computer Science and Journalism classes on Oct. 14.

This was the fourth time Patil spoke with Lane students, the appearance only possible because of computer science teachers Daniel Stone and Jeffrey Solin, who were able to connect with Patil. Stone said that his Civic Action through Computer Science class serves as a way for students to see the unique opportunities that data science has to offer, especially as more

and more academic fields could use data science as supplemental knowledge.

The education system in the United States is rigid, said Patil, and while the foundation works incredibly well for some, many students are left feeling dejected. Some of these students, like Dr. Patil, faced rejection from every college.

Patil found himself at community college, and initially kept up with his old lackadaisical learning habits. Here, though, is where the switch went off: Dr. Patil began to try in school. Until then, this notion was unprecedented for Patil. Even so, Patil taught himself all the high school level math he previously failed, and found good challenges within the more advanced

coursework.

After this venture in college and going on to earn a doctorate in applied mathematics in 2001, Patil witnessed the events of 9/11 and knew he could find a way to help. “Government is defined by those who show up,” said Patil, going on to emphasize the importance of service in our country.

Under President Obama, Patil became the first Chief of Data Science for the United States. The Chief Data Scientist doesn't actually handle a lot of data, according to Patil, and that is mostly for legal reasons. Patil did, though, provide insight on the Fatality Analysis Reporting System—or the FARS dataset, as he calls it—a collaborative effort with the Department of Transportation to better under-

stand a sudden uptick in fatal car collisions.

The field of data science, of course, still has many wrinkles. Since coining the term nearly eighteen years ago, Patil said his goal has always been to help people and better the world—especially for young people growing up in the “most disruptive periods in history.” Because of this, Patil said, more and more people are driven to explore data science.

The best data scientists, Patil says, are holistic ones. Data science can feel like just looking at points on a graph—but each dot is a person. All this analysis can become formulaic, says Patil, and he encourages data scientists to search for real problems that data science can be applied to.

Everyone belongs in the field of data science, said Patil—and no

one should settle for anything short of inclusion. Each data scientist is important, says Patil, and each one should have their stories told.



**Patil worked as Chief Data Scientist under President Obama; he now serves on the board for Devoted Health. Source: Obama White House Archives.**

# Prospects and pitfalls of AI grading

By HANNAH SPERLING

Lane Tech's Academic Integrity Policy prohibits students from using AI in the completion of any assignment, unless pre-approved by an educator. The guidelines on AI usage for educators themselves, however, are a little less clear.

Chemistry teacher Patrick Davey said that professional development on the subject has been limited on the CPS and schoolwide level due to the fact that AI is still such a novel technology.

However, Davey said that "I do research outside of school that associates with AI and incorporating it into education, and companies associated with Stanford University, UIUC... they've got a lot of systems in place that are built to be helpful to both students and teachers."

Following this model, AP Environmental Science teacher Arthur Wawrzyczek said he has personally been weighing the benefits and potential risks of using some of these AI systems to grade assignments in his own classes.

"The first decision you have to make as a teacher when incorporating something new into the classroom is, is it going to benefit my students' learning, right?" Wawrzyczek said. "Secondary to that is, how much time is it going to save me?"

Indeed, one of the main benefits of using AI for grading is that AI can deliver feedback at a much faster rate and for a larger number of assignments than teachers feasibly can.

The Lane Tech Academic In-

tegrity Policy already lists the usage of AI for the purpose of "confirming their understanding of a complex text, or checking their writing for grammar and tone" as one of the potential exceptions in which the usage of AI by students could be acceptable.

Accordingly, Wawrzyczek has provided students with the option to use AI to generate feedback on their own practice FRQs in the past. However, Wawrzyczek continues to read through and grade each assignment himself, recognizing that AI is unreliable and has the potential to "hallucinate."

As Davey said, "Students seem to think of [AI] as like another search engine. It's not, it's generative text. It works like a really advanced version of the same thing that knows what you're going to say next when you're auto texting on your phone. So it can do things like generate answers that aren't correct. It can make up resources that don't exist."

As with any utilization of AI, ethical considerations apply, but Wawrzyczek brings up additional concerns where students' well being and protection is involved. "Not every AI company is super transparent about how they utilize the input data you give it," Wawrzyczek said. "So what's the ethics behind feeding it 100-something student responses? How are they using that information? Is it somehow traceable back to the school?"

Continuing, Wawrzyczek said, "And also just the fairness aspect of it, right? Here we are saying you as students are not allowed to use AI for these assignments and these responses, but I'm going to go ahead and use it anyway, even

though I told you not to. Granted, you can work around that."

Keeping his students informed on and actively involved in creating the classroom AI usage policy is one such way Wawrzyczek has managed to do this.

"It's very important for me that my students know what I'm doing and why I'm doing it. The most important opinion in the room is probably the students," Wawrzyczek said. "Do they feel like it's acceptable for us to assess them in this manner? And surprisingly, when I asked my students, most of them were."

Davey said that another of his concerns is that AI use for grading will create a disconnect between students and their teachers.

"Teachers or students that rely on it too heavily are going to just find themselves in kind of like this weird hole where either you're identifying student work as being AI generated when it's not, or you're going to rely too heavily on it for grading," Davey said.

"Then you kind of lose the initiative to give that kind of more personalized feedback on homework tests, especially things like lab reports or major essays, something that requires a more intimate knowledge of the student, who the person is and what they need to help to gain their growth and knowledge."

Aquaponics teacher Brianna Bryson said that "The more technology we get, we lose some of that, like, human connection, and I feel like AI really widens that gap in teaching."

For this reason, Bryson said she doesn't believe AI should be used in classrooms at all.

"We should be using our brains

they don't start their homework till like 8.30 p.m.," Davey said. He explained that many students ask him questions beyond class hours.

"I keep my G-chat on my phone," Davey said. "So they'll message me with questions like, How do I do question four? And I walk them through it digitally or send a video."

Despite the time and effort it takes to manage being a teacher, a coach, and other responsibilities, teachers continue their commitment to extracurriculars. This poses the question: what are teachers' main motivators? Overall, it's clear that connections and student growth are very important to them.

Josh Park, AP and Honors Physics teacher and Boys Tennis coach, highlighted the connections with students he builds through coaching.

"Building relationships with athletes outside of school is so much different than building relationships with students here in the classroom," Park said. "And so having that different dynamic is worth it to me."

Davey also explained how Lane is "the most decorated Esports program in Illinois." He said that through the tough days, having this tangible success "makes the work a little bit easier."



PHOTO BY HANNAH SPERLING

**At the annual Alpha STEM Honor Code meeting, Science Department and Alpha STEM Program Chair Lucy Young explains the expectation that students should not use AI in the completion of assignments.**

to learn and teach and communicate," Bryson said. "I'm sure AI has a place. I don't think it's here."

Whether teachers use them or not, there are already a multitude of AI tools at their disposal.

Wawrzyczek said that he has tested ChatGPT5, Gemini, Microsoft's Copilot, and CoGrader, which he said is "one of those programs that will integrate directly into Google Classroom," in order to keep up with develop-

ments.

"AI is going to be the future of education," Wawrzyczek said. "So at this point, we're in a position where we either have to adapt or be left behind. I haven't quite figured out how it's going to be used yet, but at this point, it's an inevitability. And I think it would serve us to be ahead of the curve rather than struggling to catch up when it's surpassed whatever its capabilities are now."

## Beyond the bell: Commitments and connections



PHOTO BY SAMIRA SOORYA

**Mr. Davey leads the Esports practice while tutoring a student.**

By IRELAND COSTELLO and SAMIRA SOORYA

Teaching doesn't always stop when the bell rings. Many teachers at Lane Tech are involved in so much more beyond the normal school day. From coaching teams to leading clubs, teachers stay long after hours to make an impact.

Dedication to extracurriculars comes with an intense and busy schedule that can be hard to manage. Amy Wallace, the Boys Varsity Volleyball coach, founder and leader of the Letterman Club, and math teacher, describes her schedule as "horrible some days." She explains that she gets

to school early for open gym, stays until the bell rings, and then immediately goes to DePaul for girls' volleyball practice.

"If I'm lucky, I can go home for dinner and then go straight to club practice because that starts at 8," Wallace said. With that ending at 10 p.m., she said that it is "a long day, but it's worth it in the end."

Wallace isn't alone in feeling the strain of a busy schedule. Patrick Davey, Chemistry teacher and founder and leader of Lane Tech's Esports team, explains that after the school day, lengthy Esports practice, and tutoring, his teaching hours span long beyond the school day.

"Students have questions, but

Davey also mentioned that seeing students grow to enjoy his class, or have an "Aha" moment, helps to motivate him as well.

This connection works in many ways, as lessons learned in patience and persistence on the field often show up in the classroom too. Teachers all over Lane saw these patterns in their teaching and extracurriculars, and were excited to share their outlook.

Mixed media and art teacher Liana Falletto said that her role as a sponsor in the printmaking club has shaped the way she teaches and connects with students.

"It's cool to see what they come up with for themselves because then that helps me think about projects that I might do with the larger class," Falletto said.

Wallace also talked about the in-classroom impact she sees as a result of coaching. Wallace said, "I think by coaching and being involved in other things, it makes you more approachable to students... we're around here, we're in this with you."

Varsity Soccer coach and Spanish II teacher Andrew Ricks said, "The classroom helps me on the soccer field, and the soccer field helps me in the classroom."

Ricks said that coaching actually affects his thinking in the classroom.

"As a coach, you're trying to



PHOTO BY IRELAND COSTELLO

**Mrs. Falletto and Mrs. Chisholm proudly show features in the student art show, including pieces from Mrs. Falletto's printmaking class.**

pick up on strengths and weaknesses of your own team and the opponent, and so in the classroom, I think that that helps me see those strengths and weaknesses of students," Ricks said.

Through long and hard days, these teachers find a passion that keeps them moving forward. "You need a kind of soul nourishment as well," Davey said. "So when you're having a really bad day, you can remember that, hey, there's a kid going to college because of the efforts you put in."

Coach Wallace summed it up best: "The kids are the wins and losses and the end of it."

# Girls volleyball faces off against Res for Senior Night



PHOTO BY CHARLOTTE KNEER

Senior player Abby Graff embraces her teammates during the team's senior night celebrations.

By CHARLOTTE KNEER

Lane Tech's girls varsity volleyball team came together the night of Monday Oct. 6 to commemorate the team's four senior players. Seniors Audrey Nathaus, Emelia Pastorelli, Abigail Graff, and Emma Strong each celebrated four years at Lane before the team battled Resurrection in three sets.

The team's senior players all started the first set; however Res pulled ahead 5-11. After several extensive volleys with points awarded to both sides, Lane remained behind with a score of 10-19, prompting Lane to take a timeout. Junior player Sophia Abdullah got a kill as Lane was closing the score

gap, but it wasn't enough as Lane again fell with a score of 15-23. With the set point so close, sophomore player Sophia Polec got a kill and brought the ball back to Lane. A missed serve resulted in Resurrection winning the first set, 16-25.

In the second set, Lane gained an early lead with a score of 5-1. Sophia Polec got another kill, prompting Resurrection to take a timeout. Lane continued to build their lead to a score of 15-7, with sophomore player Janelle-Elise Ibeagha scoring the point that led to a Res timeout. Lane continued to dominate the second set, bringing the score to 24-11. A missed serve from Resurrection gave Lane the set point, and Lane won the second set, 25-13.

The third set began with both teams swapping the lead, eventually tying at 5-5. Lane gained a 10-8 lead with a kill, but Res regained the lead with a score of 13-15, prompting Lane to take a timeout. The score stayed close for the rest of the game, with Lane tying it at 17-17. Res got the lead again, and Lane couldn't get it back although they stayed close in scoring. Eventually Resurrection won the third set with a score of 21-25, and achieved the match win.

"We tried our best," said junior setter Amelie Patterson said. "They're a really strong team." Despite the loss Patterson said, "I'm really excited that it was our senior night. I'm glad they got to celebrate the seniors."



PHOTO BY CHARLOTTE KNEER

Sophia Polec and Emma Strong blocking against a hit from Resurrection.

Coach Kwong spoke highly of his senior players. "Great, great girls. I'm really gonna miss them. They've all contributed to our program and our success." Senior captain Abigail Graff finished the match against Res with 2 kills and 3 successful digs, according to MaxPreps. Senior player Emelia Pastorelli had 4 points off serve and 3 successful digs.

As the team moved into the city playoffs, Patterson spoke on the positive outlook. "It's looking like we could fall into the top three seeds, so I'm excited for that," Patterson said.

Coach Kwong emphasized that the team is still working to get better. "We just gotta continue to clean things up," Kwong said.

Lane went on to win their first two games of the city playoffs 2-0 against Intrinsic and Brooks, according to MaxPreps.

"I think we have a lot to look forward to for the rest of the season and next year with the junior leadership," Patterson said. As the 2025 season finishes up, both players and coaches are looking to the future.

"I've got some very young talent, a couple sophomores, and you know, once they get more experience and mature, we're going to be great," Kwong said.

Lane beat Amundsen in their last home game of the season for the win in the CPS quarter-finals. Their next match is Maine West on Oct. 26.

## How advanced film technology affects high school sports

By FAITH GALIK

With developing camera and film technology, sports are changing. Now, players' every move is being recorded and posted online for the public to see, for better or worse.

In high school sports, the most popular site for sport filming and analysis is called Hudl. According to their website, 99% of US high schools use Hudl. Lane is a part of this majority. "Lane Tech administration...pays a very large bill. We invest in this technology for our athletes and our coaches," said Athletic Director Brent Bradish. Bradish said it is the largest annual contract that Lane pays.

This program records games with automatic zoom and hands-free filming, and uploads the footage to their site, then within hours, breaks down statistics and analytics for each player.

It started with only football film but now has grown into the recording of most gym and stadium sports, like basketball, soccer, volleyball, lacrosse, etc. So, coaches of a wide variety of sports are now able to utilize this to create game

plans, analyze their players and opponents. "The technology is unbelievable," said Bradish. "And now that has completely changed the way coaches design their practice, or prepare for a game, or study another team, and maybe build an offense or a defense based off of all that technology, all the data that's provided,"

"Whenever we play a game in a stadium, there's a Hudl camera in the stadium," said Head boys soccer coach, Andrew Ricks. "You can access that already. So if we travel to another CPS stadium like Rockne or Eckersall or Gateley, they'll have a Hudl camera that you can access as well," Ricks, who has been coaching soccer at Lane since 2000, working with both the boys and girls programs throughout his career, said he has seen the technology have a positive impact.

"It's clear when you can show a visual to a player of what they did well or what they didn't do well, it's a lot more impactful," Ricks said. "And then also we can watch games with other teams, which has directly affected our results of seeing small things, for sure. And I'm certain that the same thing is for

other coaches watching us."

Along with statistics, Hudl technology compiles highlight reels of individual players and their personal game successes.

Sometimes, Ricks said, this isn't ideal for coaches if players aim to perform for their own highlights. "Because sometimes it'll look good, but is it effective? And I'd rather have the effective, as the coach, than looking good, which maybe a high school student might try to get more likes if it looks good. So that, I think, could be a pitfall," Ricks said.

Hudl is also present on collegiate levels. Bradish said college recruiters use Hudl in their recruitment process. "Let's just say...they're looking for a soccer player and a midfielder. Let's see what Chicago has' and so they can literally zoom in on all the Hudl footage and grab all of the statistics of midfielders in Chicago and then highlight and then pick those kids, study their film," Bradish said.

Now that each game is potentially being watched by recruiters nationwide, the stakes of any given game are raised.

"Nowadays, it is kind of a lot

of pressure knowing that everybody has that film and can access it

whenever they want to," said senior football player Gregory Howard.



PHOTO BY FAITH GALIK

Hudl camera mounted in Lane Stadium.