

**SEE SENIOR DECISIONS**

**Woods and Silberg named Valedictorian, Salutatorian**

By ANELIESE YEAGER

Now named valedictorian of the Class of 2026, Daijah Woods said at the moment it didn't feel real. "I didn't find out until my friends [saw the email and] were texting me congratulations," Woods said. "I was a little confused... It was very surreal." What stood out more than the title though, was the support she felt from the people around her.

"Honestly... I would do it all over again."

Reflecting on her four years at Lane, Daijah Woods didn't start by talking about grades or rankings. Instead, she smiled and thought about the experience itself, the classes she took, the risks she decided to take, and the people who pushed her along the way.

Just a spot behind her, Gus Silberg, salutatorian, shared a similar story.

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PHOTO COURTESY OF DAIJAH WOODS

**Class of 2026 Valedictorian Daijah Woods.**



PHOTO COURTESY OF GUS SILBERG

**Class of 2026 Salutatorian Gus Silberg.**

**Starting a brand new chapter**  
 Lane Tech's annual Decision Day

By JILLIAN HAYES

After hours of staring at Common App, finding teachers to write letters of recommendation, sending in a high school transcript, and stressing over a personal essay, Lane's Class of 2026 students' work paid off at Decision Day.

Decision Day is an annual celebratory event allowing students to be rewarded for committing to a college or university, but it is also a reflection of their last four years of high school. Some students view the event as the beginning of a new chapter in their lives.

The event is focused on students celebrating their college commitments, and seniors described a variety of reasons that brought them to those commitments. One of the most discussed reasons for college decision was the cost of tuition whether it be through scholarships or financial aid.



PHOTO COURTESY OF JUDE HIRSCH

**Seniors Sam Damiani, Diego Patino, Ben Lebeau, Isaac Dunn, Zach Buchar, Sam Liebert, Hana Eichler and Andy Lawrence sit on the outer edge of a parachute with Asa Troccoli and Lucy Arnold at the center.**

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**Advanced Acting Studio and Theater Production classes put on a puppet show**



PHOTO BY DASH ROREM

**(From left to right) Julian Hernandez-Suster, Julia Shepardon, Sloane Smith, and Lydia Vodopic perform their scene titled "Bork Bork" as Seymour, Sunny Sunston, Snakiera, and Pipemaster.**

By DASH ROREM

Hidden behind a wall built of two vertical tables lies a group of actors with their hands extended high above their heads, animating an otherwise lifeless puppet. The puppet shows were held during classes April 10, 13, and 15.

The process included establishing a character from the puppets created by the Theater Production classes, writing the show, re-

hearsing, and finally performing the show, according to senior Asa Troccoli.

"My favorite part of the whole process was getting to rehearse the skit with my group and finding props and making things more and more ridiculous and funny," Troccoli said.

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**Gen Z's relationship with Christianity is more complex than a revival**

By JONAS GRAY

Since the 1990s, younger generations are less religious than their older counterparts, with less church attendance and respondents saying that their faith is less important in their lives, according to Pew Research. But recent headlines have proclaimed a "Gen Z Religious Revival," citing growth in church attendance with national surveys as proof.

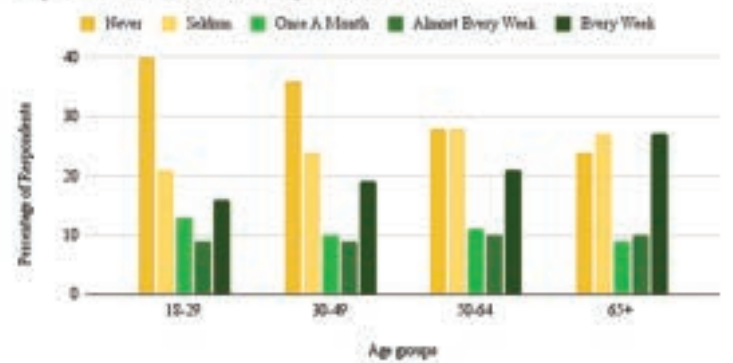
However the data could misrepresent what is actually happening.

According to the British Broadcasting Channel, one of the surveys, conducted by YouGov, which has been repeatedly cited as proof of a rise in religious beliefs in younger people, was done via an opt-in format. This means respondents chose to respond and were given money for doing so. This type of sampling is regarded as inferior and less accurate to a more scientific random selection.

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**Percent Church Attendance 2025 by Age Groups**

Respondents were asked how often they attend church service



GRAPH BY JONAS GRAY

Data gathered by Gallup Polls.

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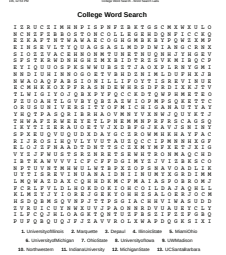
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# Starting a brand new chapter: Lane Tech's annual Decision Day

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Isabella Snopek, an incoming freshman at Ohio State University for philosophy, policy, and economics said, "I got a full ride to the college. So I was like, 'you can't turn down a full ride.'" Natalia Arrellano, attending Dominican University for Political Science on a pre-law track also received a full ride scholarship, while Tiarri Banks, attending Bradley University for marketing said the scholarships she received played a role in her decision to attend Bradley. Yahir Reyes, who will be attending Augustana College for Political Science, said "It was probably the most affordable college compared to the others I applied to."

While many students said they made their decision based on the architecture or location of the school's campus, some had reasons that reflected their own personal interests. Kellen Shields, an incoming freshman at Fordham University for psychology, said, "What helped me was touring the college



PHOTO BY JULIA HICKSON

**The Lane Tech Champion's senior editors Julia Hickson, Sophie Wu, Alana Nichols and Ellie Sanderson pose with Adviser David Strom in their college attire.**

and trying out for the dance team, that really made my decision easier." Diego Patino, who'll be attending University of Notre Dame for political science said he was drawn to the religious life at the universi-

ty. In regards to choosing a major, Roman Brice who is going to be attending Cornell University for Government said he determined his major based on the current state of the country. "I feel like everything for the way the world works is related to politics in one way or another," Brice said.

At Decision Day, students reflected on their past 4 years at Lane, closing out this chapter of their lives. Shields described the event as exciting and said "[It's] also scary and a little bit sad to leave behind a lot of the amazing friends that we made here."

Snopek said she's grateful for the experiences she's had during her time at Lane. "I feel like I'm at a loss for words," Snopek said. "I think that in the moment, I'm really happy and excited to be surrounded by all these people that I've met throughout my four years at Lane and I'm extremely grateful to have all the connections I've made. It's sad in the realization that it's coming to an end. Like, my

high school career is done, onto the next chapter."

During the event, students recognized their work and expressed gratitude for the resources that brought them to their college decision. Aaliyah Perez, attending UIC for finance, said "We're happy to be here. We're happy to have come this far." Similarly, Eduardo Villagomez who will be attending DePaul for criminology said he's thankful for the resources that brought him to where he is now. "I'm very grateful for everything that I did here and it really helped me build who I am today," Villagomez said.

Not only did seniors recognize their own work, but they recognized the work of their peers as well. Brice said the day felt like a celebration for all seniors. "Today genuinely feels like a celebration of everyone I've ever met and all their hard work," Brice said. "It's genuinely amazing, it's a day of celebration for all seniors."

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## Advanced Acting Studio and Theater Production classes put on a puppet show

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Senior Julian Hernandez-Suster, on the other hand, preferred creating the character of his puppet.

"I really enjoyed trying to think of a very interesting backstory and also a very unique voice that would go along with my puppet, and also creating a name and mannerisms and personality was very, very fun for me," Hernandez-Suster said. "I was able to push my limits with my voice and also my movement and choices in ways I've never really done before. And I think that I created a really fun, goofy character that really translated well on stage."

Hernandez-Suster also said this type of acting was something very new for him. "I've always done in-person, on-stage plays and I've never really had to become something small," he said.

He later compared puppet acting to on-stage acting. "In my experience being on stage, performing as a character is different because you feel like you're perceived," Hernandez-Suster said. "Although you are playing a character and you're in character and you have motives, you still feel the eyes watching and the audience. You still feel that present moment and how people are perceiving you and seeing you. And I think in a

way, it can make things more difficult for people to step out of their comfort zone when on stage. But, with the puppet acting, this was really unique because it hid the actor behind a wall and then the actor has to put his hand above [the wall] with the puppet, and that fully keeps the actor anonymous."

When it came to choosing the puppets, the actors had to choose between puppets created by the theater production classes. "My puppet,... he wasn't as pretty as the other puppets," Troccoli said. "I think he's beautiful, but he also looked like a pokemon. And so I took that idea and ran with it."

"His name was Spencer," Troccoli said. "He had a lisp because he had a big tongue sticking out of his mouth, and he was a scrapped Dragonair evolution, and he was very chill, but also stuck up." A scrapped Dragonair Evolution is a hypothetical iteration of the Dragonair Evolution Pokémon that was scrapped in development.

Hernandez-Suster also chose his dog-puppet for the strange way it looked. "When I saw it, I was like, wow, that's an ugly puppet... but then it kind of made me think," he said. "I was like, 'wait!' it's like a real dog at a pound that no one wanted because it's ugly or some-

thing. I was like, 'wait a second!' I need to adopt this dog and become its father."

Junior Milo Soss created a puppet resembling a Fossa, which is an animal similar to a mongoose native to Madagascar.

Soss said the process began with a sketch of the puppet, then creating a cardboard skeleton, then adding foam padding, before finally incorporating fabric and feathers. "You definitely have to think about that balance and also think about it being movable, wearable, comfortable for an actor who's using it," Soss said.

He also focused on the design of his puppet. "With a puppet, there's a balance between wanting to have an actual animal that's very clear what it is and wanting those cartoonish colors or aspects to it that make it friendlier or just more interesting to interact with," Soss said.

His puppet was intended to be reminiscent of a Disney Villain. "I chose to make the teeth sharper, almost like shark teeth to give it that scary vibe, and very green eyes because we associate green with Disney villains," Soss said.

"Making puppets is really hard," Soss said. "But it was fun because it was a challenge. Drawing some-

thing in 2D or looking at photos is very different from trying to create something in 3 dimensions, which, I thought, was really cool."

The puppet show was also written by the students, part of the process Hernandez-Suster was very involved in. Hernandez-Suster and his group wrote a segment for the show about a sun, a snake, and a metal pipe struggling to get a seat at a restaurant, proceeding to go through a series of challenges put on by a dog in order to do so.

"The unique thing about this writing process was that we had to create an entirely new skit that's three minutes long that incorporated four different puppets that had no relation whatsoever, that all had different voices, different backgrounds, different stories, different mannerisms, personalities, that were all created by these other people, and we had to kind of find a way to connect these differences and create something that is cohesive and interesting to watch," Hernandez-Suster said.

"It also taught me to add a lot of those choices and methods to my future acting," Hernandez-Suster said.

## Woods and Silberg named Valedictorian, Salutatorian

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When he talks about his time at Lane, he doesn't start with the accomplishments either, he started with the environment. "I just think about the community around me.. It was so easy for me to find classes I was interested in," said Silberg. "Everyone's very encouraging... they'll help you out along the way."

For both Woods and Silberg, school became more meaningful when they found ways to connect it to themselves. Woods remembers one teacher that changed everything: Mrs. Cramarosso. "She just changed the way I wrote and the way I saw classes in general," Woods said.

Silberg described a similar shift when he entered AP Capstone, and

specifically shouted out Mr. Gonzalez. "He really pushed me to explore what I was interested in.[The class] really allowed me to think about what I wanted to learn and turn it into a big project," Silberg said.

Their daily routines reflected two different mindsets. Silberg learned early on to protect his time outside of school. "I really maximized my 8:00 to 3:15," Silberg said, explaining that staying focused during class meant he could fully relax later. Woods on the other hand found herself working whenever she could. "If I'm on the bus, I'd pull out my phone and do some work. There's just never a time where I'm sitting around feeling unproductive," Woods said.

Neither path was without its challenges. Both students openly admitted that self-doubt followed them at times. "It's pretty common to doubt yourself... There are so many smart people," Silberg said. He learned to remind himself that "everyone's on their own path." Woods described similar feelings of imposter syndrome. When things became overwhelming, she gave herself space to reset "I need a moment to myself... then I'll go back to my work."

As graduation approaches, both students are thinking less about titles and more about what they'll carry forward at Duke University (Woods) and Stanford University (Silberg). Silberg said being salutatorian is meaningful because

it gives him the opportunity to "speak on behalf of this amazing class." Woods hopes younger students take something simpler but just as important; "just because a class is advertised as being hard... you should still try and take it," Woods said. "A grade isn't everything, you are not your grade."

Looking back, Silberg wishes he had gotten involved in more activities earlier on. "It's such a huge school you've really got to take advantage of that," Silberg said. Woods, though, wouldn't change her experience.

After everything, the stress, the late nights, the moments of doubt, her answer still remains the same: She would do it all over again.

# Gen Z's relationship with Christianity is more complex than a revival

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40% of adults aged 18-29 reported that they never go to church and 21% say that they seldom do.

And yet there are still reports of religiosity increasing among younger people.

Trinity Vernonpye, a senior and president of Holy Trinity club at Lane, describes herself as non-denominational and said, "In this last year or last, actually, three years, I've been in Lane Tech especially, but especially this year, it's been a height and increase in people who reignite in their faith and just having more desire to

meet God, understand who he is, and just grow a true relationship with him and just want to better themselves overall."

This trend was also recognized by junior Ainslie Rooney, who identifies as Catholic, saying, "When I came to Lane I wasn't expecting so many people to be like, religious or Christian because there has been a lot of religious hate in politics (referring to the increasing role of religion in political debates), so I just was surprised by how many people I met."

But people like freshman Sean Kroiak haven't seen many people wanting to be more involved in

religion, saying, "I only have one case of someone actually becoming religious and that is my cousin, but that was a while ago. And that's literally it."

It seems that though nationwide religiosity among younger people is declining or staying at lower levels, select communities may be seeing young people increasing attendance or becoming zoming closer to their church community.

Social or religious trends are very hard to pinpoint and are likely the cause of a variety of possible causes.

"Current times are pretty depressing," Kroiak said. "There's a

very high Gen Z rate of depression nowadays. So I wouldn't be surprised if some people turn to religion. But, I would not be surprised at all if this was constructed."

According to Pew Research, 70% of teens report that anxiety or depression is a major problem among their peers.

This desire for a community is a possible reason some religious communities are seeing higher attendance.

Referencing the bible, Vernonpye said this about community, "And I think in Galatians, [It's explained that] the need of a church because it has that community

and it's meant to just overall help us build each other out."

"Just [church] is somewhere where nothing else is connected to that place, like because no politics or school or any of my friends are involved with my church," Rooney said. "It's a place I can go and not have to worry about that."

But there can be some tensions in those communities, as political debates and religion have become increasingly intertwined. Both Rooney and Vernonpye expressed a dislike for people using religion to justify actions.

## Lane's annual end of year AP Art Show

By ETHAN MAZZEO

Yoel Lopez's digital artwork "Perigee" depicts a large cartoonish moon with a wide grin hanging over a Chicago-like city.

"It was really hard trying to get everything to look right," Lopez said. "I was experimenting with colors and lighting because most of my stuff is usually flat. Most of the difficulty came from trying to both learn and make it look good by the deadline. But in the end, I think it came out fine. At least in terms of practice. I learned from it."

The piece was one of many displayed at the AP Art Show, which was held on May 14 after school in the Art Gallery, Room 147. Teachers, parents, and students alike all came together to view art students' last piece of work for Lane. AP 2D art, with things such as photography, were held on the right half of the room, and paintings/drawings were on the left.

"Perigee" was submitted both for Lopez's AP Drawing final as well as for his portfolio, and it was also displayed in the All City Art

Exhibition at the Art Institute of Chicago earlier this year.

Artist Emily Diel's favorite piece was "Unbound" due to the difficulty of it. "It took me a month because I kept messing up the swirl, and then I had to go over it with pens," Diel said. The hardest part of the piece for her was getting the swirls correctly. "I had to redo this piece a couple times because I didn't like it."

Diel's other piece, "The Irony Of Human Isolation" shows five teenagers all sitting close but not quite next to each other looking down at their phones. She said she was inspired to make this piece through "weird behaviors that people do, and the first one I could think of was why don't we connect with each other when we have the opportunity to."

Roman Brice, a senior and spectator to the art show, came to support his artist friends Alex Smith and Cam Chitnis. Brice said that Smith and Chitnis had done their art pieces on architecture and natural landscapes. "They're really cool pieces," Brice said. "It's a lot of light contrasts. Like there's one that looks like it's

in the desert and it's got trees and it's really stunning."

Aurelio Smithivas went to the art show for extra credit in his class but mainly to indulge himself in the many pieces displayed there by his classmates. Smithivas said that his favorite pieces were the photography ones. "I'm in Photography 1. So I can really understand the creative process and almost the vision that goes into these. I can appreciate it a lot more. So yeah, I think that's why a lot of them are interesting to me."

Santiago Ramirez, an artist, did three pieces called The Eagle, The Wolf, and The Whale with the general scene of it being the symbolism of animals and how they relate to people. Ramirez said that he found animals the easiest to draw while the hardest part was trying on a large scale he has never drawn on before. Overall Ramirez said, "I wanted to draw [an] environment that animals can be found in. Which I think is a lot more colorful and lively."

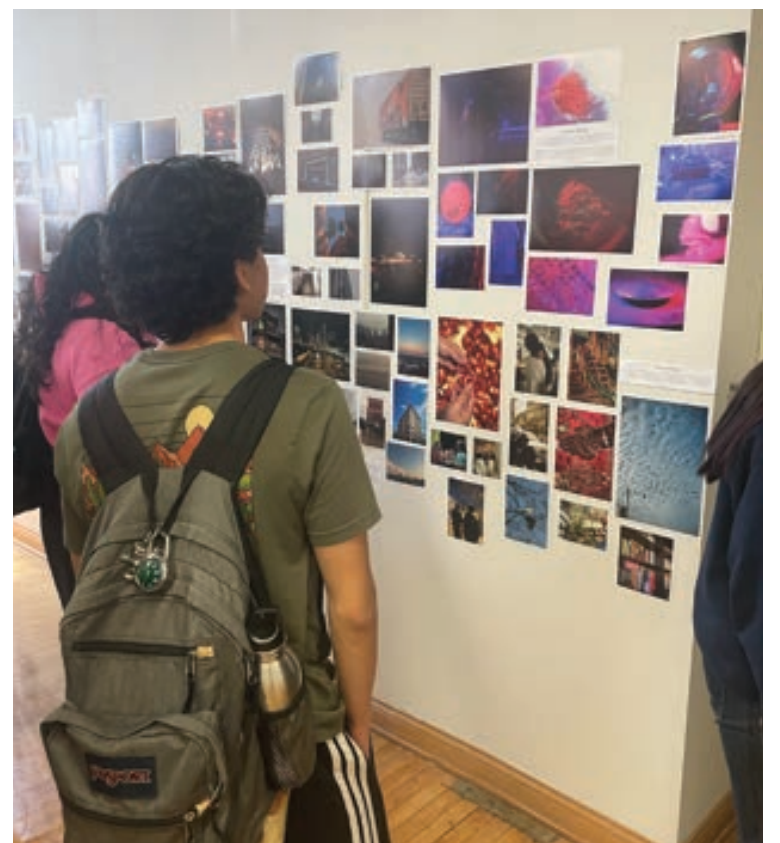


PHOTO BY ETHAN MAZZEO

Aurelio Smithivas views Cam Chitnis' photography pieces.

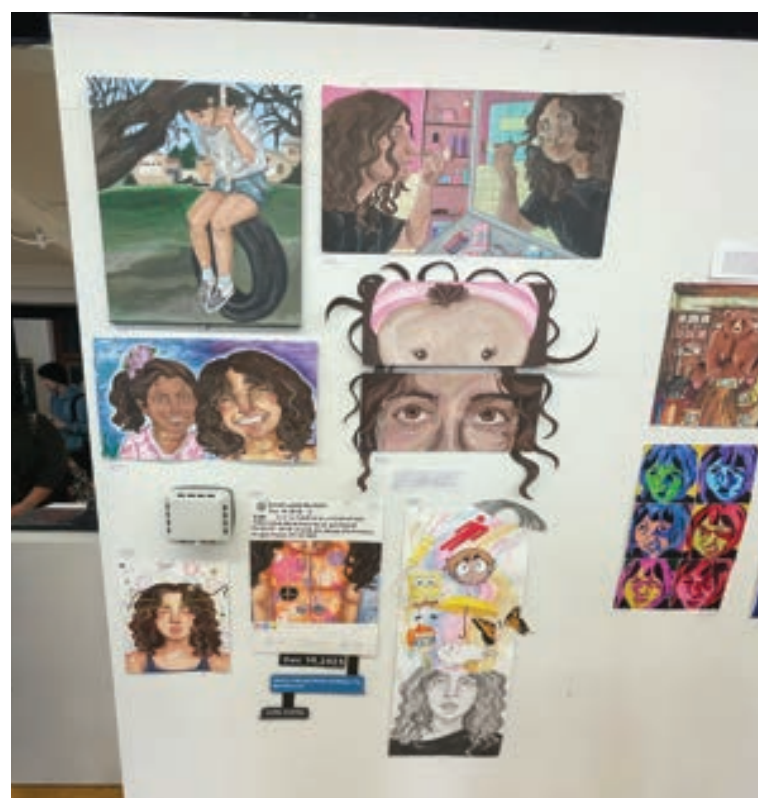


PHOTO BY ETHAN MAZZEO

Julia Hickson's pieces presented at the Art Show.



PHOTO BY ETHAN MAZZEO

Yoel Lopez's art pieces displayed in the art show with his perigee piece being the moon.

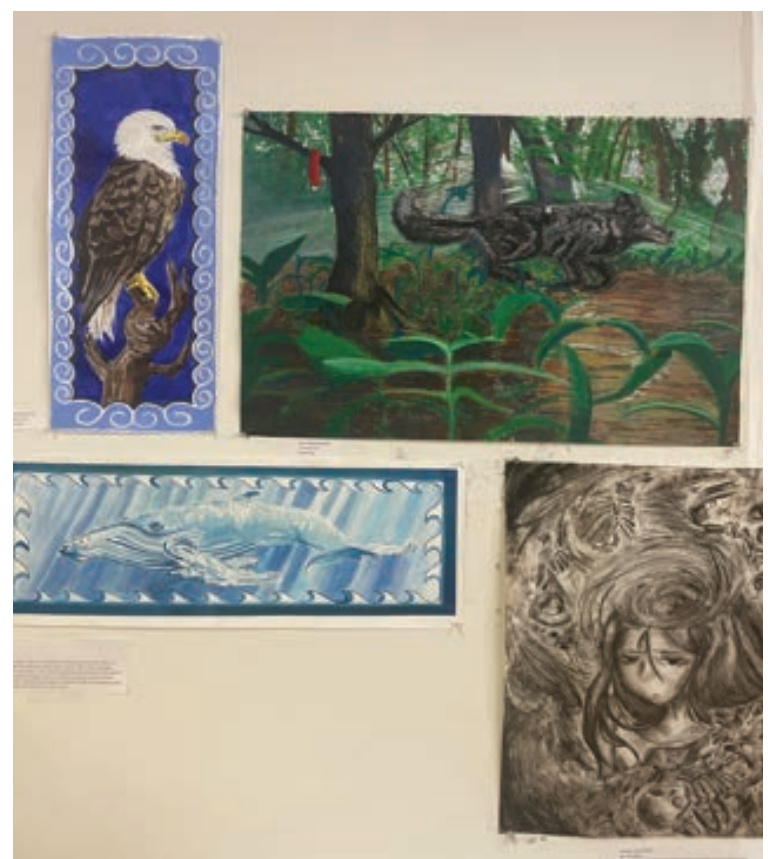


PHOTO BY ETHAN MAZZEO

Santiago Ramirez's pieces displayed at the Art Show.

# Choir is not a drag

## Lane Tech choir's first drag queen bingo fundraiser

By JULIA HICKSON

Izzy Fierce walked out at 7 p.m., red hair so high it could touch the ceiling. “Round and round the bingo cage goes, where it lands, only I know,” Fierce said as the numbers dropped one by one and she began calling them out.

Lane Tech choir held its first drag queen bingo fundraiser April 12 at Hamburger Mary’s to raise money in order to switch from dresses and tuxes to new concert robes. “[Concert robes] are gender neutral,” said choir teacher Ashley McKinstry on why they are switching. “It doesn’t matter what you are wearing underneath them. [Also,] so kids don’t have to go buy their own clothing. They are a little cheaper, and also they would stay here and so I wouldn’t have to rebuy them every single year.”

Additionally, the choir is in need of new robes as they are required to wear them for their Illinois Music Education Association (ILMEA) competition, and for the past few years, they have been borrowing them from a local church.

The first game of the night was classic bingo and as the contestants got one spot away from winning, Fierce directed them to exclaim “It’s on, b\*\*\*\*s!”

The first winner of the night was freshman Emma Sennett. While this is her first year, joining choir felt like a natural next step to her singing journey. “I’ve been doing voice lessons and singing since I was about six, so choir is kind of like the next step in that,” Sennett said.

To win round two, contestants had to get five in a row diagonally. Upon winning, contestants were able to choose prizes, which included items such as Star-

bucks gift cards, hair products, water bottles, or squishy toys.

Intertwined between the six games of bingo, there was a plethora of mini games, the first of which was a guess the song game. The two contestants, Bart and Kelsey, both floundered through the game, not knowing songs such as “Shake it Off” by Taylor Swift or “Golden” from KPop Demon Hunters, but ultimately Kelsey won after guessing “Walking on Sunshine” by Katrina and the Waves.

Following the mini games, Fierce took a break and made way for performances by choir members. The first performance was by the choir trio, Mallory Finnigan, Amelia Taylor, and Grey Pillsbury, who sang “And Nature Smiled” by Allen Koepke, which the trio performed at the choir IHSA competition.

While it is only her first year, Pillsbury has been interested in choir for a long time. “My freshman year, I saw the choir concert right after I had done my course selection, and I was like, ‘Oh my God, I want to be a part of that,’” Pillsbury said. “The pieces they played were really cool, and I just really loved the general energy of being in a chorus.”

After this performance, senior Henry Wachob did an acoustic cover of the song “My Old Man” by Mac DeMarco which led into Fierce coming back out to do a performance of her own.

Fierce went around the restaurant collecting tips from the audience, lip synching to a medley of Abba songs, beginning with “Take a Chance” and closing with “Waterloo” before returning to her bingo table. The next round was a regular game of bin-

go that Sennett won once again. “[The event] was super fun, and I won bingo twice,” Sennett said.

Along with the many mini games and chances to win prizes, there were certain calls and responses that could also give the players a chance to win a prize. For instance, when the number B-11 was called, the crowd would erupt in people screaming “hands to heaven!” with the first one to call it out winning a gift from the prize box.

Following the 4th bingo round, there was another mini game where junior Haven McDermit and sophomore Maeve Gray competed to see who is the better drag queen. McDermit, nicknamed Anita Loan, and Gray, nicknamed Sweet Cheeks, danced around Hamburger Mary’s collecting tips. Anita Loan came out the victor, collecting \$90 in tips, beating Sweet Cheeks by just one dollar. All of the money from the mini game was then donated back to the choir.

With only two games remaining, there were more specialty rounds, the first of which was the “pole dancer” which required all five filled squares to be in a vertical line, and then “I got B.O.” where contestants needed to fill an entire vertical line in both the B and the O sections.

With the final prize being two tickets to the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, stakes were higher than ever, but contestants were faced with a worthy opponent. “Me and my family play bingo religiously,” Pillsbury said. “The night before, we actually went to another bingo event. I was kind of on a hot streak this weekend.” Pillsbury won this round of bingo, taking home the tickets and



PHOTO BY JULIA HICKSON

**Choir trio: senior Mallory Finnigan, juniors Amelia Taylor and Grey Pillsbury perform “And Nature Smiled” by Allen Koepke.**



PHOTO BY JULIA HICKSON

**Senior Henry Wachob performs “My Old Man” by Mac DeMarco while Ashley McKinstry holds up microphones.**

joyfully exclaiming “I got B.O!”

Despite being an event to raise money for the Lane Tech choir, it was just as pleasurable as if it were a normal bingo night. “I

really enjoyed the event,” Pillsbury said. “I won two tickets to the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, which was insane, and it’s also just a really great vibe.”

## IHSA Journalism Finals bring together reporters from across the state

By ALANA NICHOLS

Students filed into Heartland Community College’s auditorium on April 24 to hear from the debaters whose arguments would later be used in many student stories. The debate, on the issue of citizen journalism versus professional journalism, was staged for Radio and TV News categories, and would set the tone for a day built around fast reporting in a single-day statewide competition.

The Illinois High School Association’s Journalism State Finals brought together students throughout the state for the 20th year of the event. Many schools attended with full teams, while others came with only a few students who qualified from sectionals. The competition included categories in writing, design, photography, and broadcasting, and copyediting, which were all done in person under strict time limits.

This year’s state finals showed not only how different schools approached journalism, but also how the IHSA event itself has evolved over time. With mock press conferences and staged news, the contest had students demonstrate the same reporting skills used in professional settings.

Timothy Barnes, who argued for citizen journalism in the mock debate, said the physical setup influenced how students gathered the information. “Because we have the podium to the right and then it’s like the space that we have makes it a lot easier for us to talk to everyone instead of just focusing on an individual,” Barne said. He added that the format of the auditorium allowed students to “talk to pretty much everyone,” rather than approaching sources one at a time.

Barne said that his team spent time outside of school to prepare, up to 5 hours in some cases. “We spaced it out in the time of, like, a week or two weeks,” he said.

For students in radio news, the challenge came from condensing a large amount of information into something much smaller to submit to the competition. Sophia Valdez, who competed in the radio news category, said the hardest part was “trying to find a good story and trying to find the main points of the story since they give you a lot of information.” She explained that competitors had to identify “the main topics and main points,” while also managing the time constraints. “If you talk too much, you’ll run out of time,” Valdez said.

Valdez said she tries to balance different viewpoints within her reporting. “I always like to use different voice clips of different, like, right now, debaters,” she said. She explained her focus to stay unbiased while still conveying voice. “You have to be very neutral about it, so you have to do your best to give their main points and not lean on one side,” Valdez said.

IHSA administrator Matt Troja oversaw the broader structure of the event. He explained that he helps to coordinate the competition and said the journalism finals stemmed from the ideas of journalism professors at Eastern Illinois University. He said the goal was to give students who are involved in school newspapers and yearbooks a shot at participating in an IHSA event.

This participation has been steady for two decades, ranging from 80 to about 110 schools, depending on scheduling conflicts, Troja said.

Troja said the most challenging part now is dealing with the technology. Before 2020, most entries were submitted by hand, but in an attempt to adapt after the pandemic, IHSA changed its categories to an online arrangement as well. “The move to digital has made some things easier



PHOTO BY ALANA NICHOLS

**Lane Tech journalism students qualify for the State Finals: Sophie Wu, center, finished 4th in Newspaper Design and 6th in Editorial Writing. State qualifiers Dash Rorem, left, competed in Editorial Cartooning, and Ellie Sanderson, right, competed in Copy Editing.**

and it’s made other things a lot more complicated,” Troja said. He noted that entries are sometimes in the wrong format, requiring staff to track down students who may have already left the campus.

Now, sectionals remain virtual, a decision Troja said is supported by most advisers. Surveys show the agreement among staff of “about 70-30 to stay virtual,” mainly because in person sectionals would require computer labs that many

schools don’t have access to.

The day at Heartland Community College continued with students moving between writing rooms, photography assignments, and broadcast spaces until around 1:00 p.m. The day ended with the announcement of Edwardsville High School’s victory of the 2026 IHSA state journalism finals with a two point lead over Huntley High school.

# Reuse reduce recycle

## Earth Day, the Revival of the environmental movement

By LILY ROYER

The National Environmental Teach-In was proposed in late 1969 to be a day for college students to study environmental lectures and lessons. Later, it was rebranded to be called Earth Day; a celebration of this world we call home.

Earth Day wasn't initially intended to celebrate scenery and wildlife, like it is now. Instead Earth Day all started with the environmental movement of the 1970s; Earth Day was later assigned to April 22 as a day of annual celebration for the world, and a way to forever raise awareness.

Arthur Wawrzyczek, an AP Environmental Science teacher, said that to understand Earth Day and the steps we can take today, we have to understand the history first.

"Earth Day has become a little bit more symbolic than perhaps the original Earth Day intended to be," Wawrzyczek said. "But I also know why some of that was lost. Back then you were walking into air that would kill you, that was the concentration of pollutants and acid-forming gases and all these different things in the air and in the water."

"I mean, rivers were on fire. Do you know how difficult it is to set a river on fire? That was the sort of environmental damage they were dealing with in the 60s and 70s, when Earth Day was that larger protest movement," Wawrzyczek said.

Earth Day is larger than a day, it is a celebration of Earth's many features and a protest



PHOTO BY LILY ROYER

**Lane students collecting trash and taking care of the environment around campus.**

movement for change, protection, and conservation.

Senior David Morowitz, a member of Envirothon, described Envirothon as a science olympiad for the environment, where students take tests in competition to see who knows more on environmental topics that change year by year. He said he thinks Earth Day is a way for the world to come together to recognize Earth's beauty. "I think Earth Day should be every day," Morowitz said.

"Even if it's a small thing like posting a picture of the forest on your Instagram story, it's still something to recognize how beautiful everything around us is and how we should be doing more work to preserve it," Morowitz said.

According to the Council on

Foreign Relations, "Earth Day has become a durable symbolic focal point for global climate action."

Shay Field, a senior, called Earth Day a day to become more aware of the environment. He also feels like no real change is going to come out of just one person getting involved.

"I honestly do think that a lot of environmental protection stuff is like, all or nothing," Field said. "I feel like a lot of people struggle to get into it, because they feel like, oh, well, I either have to 100% do this or I can't do it at all. I mean, I feel like a lot of things are like that, but it's also costly, like with time and money."

Whilst reflecting on the real impact of Earth Day, Brianna Bryson, an AP Environmental Science and an Aquaponics teach-



PHOTO BY LILY ROYER

**Lane tech lawn, showing people enjoying the warm weather and celebrating nature.**

er, said a state of apathy can impact how much progress is truly made.

"I see kids who are like, well, what's the point? What am I going to do if no one else is participating?" Bryson said. "And so there's a lot of apathy around it, but I also think there's a lot of people willing to help. They just don't know how to help or where

to go, or you know who to ask."

Wawrzyczek highlights the importance of appreciating and protecting the environment that we currently have. "I want to see a larger focus on just protecting the already positive attributes we have, which realistically is specifically our biodiversity," Wawrzyczek said.

# Prom Date Pressures

By FAITH GALIK

As the school year nears the end and prom approaches, this can be a time filled with love, friendship and community. For some, it can also be one of isolation when the topic of a "date" is mentioned.

"I think that prom is definitely a lot more focused on dates and romance and like in High School Musical, it's all about taking somebody," said senior Sophie Petrucci.

This media portrayal of prom has an impact on senior perspectives and expectations for their own prom. When prom is featured in popular coming of age movies and TV shows, many scenes center around the romantic aspect, having the perfect experience with the perfect partner.

"I feel like it's expected of people to have a date on prom," said senior Victoria Karczmarzyk. "Even if it's not necessarily someone you know very well." A 2026 statistic from WifiTalents writes that 65% of prom attendees go with a romantic date. The remainder attend with friends or solo. This majority can be off-putting for students who aren't asked to

go along with another person.

The culture around securing a prom date may connect to a desire for couple pictures. "The date is more for show for a lot of people," Karczmarzyk said. "In some cases, it's more to say you had a date and pose for a picture rather than actually establish a connection." According to WifiTalents, 50% of dates include pre-prom photoshoots.

Petrucci attests to pre-prom photoshoots contributing to stressors of obtaining a prom date. "For pre-prom photos, if everyone has dates, it's going to be like, 'oh, everyone's taking pictures one-on-one with their dates,' and I'm just going to be standing there by myself," Petrucci said.

Some of these pressures may be unique to Lane's dance policies. Every year, homecoming does not allow for anyone outside of Lane to attend, while Prom does, each person gets a non-lane plus-one. The differences between the allowance of outside dates from homecoming to prom creates difference according to Petrucci. "I think that it's just a lot more relaxed and because you can't bring people from other schools, it's



PHOTO BY FAITH GALIK

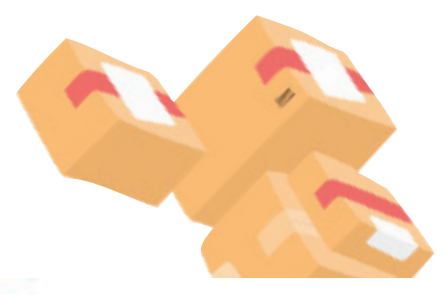
**Sierra Schimmel, Shannon Flanagan, Mary Cate Bradish, Maddie Dube, Victoria Karczmarzyk, Gabby McCracken, Kristina Kelly, Sophie Petrucci, Faith Galik and Emi Valova pose at prom with their flower bouquets.**

like you can't really bring dates," Petrucci said. "But here [with prom] it's like every single person is trying to find someone to bring."

Getting caught up in these societal pressures can be unnecessary stress for what is supposed to be a big moment for seniors. "I think it'll be a lot of fun, with

or without a date," said Petrucci. "And I think, honestly, the dates make it more stressful anyway."

# And they're off...



## Midwest



### University of Illinois Urbana Champaign

Adam Parsons, Aidan Olmstead, Alex Smith, Allison Duran Diaz, Alyssa Gonzalez, Andrew Chang, Andrew Fukawa, Andy Choi, Angelique Rodriguez, Angie Situ, Areti Vlahos, Arhum Butt, Atinuke Sulemon, Ava Gavigan, Ava Osberg, Avra Raman, Benjamin Bock, Brianna Blackshaw, Bridget Berg, Bridget Fulkerson, Bridget Taylor, Brynn Walter, Caleb Kerman, Cameron Tokowitz, Charles Majewski, Chase Kaplan, Connor Moli, Connor Niles, Connor Sullivan, Crystal Hernandez, Daniel Rodriguez-Bernal, David Morowitz, Dax Kato, Dede Gbikpi-Benissan, Eddie Newboe, Edwin Jimenez, Ela Agar, Eliana Zaldivar, Ella Lateano, Eric Ameyaw, Erick Eligio, Ethan Goldstein, Ezekiel Garcia, Fiona Cheng, Gaby Vela Sora, Geneva Duncan, Graham Quinn, Greg Howard, Gunnar Nicewick, Hagen Bonnette, Heather Borre, Helena Domalik, Hunter Liao, Hunter Smith, Ikechukwu Nkwocha, Indra Catolico, Iris Modzelewski, Jaykynn Roldan, Joe Nowak, Jorge Castellon, Jose Rueda, Julia Hickson, Kai Changet, Kaila De Freitas, Kelvin Zhindon, Kevin Nguyen, Kiyoko Woodfork, Lailani Rosa-Santiago, Lara Aral, Leila Hasan, Leo Ripp, Levi Rice, Liam Minkov, Logan Dimas, Lucy Arnold, Lucy Noback, Luke Pagonis, Lydia Palilonis, Madeline Freda, Maks Schechinger, Mason Hauser, Matias Hernandez Ojeda, Mayra Calderon, McKenna Casey, Michael Goluch, Miley Rodrigue, Milo Manley, Mimi Pastrotelli, Monserrat Ron, Morenike Sulemon, Myles Vendel, Nico Conception, Nina Le, Noah Sykes, Opal Prachand, Quinn Downey, Radu Bucur, Roi Vaughn, Ruby Miller, Sam Olech, Samuel Liebert, Sean Doyle, Sebastian Arias, Sirun Zhu, Stella Steckler, Theo Blaustein, Thomas Duffly, Victoria Cuervas, Victoria Karczmarzyk, Yapeth Meharena, Zach Buchar, Zuzanna Flaszka



### University of Illinois Chicago

Aaliyah Perez, Analy Garcia, Andrea Alvarez, Ben Ciesla, Christian Terrazas, Christopher Gonzalez-Avila, Daniel Ortiz, Diego Luna, Emily Chow, Emma Estrada, Enggy Puma, Francisco Montero, Germaine Mosquera, Gilberto Perez, Gliann Francisco, Isabella Chan, Jaslene Soto, Jessenia Luna, Jezalyn Davila, Johanna Lector, Jose Lagunas, Kebor Bekuma, Leo Gao, Marcos Perez, Melannie Gonzalez, Nathan Alvarado, Nathan Miranda, Nicky Chiang, Pablo Narez, Selah Morales, Sofia Gonzalez, Yaneli Otero, Yuliana Renteria, Yuliana Renteria, Zacro Tackett



### Indiana University Bloomington

Aaron Tsai, Alex Lapins, Alizay Kashif, Amelia Volkens, Brendan Maxwell, Chuck Laurenson, Donovan Yoest, Ella Carton, Hagen Bonnette, Nikolette Rentzelos, Olivia Walling, Vivian Gerogiannis, Ava Rodriguez



### DePaul University

Adna Sero, Daniel Mazurok, Danny Delfosse, Derick Bonilla, Eduardo Villagomez, Elsa Beqke, Gregory Alex Kapelouzou, Johnson Bravo-Fuentes, Jose Pena Jr., Malik Peterson, Maria Koutsovitis, Marley Navarro, Mia Nivar, Milo Diaz, Nate Hetherington, Nery Duran, Nikia Morris, Paulina Girardi, Ruben Marin, Samuel Henderson, Sebastian Carrillo, Szymon Urantowka



### Loyola University

Aaron Sanchez, Angelina Santos, Evelyn Loja, Guadalupe Benitez, Hesham Aziz, Katarina Bhanbaris, Lexa Fleck, Martin Nguyen, Myah Shakom, Omar Aziz



### University of Chicago

Abigail Rodriguez, Josue Ochoa, Nguyen Le



Grinnell College  
Fiona McCarthy



### University of Notre Dame

Audrey Nathaus, Diego Patino, Katie Warner



### Chicago State University

Vermon Cole



### Northwestern University

Carmen Covarrubias, Delilah Lane, Ernest Gontarz, Filip Orlof, Ije Agbakwu, Kaiden Robertson, Lily Norman, Pawel Pyka, Sofia Sebastian, Vitorio Pejovic



### Purdue University

Angel Ativie, Jovani Gonzalez, Milo Winston, Oscar Craig



### Northern Illinois University

Brandon Apollo, Demario Reyes, Dwan Bright, Habib Oubidele, Michelle Garcia



### Macalester College

Jonas Gray, Madeline Marceau



### Iowa State University

Alana Nichols, Daniel Howard



### Illinois Institute of Technology

Angel Otis, Diego Lineros, Juan Torres Jr., Jose Carriel



### Illinois State University

Aaliyah Alpin, Amari Hernandez, Ava Troccoli, Babi Vais, Carmen Chavez, Chloé Gonzalez, Dany Wachob, Madison Alstara, Matthew Szalasi, Melani Miranda, Romyell Davis, Sophia Babson, Stephanie Benavides



### University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

Owen Herzh



### Eastern Illinois University

Kendrick Lyles-Henderson



### Southern Illinois University Edwardsville

Ja-Sharia Myles, Reginald Damontae Brown III, Zaria Daniels



### Michigan State University

Alexander Hoff, Andy Lawrence, Asher Radutny, Cooper Tassone, Fiona Burke, Graham Sumner, Iris Finelli, Joey Petracca, Lazarus Suda, Maggie Hays, Max Shulman, Shelby Goss, Sophia Contreras



### Beloit College

Miles Morrow



### DePauw University

Diana Solorzano, Gezelle Pompa



### Wright College

Fernando Carrero, Hope Maciel



### Marquette University

Declan Sweetman, Diana Cano, Ellie Diemer, Gabriel Xerogianes White, Gray Jimenez, Maryn Kenny, Natalia D'Alessandro, Sage Tenfelde, Will Glenn



### Kenyon College

Ash Torres, Heyn Negrete



### Miami University Ohio

Annabella Martha, Arianna Koschen, Claire Schneider, Daphne Perolas, Evangeline Roach, Jeremiah Aganaga, Mita Gordon, Molly Busby, Will Bigan



### Grand Valley State University

Amyah Davis



University of Michigan

Anh Truong, Charlie Johnson, Charlotte Burns, Helin Wang, Henry Fleishman, Juan Carlos Ascencio, Julian Hernandez-Suster, Kaiya Kedzierski, Kanan Kraus, Mathew Melo, Oliver Webber, Olivia Jones, Olivia Segura, Owen Soltanzadeh, Radu Anghel, Samantha Schupp, Samuel Damiani, Shayna Sharpe, Tony Zetina, Vanessa Donnelly, Zach Watts



Augustana College

Ezekiel Bradshaw, Yahir Reyes



University of Wisconsin Madison

Abbie Graff, AJ Regis, Alexis Herrera, Alice Svendsen, Alice Tomlins, Anthony Suarez, Arizona Pareika, Brendan Maxwell, Camden Rush, Damian Zuniga, Emi Valova, Ewa Bodzianowski, Finley Gutierrez, Graham Grossman, Jennifer Sein, Jocelyn Hays, Joseph Singan, Kelly Tran, Lila Ruby, Luc Baldwin, Luciana Flores, Nadia Sayeed, Oliver Adler-Grimm, Shai Stevens, Shonra Khan, Stella Yarusso, Tien Tong



Quincy University

Richard Barwicki



St. Olaf College

Sunita Burwell Mehta

Columbia College Chicago

Almar Lewis, Jacob Ballard



University of Iowa

Avery Nelson, Blake Moore, Charles Wittenwylter, Drew Janovsky, Jackson Shapley, Joseph Breenka, Max Szukala, Natalie Crosby, Wilson Macbeth

ILLINOIS

Illinois College of Applied Health Sciences

Isaac Baechus



North Central College

Harrison Bakunas



Southern Illinois University Carbondale

Noah Zaccari



Kennedy-King College

Yasir Beloch



University of Northern Michigan

Yohan Encarnacion



North Central College

Harrison Bakunas



Triton College

Michael Duke



University of Dayton

Ethan Cloud



Ohio State University

Brianna Hernandez, Dylan Kenealy, Eliana Silva, Isabella - Sнопек, Jared Harris, Johnathan Pierson, Karley Pearl, Maja Cabacug, Sophie Petricci, Yonatan Joffe Turjeman



Saint Mary's University of Minnesota

Joseph Devaney



School of the Art Institute of Chicago

Daniel Alvarez



Bradley University

Elliot Orzechowski, Melissa Perez, Tiarri Banks



Butler University

Chayse Radcliff



Denison University

Deodthy Mason, Vivian Kotche, Yareli Marchan



University of Illinois Springfield

Aaron Mata, Maritza Sandoval



Saint Louis University

Hope Wilson



Illinois Wesleyan University

Adna Subasic, Zadia Jefferson



Richard J Daley College

Miguel Martinez



Carthage College

Peter Georgopoulos, Ryan Roth



Olivet Nazarene University

Alex Juarez-Magana



Case Western Reserve University

Claire Lokken, Chaitan Murthy



Drake University

Mallory Finnigan



University of Wisconsin-Platteville

Zola Bevacqua



Lewis University

Avahn Tellis-Nayak, Maya Kolowski



Roosevelt University

Irene Aguado



Dominican University

Alexandra Castaneda, Angel Carpio, Jaquelyn Cardenas, Jayden Barrientos, Mai Diaz, Melanie Ortiz



Milwaukee School of Engineering

Bryan Gauto, Samuel Spencer



North Park University

Alizay Irizarry



Harold Washington College

Angel Santana, Jesus Cruz Torres, Kris Paras



Malcom X College

Allison Sarate, Evan Vazquez



Vandercook College of Music

Wyatt Tiberia

# Northeast



**Yale University**  
Jack Cherry, Omar Arellano



**Susquehanna University**  
Roxana Cortez



**University of Massachusetts**  
Emily Cardona, Ronan Owens



**Boston University**  
Bodhi Haines, Faith Galik, Isaac Dunn, Marysia Szulakiewicz



**Babson College**  
Jose Munoz



**Ithaca College**  
Sidney Lai



**Boston College**  
Bridget Smith, Easton Walker, Lillie Sullivan, Mary Cate Bradish, Owen Matys, Winnie Tu



**Hobart and William Smith Colleges**  
Andrew Senorski, Karter James, Payton Johnson, Sydney Hoffman



**Massachusetts Institute of Technology**  
Diego Landeros



**Tufts University**  
Jude Hirsch, Shay Field



**Carnegie Mellon University**  
Ella Doubek



**Haverford College**  
Sasha Ayers



**Princeton University**  
Justin Choe, Krishna Pandey



**Cornell University**  
Charlie Metzgar-Rugg, Roman Brice



**Bowdoin College**  
Vania Uribe



**Colgate University**  
Oliver Ara



**Columbia University**  
Abby Hachim, Jamie Smith, Payman Rajaie, Philip Kobierski



**Syracuse University**  
Nolan Matthews



**New York University**  
Daniel Sanchez, Hana Eichler



**University of Vermont**  
Abby Kupkam, Carolyn Faasse, Julia Pentangelo



**Pennsylvania State University**  
Gary Angelo, Natalie Miranda, Olivia Prieto



**Middlebury College**  
Sebastian Bernal, Solah Montenegro, Zion Lasana



**Berklee College of Music**  
Grey Baum



**Drexel University**  
Franklin Smith



**Fordham University**  
Kellen Shields



**University of Pittsburgh**  
Celia Allaband-Gamble, Izzy Ide, Madeline Lynch



**Connecticut College**  
Lily Ngo



**Dickinson College**  
Luis Morales Lopez



**University of Connecticut**  
Daniela Andrade



**Trinity College**  
Evren Durham, Trang Nguyen



**Fairfield University**  
Ryan Peet



**University of Maryland**  
Eleanor McGuire, Emma Casillas



**Bard College**  
June Rutzen



**Stevens Institute of Technology**  
Elvin Rodriguez

# South



**University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill**  
Sydney Trzar

**Florida A&M University**  
Camille Oshodi

**University of Tennessee**  
Adrian Christiansen, Annabelle Glick, Gavin Piccirilli, Lucy Mollet, Luke Kam, Manny Girolamo

**University of Tennessee Knoxville**  
Luke Kam

**Florida International University**  
Arianna Marquez

**University of Miami**  
Eleanor Detlefsen, Tallulah Dabrowski

**Savannah College of Art and Design**  
Patrick Wallenfang, Ruby Fuller

**Duke University**  
Anna Tataryn, Addy McGarry, Dajjah Woods, Lana Surgit

**University of Florida**  
Charlie Goldstein, Kayla Castro, Keenan Valerius, Liam McCreery, Lindsay Peterson, Nico Donoso, Sam Arnold, Tyler Coslow

**Tulane University**  
Ada Lavery, Athena Solberg, Eli Wener, Lexie Antoine, Lila Shapiro, Sofie Miniscalco

**Vanderbilt University**  
Jason Lakian, Jinhua Wang

**Louisiana State University**  
Kristina Kelly

**Auburn University**  
David Gallo

**Georgetown University**  
Olivia Kurmsky, Samuel Speck

**Emory University**  
Princess Cadman, Zoe Horton

**Clemson University**  
Emmy Simone

**University of Tampa**  
Will Bigane

**Rice University**  
Valeria Palacios

**University of New Orleans**  
Jeremy Vogel

**Jackson State University**  
India Davenport

**Wake Forest University**  
Mia Rodzynek

**University of Texas**  
Dean Guttman, Scarlett Kral, Sydney Van Aken

**Coastal Carolina University**  
Davis Gebhart

**Tennessee State University**

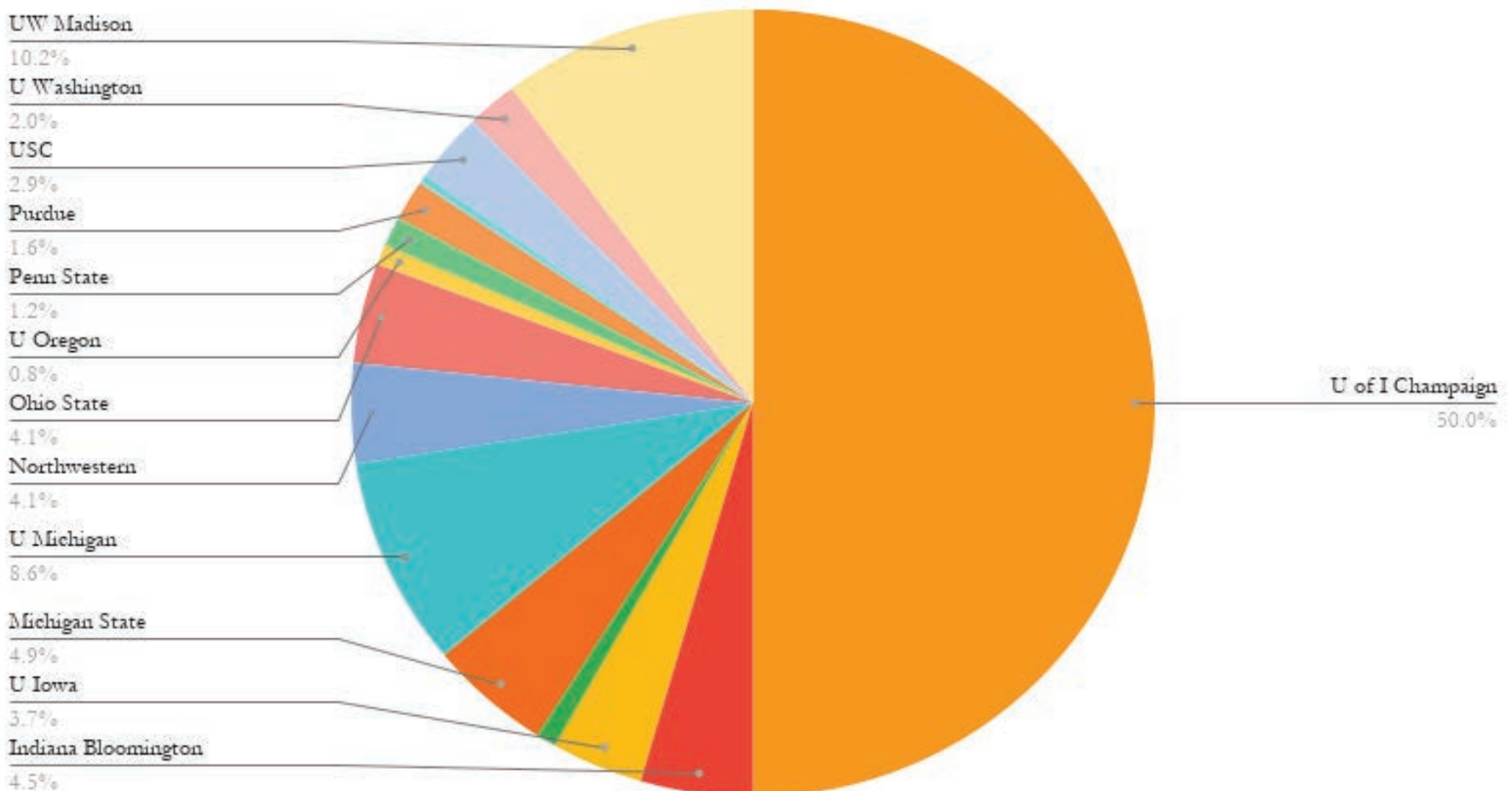
**Texas Southern University**  
Jackson Galby

**Georgia Tech University**  
Hudson Finn, Mike Majewski, Talia Seidner

**Howard University**  
Addy Biggs, Lenise Montgomery

**Virginia Tech University**  
Sayer Jankowski

## Big 10 Attendees



# West



**Pomona College**  
James Scott, Mateo Schroeder, Lena Wierchigroch, Ngone Dioum



**University of Southern California**  
Caitlyn Shane, Emily Chivers, Mary Brunson, Sophie Wu, Spencer Martinez, Zaria Daniels, Zoe Kirsch



**University of California Berkley**  
Maia Westrope Pellot, Marcus Arzadon, Rheya Ciesla



**Lewis & Clark College**  
Lark Beck



**California Polytechnic State University**  
Kaiser Chapman



**University of California Los Angeles**  
Julia Poulos



**Gonzaga University**  
Finn Hogan



**San Diego State University**  
Clarissa Akoto-Bamfo, Lian Huh, Niam Darden, Selam Selesonidan



**University of Washington**  
Elizabeth Sanderson, Ettan Bhutt, Harlow Lovitt, Kianna Macedo, Natasha Matznick



**Colorado College**  
Belinda Calle, Miles Edel, Zach Olmsdo-Masie



**University of California Santa Cruz**  
Asha Westrope Pellot



**Santa Clara University**  
Valeria Palacios



**University of California Santa Barbara**  
Ian Donohoe, Isabella Butts, Lily Bishop, Owen Santiago



**Colorado University Boulder**  
Aneliese Yeager



**University of Oregon**  
Alex Deakins, Kieran Vance



**Stanford University**  
Gus Silberg, David Espinoza

# International

## Ireland

## England



**University College Dublin**  
Alex Fitzpatrick



**Trinity College Dublin**  
Luka Thompson



**Liverpool John Moores University**  
Kaiya Stewart

## Canada



**McGill University**  
Maeve Krikorian



**University of Toronto**  
Novella Cage, Ava Lau



**University of Guelph**  
Juno Niederpruem

# Military

# Congrats class of 2026!




**United States Marine Corps**  
Nikolas Jacob



# From diapers to diplomas

By NIANI DARDEN



**Andres** SANCHEZ

**PRIMARY SCHOOL:**  
 "I remember the first day of preschool. I walked in with my mother. I didn't want to leave. They had to pull me off of her. And I was crying and then I got carried away by the teacher's assistant on her shoulder. I didn't want to leave. And when I got there, all I did was play with sand."

**HIGH SCHOOL:**  
 "I'm very social, so I just went around talking to everybody, tried to make conversations with everybody. I think it went well."

**LESSONS LEARNED:**  
 "Getting to know everybody right at the beginning always works out in the end, because then you get to have more connections."

**WORDS OF WISDOM:**  
 "The longer you entertain what's not for you, the longer you postpone what is."

PHOTO COURTESY OF ANDRES SANCHEZ



**Ben** LEBEAU


**PRIMARY SCHOOL:**  
 "I remember my first year at kindergarten, like my dad walking me all the way into the class, and just being very scared to leave aside."

**HIGH SCHOOL:**  
 "I remember having the screenshot of the map of the school up, trying to get around the hallways. But I was still pretty outgoing and good at making friends, you know?"

**LESSONS LEARNED:**  
 "The point of a child's first day of school is to be scared, but to get the courage to get past that. It's like throwing them in the deep end."

**WORDS OF WISDOM:**  
 "There will always be people more talented than you, but don't let there be anyone that works harder than you."

PHOTO COURTESY OF BEN LEBEAU



**Aaliyah** ADEDEJI

**PRIMARY SCHOOL:**  
 "I remember my first day of second grade because it was at a new school. I came from a Catholic school called Our Lady of Guadalupe to Beasley. I remember so vividly because that was my first experience with a white teacher."

**HIGH SCHOOL:**  
 "My first day of high school was extremely stressful. Having to navigate such a big school was extremely hard. I was late to every class that day, and it was very interesting because I got to see different people. Like people who didn't really look like me. I also had forced myself to be more social. And I met a really good friend named Miranda, until this day, we're still tight."

**LESSONS LEARNED:**  
 "Talking to newer people who you wouldn't expect to ever talk to definitely helps with character development."

**WORDS OF WISDOM:**  
 "You define who you are."

PHOTO COURTESY OF AALIYAH ADEDEJI



**Selah** MORALES


**PRIMARY SCHOOL:**  
 "I remember my first day of second grade, because I was transferring to a new school, and I was very, very nervous because I didn't know all the people that I was going to meet. I knew that these people already had a community with each other, so I was worried I wasn't going to fit in."

**HIGH SCHOOL:**  
 "Freshman year was very nerve wracking because I didn't know anybody. I made friends on the first day, though, through seating charts and stuff."

**LESSONS LEARNED:**  
 "I think new environments are nerve wracking for people, especially when you're gonna start in a new place. But I think it's very important for learning and independence and learning how to socialize with people."

**WORDS OF WISDOM:**  
 "Cowabunga!"

PHOTO COURTESY OF SELAH MORALES



**Adelaide** BIGGS

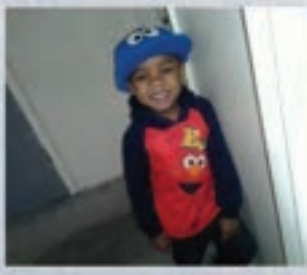
**PRIMARY SCHOOL:**  
 "Ooh, I remember one time my grandparents had flown in from Australia for the summer, and they dropped me off on my birthday at school with my parents."

**HIGH SCHOOL:**  
 "I think my first day of freshman year was a lot more daunting. I remember going to my friend Maeve's house, and her dad drove us to school, and I remember being super self-conscious about the outfit that I picked out and everything."

**LESSONS LEARNED:**  
 "It's okay to put yourself first and prioritize yourself in a lot of, (not every), but a lot of situations. I think in order to have a healthy relationship with other people, you need to have a healthy relationship with yourself."

**WORDS OF WISDOM:**  
 "Everyone is a bit nervous, obviously, about going into new schools and new places and finding themselves and other people. But I think we all have done it before and we can all do it again."

PHOTO COURTESY OF ADELAIDE BIGGS



**Ikechukwu** NKWOCHA

**PRIMARY SCHOOL:**  
 "I went to kindergarten. I just see this one girl in the room. She's crying hysterically, and I'm just like, what is going on? Why are you crying? But I understand looking back on it, she was in a new environment in a new place she's never been."

**HIGH SCHOOL:**  
 "My first day of freshman year was just, it was like I was in a new world, new planet. I was definitely out of place in my first few weeks at Lane, but eventually I was able to get into motion and start to learn the environment."

**LESSONS LEARNED:**  
 "Do whatever you want to do, and you'll find your own group of people, especially at a school like Lane Tech."

**WORDS OF WISDOM:**  
 "When life gives you lemons, you make lemonade."

PHOTO COURTESY OF IKECHUKWU NKWOCHA

# The appropriation of Asian fashion and culture

By SOPHIE WU

Fashion is a vital aspect of ethnic cultures—one that can emphasize celebration and tradition—however, it's now under scrutiny once again. When searching on Google for traditional Chinese clothing, the qipaos (traditional Chinese dresses) are cropped from maxi to mini dress length. There are some tops that imitate the high collar that distinguishes the qipao style, but they make those tops look like something for everyday wear.

Qipaos are normally worn for cultural celebrations like Chinese New Year and for brides during

their wedding ceremonies. They are not meant to be worn to go grocery shopping or for lounging around the house.

*[They're] wearing it just because [they] think it looks cute. But [they] don't respect the people, and [they] don't respect the culture.*

- Sirun Zhu

Senior Sirun Zhu said that she disagrees with the concept of people wearing qipaos for fun since it's disrespectful to Chinese culture. "Sometimes I'm just

scrolling [online] and I see someone wearing a sexualized version of qipao, and [they] don't even understand the historical significance behind it," Zhu said.

An anonymous Lane senior said that she feels uncomfortable with the idea of South Asian I-Days clubs wearing traditional clothing as costumes whereas she usually wears them for weddings and celebrations. "I know some people who say they just joined a South Asian club because they have cute costumes, but don't even know that the headpiece jewelry they wear is called a Maang Tikka," she said. "It just felt weird watching I-Days when most oth-

er clubs have so many people who join because they're connected to their culture and are proud to show it, whereas the South Asian clubs were mostly people dancing in costumes from a culture they weren't connected to."

Senior Krisha Pandey, who is Nepali and South Asian, said that she has also noticed the appropriation of Asian culture, especially with bindis, henna, and traditional clothing, saying that social media has made these trends more visible throughout the years. "It feels frustrating when people only value parts of a culture when it becomes trendy, while the people from that culture still face

stereotypes," Pandey said. "Social media helps raise awareness, but sometimes people focus more on attacking than educating."

Pandey also said that this perpetuates the notion that foreign cultures are mainly seen as aesthetics rather than meaningful traditions, and spreading awareness would help people understand the difference between cultural appropriation and appreciation. "Cultural exchange is good when it comes with respect, but the problem starts when people take from a culture without understanding or acknowledgment," Pandey said.

## Asian-Pacific awareness at Lane

By ELAINE NGUYEN

Every year, Lane recognizes Asian Pacific Islander Heritage Month. There is an annual Lane Tech Asian American Cultural (LTAAC) showcase held in the auditorium.

This year, the date for the LTAAC Showcase is May 19. Dances, songs, and other types of performances are expected to be presented to the audience members during the showcase.

There are currently two Asian languages taught at Lane: Japanese and Chinese. Sundry SaTsu is currently the only teacher that teaches Japanese. Dana Anderson and Pei Yeu Chang are currently the two teachers that teach Chinese.

Anderson teaches her Mandarin class the language and the culture of China. "[The aspects of Chinese culture] are based on what we are currently learning [with the Chinese language]," Anderson said.

Like Anderson, SaTsu teaches his Japanese class about Japanese culture. "[I teach my students Japanese events such as] children's events, other things, like New Year's," he said.

After school, Asian-Pacific dedicated clubs host their meetings. For the 2025-26 school year, there are eight I-Days Clubs focusing on specific Asian-Pacific cultures. Some non I-Days Clubs that focus on Asian culture or identity include National Chinese Honor Society, Asian Pop Dance Club, and Filipino Student Association.

Lane Tech Asian American Club is one of the Asian-Pacific clubs that does not focus on I-Days dances. Senior Trang Nguyen led meetings in the danceroom and lunchroom after school every day, in which Chantelle Fergoso and Emilyne Villasenor sponsor the meetings.

Nguyen said "I'm pretty proud" to become a part of LTAAC, since she was a sophomore. Ever since she has joined this club, she said her experiences "taught [her] a lot about leadership and how to work together with students and others" and also said she got to build this club for not only herself, but the members in her club.

"I just feel that bringing the Asian community together to represent all the different cultures around Asia is very meaningful to me," Nguyen said.

Like LTAAC, Filipino Student Association (FSA) is another club that focuses on Asian culture and identity but not dancing. Seniors Kaela Allawan and Jason Lukian led meetings in the dance room and Room 144 after school on Wednesdays, in which Anthony Gonzalez, Chantelle Fergoso, Emilyne Villasenor, Kelly Novak, Maria Olea, and Tiffany Williams sponsored the meetings.

One of the FSA Club Presidents, Lukian, said that the purpose of FSA is to highlight the culture of the Philippines and to bring awareness to this culture, such as what the culture is, the food, dancing, and everything else that comes from the Philippines.

Lukian said he ensured that every part of the Philippines gets the spotlight in the FSA because he said that "the Philippines is very diverse, even [though] it's a small country".

"I feel very proud [to be the Club President of the FSA] because, coming from a family that was made up of Filipino immigrants, it feels great that I'm able to represent my culture," Lukian said.

Despite both Allawan and Lukian being very busy throughout the year, Lukian said he and Allawan tried their best ability to showcase Filipino culture to their members and plan events with other clubs at Lane to highlight their culture and other Asian cultures, while highlighting every part of the Philippines.

Another Asian Pacific I-Days club is the Pakistani Club. Seniors Alizay Kashif and Lena Wiercigroch led meetings in Rooms 254 and 259 after school on Tuesdays, in which Sahar Shafqat and Marrin Gillespie sponsor the meetings. Pakistani Club describes itself as: "a community for Pakistanis and those interested in Pakistani culture. It is a space for learning about cultures that are not your own and also for feeling a sense of representation and belonging in our school's community."

For this school year, the Pa-



PHOTO BY ELAINE NGUYEN

**Traditional Asian clothes displayed on mannequins in the main office hallway.**

kistani Club danced in Punjabi Bhangra style, which Kashif described as "way more upbeat" and the female members performed a traditional Luddi dance, which is traditionally done at weddings in Pakistan.

Kashif said being part of the Pakistani Club made her feel "a sense of community", in which the Club together embraced the Pakistani culture, ate the traditional food, and learned the traditional dances.

"I do think I feel extra proud for being on Pakistani [Club] just because I am Pakistani myself, and because of the commitment that I've made, doing it for four years, but especially because I feel like there's something really special about our dance, our performance, when it comes to our costumes and our music, and the level of energy, I feel like even more so than putting together dances," Kashif said. "It's about putting on a show where we're having fun, and we have energy and providing a space where people feel happy in the community."

Korean Club is another I-Days club that represents an Asian country. Seniors Andrew Choi and Lana Surgit led meetings in Room 219 after school on Mondays, in which Josh Park sponsored the meetings.

For this school year, the Korean Club performed Buchaechum, which is a type of fan dancing, which has been performed throughout centuries in both North Korea and South Korea.

Surgit said the fans have "a significant look, 'cause it has these flowers" and mentioned that the flowers are "very significant to the Korean fan dance and the culture".

Not only did the Korean Club perform Buchaechum, but they also performed Taekwondo, which has "KPop" influences.

Surgit said her club have "all put in a lot of time and effort" and "have developed meaningful relationships with each other," when they practiced for I-Days over the months leading up to the event.

Asian Pacific Islander Heritage Month is celebrated all throughout May. This initiative officially debuted as a full month in 1992, after President George H.W. Bush a bill to recognize May as the Asian Pacific Islander Month. The bill originated in 1977 as a proposal by Representatives Frank Horton and Norman Mineta to honor Asian/Pacific American history.

Many Asian Americans around Lane found the Asian Pacific Islander Heritage Month to be when they would deem as important and would also celebrate. Many of these people have their own interpretations as to the meaning and purpose of the Asian Pacific Islander Heritage Month.

"I think [Asian Pacific Islander Heritage Month at Lane] is to honor all the Asian American students, and other Asian Americans that came before us, and to also celebrate the culture within

Lane," she said.

Lukian said, "I think [Asian Pacific Islander Heritage Month] means for me to be able to spread my culture, especially as an Asian American, obviously but being able to kind of be proud of who I am without being overshadowed or feeling like that I'm kind of like forcing my culture upon other people. It's more like me being able to kind of embrace who I am, and show what Asian American culture is, and why it's so important for it to be remembered and how it makes a big difference not only in Chicago, but in the U.S. as a whole."

Kashif said she discussed Asian Pacific Islander Heritage Month with the Pakistani Club in group chats and showed appreciation for one another.

"[Asian Pacific Islander Heritage Month] is important to me because I feel like there's not many times in the media where we're represented where we get the opportunity to share our culture, and I feel like there's a lot of stigma around, racist jokes, the media, and stuff like that, so I think it's really important that we take it seriously and appreciate," she said.

"I would say, the celebration of the Asian Pacific Islander [Heritage Month is when] everybody has the heritage from the area, including [myself]," Anderson said.

Non-Asian Americans also recognize and celebrate Asian Pacific Islander Heritage Month.

Surgit said the Korean Club performed in the LTAAC showcase by performing the dances they have danced at I-Days.

"I think it's an amazing time to celebrate all the different kinds of cultures that are encompassed in AAPI communities, especially because Asia is the biggest continent, with a lot of people that love to celebrate different cultures," she said.

Not only is Asian Pacific Islander Heritage Month the only way for people to have exposure to Asian culture and people at Lane, but they can be exposed to certain Asian cultures by taking part in either Japanese or Chinese classes, and/or watch the performances that represent a specific culture in the Asia-Pacific region.

# 'Gotta Catch 'Em All'

## Celebrating Pokémon's Three-Decade Reign

By NIANI DARDEN

Different gaming experiences connect to the masses, as people of all ages join together to enjoy the world's highest grossing media franchise, reported by VICE: Pokémon. In modern competitive gaming, including Twitch streamed Pokémon tournaments online, this energy extends beyond arcades into global audiences who participate in different ways.

This year, Pokémon celebrates its 30th anniversary, using their main Pokémon website to praise the creative minds behind the madness and the mobile and physical games that came with it.

Senior Asa Troccoli described the franchise's lasting appeal as something that has never faded. "It's timeless," he said.

According to Forbes, from 1996 to 2026, Pokémon has morphed into a global sensation, grossing over \$147 billion and counting as of recent. The franchise bridges the gap between Millennials and Gen Z, connecting them through human trainers like Ash Ketchum, and valuable creatures like Pikachu and Charizard.

Kyle Frappoly, a Lane Tech security guard who grew up play-

ing the earliest Pokémon games, reflected on his experience with its origins. "I used to play the original Game Boy games, which were Red, Blue, and Yellow. I also used to play the trading card game back when it was the OG."

Junior Tyler Tran, who watched Pokémon's presence shift over time with age, said the franchise has become more socially accepted in recent years. "I've definitely seen it evolve in the culture over years," he said. "I feel like normally you would get bullied for even touching these cards. But now, I guess, with social media and influencers, it's popped off."

Troccoli also reflected on how Pokémon became a part of their middle school's social culture in their earlier years. "At my old school, my science teacher was a state champion in the card game. So he'd talk about it all the time, and he'd give us cards and stuff, and it became kind of like a competition to see who could collect the most cards in elementary school," Troccoli said.

The Sunday reported that in Machida, a suburb of Tokyo with strong Japanese urban influence, Satoshi Tajiri was born. He would then go on to create the game Pokémon, spending

his time catching bugs and little creatures with the intention of going into Entomology. What originally started as an interest in insect behavior later shot him to success at 30, creating a series of revolutionary executive projects.

The Sunday continued that his passion for Entomology and detailed video game creation is shown through the complexity of his creatures; the stealth and skill of each individual insect in nature is trivial for the universe, revealing tricks on how each character operates in each game. Due to its complexity and psychological rewards, their games have become addicting with the thrill of collecting.

Junior Adrian Wallace described the collecting aspect of Pokémon as personally rewarding. "[Pokémon] gives me a big sense of completion," he said. "It just gave me a big sense of completion, because it took so long to beat, which is really engaging overall, and because the story was so in-depth.

Despite its humble origins, Pokémon's longevity progressed with their later connections from Nintendo, which put them on the map in America, creating the "Pokémon" show in 1997, and making iconic games such as Pokémon Red & Blue (1998),



PHOTO BY NIANI DARDEN

**Mint condition Pokémon cards in a binder owned by a Lane Tech student. The student requested anonymity due to recent acts of violence in the Chicago neighborhood surrounding card theft.**

along with more modern games like Pokémon GO (2016). Nintendo.com recorded that from 2016, their revenue exponentially boosted with in-app/console achievements, eventually leading to variant games like Pokémon GO to reach \$100 million within a year of its creation.

The man behind it all, Tajiri, spends this anniversary grateful for the creative chaos in his youth in Machida. "Everything I did as a kid

is kind of rolled into one thing," Tajiri told Time magazine in 1999.

For the next couple of years following their 30th anniversary, Pokémon has nearby plans to expand their classic trading card (TCG) and console game selections. As Pokémon heads into a new generation, fans wait eagerly for new release dates to drop.

## Seniors reflect on long-term club involvement

By HENRY LANDA-ZURI-MORTENSEN

Hudson Finn can still remember his first Future Scientists of Lane club meeting, back at the beginning of his sophomore year.

"It started off pretty awkward, not gonna lie," said Finn, a senior set to graduate in just a few weeks. "I knew a few people in the club already, but there were still a lot of people I didn't know at all, you know, but we were all interested in science. So once we started with the club stuff, we got more comfortable with each other because we all were enjoying ourselves, you know, and then [we] got closer from there."

Looking back on these experiences now, though, they seem less mundane and more valuable. They

taught Finn some "pretty essential stuff," as he puts it. "The first time I went to the club, it helped me develop those social skills of, you know, meeting new people, trying new things, [and] going out there and having a good mindset," he said.

Finn said he also was able to engage with concepts he plans to focus on in college and his career later down the line. "Future Scientists of Lane Club was geared towards chemistry, and that's what I want to do in the future," Finn said. "So I went out there, I learned some useful skills. I developed experiments. I had fun with people and, yeah, it just really helped me towards what I want to do in the future."

Jackson Kochowicz, in his

fourth year as a part of Model UN, also built skills to use in the academic and professional world.

"[Model UN] helps you learn, actually talk to people, and not be nervous while doing it," he said. "I mean, anytime you're doing a presentation, you're giving a speech, you're doing any kind of group project...Model UN really gave me the skills I need to do that, for sure. Just holding a conversation with someone, even if you don't hold the same ideas. It's really given me a lot of crucial skills I can use going forward."

Even participating in clubs that aren't necessarily geared towards building skills for future exploits has proven to be enriching for many seniors, especially in terms of finding a communi-

ty and being social. Lana Surgit, president of Korean Club and a member for all four of her years at Lane, described the experience as "amazing."

"I feel like the club really grew with me," Surgit said. "I came into the club, and it was like everyone was kind of socially dispersed, and I was very young. I was really shy, but as I grew with the club, and [there were] more communities of both Koreans and non-Koreans...people learned about the culture, [and] everyone came together...I feel like the club kind of blooms," she said.

"[Korean Club] really taught me how to communicate and be around different types of people, and to [not] judge people, and to work with others, and to be more



PHOTO COURTESY OF JACKSON KOCHOWITZ

**Jackson Kochowicz and Isaac Dunn pose for a photo at a Model UN event.**

welcoming to new people who want to try new things," Surgit said. "It's taught me a lot."

## The cost of success

By IRELAND COSTELLO

Junior Johnna Yu opened her phone to her notes app filled with a bulleted list of all of her expenses for French Club. From costumes, to sweatshirts, studios, and social events, she estimated the overall cost was around \$300. It's no question that extracurriculars also come with extra costs, and Yu has certainly recognized this. "I understand that it's a privilege to be able to participate in I-Days because it does come with such a significant cost," she said.

While a lot of the time costs are inevitable, these extra fees can exclude students. Yu said that while there are a lot of free clubs and activities to participate

in at Lane, I-Days is a large part of the social setting, and she believes that costs can be a barrier for some students.

Junior Lilly Lewis shared the costs of being involved in Irish Club. She said she has paid around \$45 for costumes, \$10 for studio time each Sunday, with added costs for social events. Lewis said that clubs can get really expensive, "which is really unfair to those who are from lower income backgrounds and can't afford to have the same activities and opportunities as I do." But, I-Days are really only the beginning. Students also mentioned AP tests, ACT test prep, extracurriculars, and sports all as factors of the fee problem.

Lewis said she used multiple companies for ACT test prep and is currently using C2 tutoring. On average, a tutoring session at C2 costs around \$75-\$100 an hour. "Students that can't afford test prep are definitely disadvantaged when taking the ACT," Lewis said after acknowledging the benefits of test prep. Yu agreed saying, "Private test prep really puts you ahead of other people."

Lane Tech is trying to bridge these gaps. Yu explained that Lane provides an ACT test prep course for only \$30. "I know that you can get the fee waived for that too," she said. Yu participated in the Lane ACT prep but said, "I definitely don't think it's up to the standard of private test prep."

Participation in sports also contributes to fees coming directly out of students' pockets. Lewis has participated in track since her freshman year. "Some of the expenses include our track uniform, spikes, extra gear, and a sports fee that goes with that," Lewis said.

Yu, who participated in lacrosse, said that team members had to pay an athletic fee and booster club fee upon arrival. "Then obviously equipment isn't covered, and a lot of the games are pretty far away, and you have to pay a bus fee," Yu said.

Junior Nicholas Zgonena, a varsity rower, claims that cost is a major barrier to people participating in his sport. "There's a reason that it's very niche and that's

because it's an expensive sport," Zgonena said.

Zgonena goes on to say that through all the expenses and long practice hours what really motivates him is, "being a part of something bigger than just myself."

This sentiment was similar to something Yu touched on. "Lane is such a big school and it encompasses so many people's interests, and I think that part of the experience is meeting new people," Yu said. "What mainly motivates me to stay involved is just experiencing new things, like taking advantage of everything that Lane has to offer as a school."

# An unconventional profession

## After School Matter's impact on Lane students

By JULIA HICKSON

16 is the age where many high school students begin the grueling task of searching for a job, but for some, they are given the opportunity to get their first work experience early.

"They're like internships where you kinda just go in and then you work together with your peers on whatever task that your sponsor or supervisor has decided for that day," said senior Milo Manley on After School Matters programs.

After School Matters (ASM) was founded by Maggie Daley in 1991 initially known as Gallery 37, it was a summer arts non-profit program created for Chicago teens. It began expanding in 1995, leading to a partnership with Chicago Public Schools to deliver programs in Chicago high schools.

ASM expanded outside of the arts in the 2000s, giving opportunities to teens of all interests, and giving teens the opportunity to break down the barriers keeping them from adequate spaces of education and employment, as all students who participate in ASM earn a financial stipend of varying value.

As of 2026, in its 35th year of operation, ASM now offers more than 24,000 program opportunities each year, at 338 sites across the city, according to afterschool-matters.org, many of which are frequented by Lane students.

"I feel like I've learned how to use new materials, which is cool, and new strategies, which are really interesting," said sophomore Faye Marquiss, a first-time participant in the Painting and Drawing program located at The Michael and Karyn Lutz Center.

Marquiss shared that she intends to participate in more programs throughout the rest of high school. "I think it's a good way to, you know, step into different professions," Marquiss said.

While ASM gives teens the ability to explore different career paths, it also allows students an opportunity to make money for themselves. "I like the way that it pays, I think it's nice and it is pretty sustainable," said Marquiss. "Like, I'm able to spend my money the way I want to."

In addition to learning about

different professions and making money, ASM is also a place that allows students to connect with others. "It's nice to meet people from other schools, just because I feel like most of my friends are [at Lane], and then my old school, obviously. So that's nice," said sophomore Thora Cox, also a participant in the Lutz Painting and Drawing Program.

While this program wasn't her first choice, Cox shared excitement that she is able to explore more programs in the future and has made the best of this one. "[Faye and I] had wanted to do a dark room photography one because that's so cool," Cox said. "But, then we thought that we were gonna get called in for an interview, and then we missed the interview date, so then we came on the last day, and that was one of the only ones that was open. But I feel like it's been fun."

In addition, Cox said, "I do want to do more ASM programs in the future," expressing further interest in getting the opportunity to participate in the dark room photography program.

While students have the opportunity to participate in ASM programs throughout the year, some choose to only take part in programs over the summer. Manley participated in a Digital photography program this past summer at Gallery 37, and a Horticulture and Botany Program the summer prior.

"Both were really fun," said Manley. "For horticulture, I learned a lot about growing plants, and then over the summer, for photography, I really just improved a lot of my photography skills. So that was good to learn."

Following this program, Manley carried the skills he learned over to his daily life. Since Manley is currently enrolled in the AP 2D Art and Design class at Lane, he said, "I've continued taking photos this year, so that's been fun."

While many students utilize the flexibility of ASM to experiment and try a plethora of different programs, others find one that best fits their interests and they stick with it. Junior Elijah Mastey has participated in three levels of ASM programs at West Town Bikes, in-

cluding beginning bikes, advanced bikes, and now an apprenticeship.



ALL PHOTOS BY JULIA HICKSON

Sophomores Faye Marquiss and Thora Cox work on collages in their Painting and Drawing program at the Lutz center located at 3435 N Cicero Ave.

cluding beginning bikes, advanced bikes, and now an apprenticeship.

While Mastey began at ASM because he needed something to do in the summer, he has continued there because he enjoys the atmosphere and there are no other programs that interest him as much. "I just really like [bikes]. And I like the shop a lot. I like the people there, and I just have a lot of fun sitting in the shop and working on bikes," said Mastey.

While this is currently just a program that Mastey participates in, he hopes to continue with it and use the program as a pathway to further his career. "It's still just an After School Matters program, but the goal is to turn it into a [real] job, but formally it's an internship," said Mastey.

Additionally, junior Nissa Abajian has participated in the Mosaic Arts program at the Lutz Center for the past two sessions. "I just thought it was really fun and I liked how chill it was, like basically just show up, make mosaics, and then go home," Abajian said.

As for whether or not Abajian would recommend ASM to other people, they said, "I would, it's really fun."



Closeup of Faye Marquiss' collage artwork that reads "There is still time."



Closeup of Thora Cox's mixed media artwork of a zombie.

# A mixture of productivity and relaxation

## Lane students plan for the summer

By JILLIAN HAYES

As the days grow longer, exam season continues on, and the year comes to an end, Lane's students anticipate a summer full of a combination of productivity and relaxation. Students expressed their excitement to spend their summers earning money, practicing sports, vacationing, and more.

Freshmen Sienna O'Malley and Chloe Beasley said they will both be spending their summers training for cross country. O'Malley says she looks forward to run-

ning with friends.

On the other hand, many students said they're excited to spend their summers traveling. Beasley said, "I'm really excited for my trip to Europe with my family. It'll be my first time." Freshman Jackie Saminao said she will spend a few weeks in the Philippines, Japan, and Los Angeles. Sophomore Zion Gore will be traveling to visit a college.

Junior Diana Balderas, Samiano, and Gore all said they will be spending their summers finding a

variety of ways to earn money. "I sell some clothes on Depop, since I'm pretty young," Samiano said. "I'm only 15 so I can't get a part-time job anywhere." Because of her age, Samiano said she plans to pick up side-hustles including selling baked goods. "I'm never gonna say no to a little business opportunity."

As for upperclassmen, some juniors plan to spend their summers preparing for college or other things that may be beneficial to their education or career. Balde-

ras said she plans to develop her fashion career as she got into a program called "Realize" for the following school year, allowing her to further her portfolio. By developing her portfolio, Balderas is also developing her personal identity. "It really is a college thing, because I'm planning to go to an art school, so my portfolio is going to be really important. But it's also a personal thing, because I really like art. It helps me express myself and who I am," Balderas said.

Though students described different summer expectations, all students expressed their desire for a summer that fulfilled a balance between relaxation from the school year, as well as productivity to keep them going throughout the year. Balderas said, "I generally do like to keep myself busy, but definitely more relaxed during the summer, because in the school year, I get really like, clustered. So, it's like a decompression."

# The dangers of moderation

Opinion

By SAMIRA SOORYA

There is a specific kind of quiet that only the privileged can afford; the privilege to ignore politics, the privilege to be ‘moderate’. For many people, more often minority groups, politics is not something that they can choose to ignore, as a change in policy will affect their everyday lives.

Cambridge University Press's definition of moderate is, “having genuinely moderate views across issues, being inattentive to politics or political surveys, or holding views poorly summarized by a single liberal-conservative dimension.” There is a difference between passivity to politics and leaning towards middle ground

policy. Apathy to politics is the real danger to society.

In times of oppression and government discourse, it is more important than ever to have clear and informed views on politics. Bishop, theologian, and anti-apartheid activist, Desmond Tutu said, “If you are neutral in situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor.”

The world we live in would not be the same without people who take a strong stance in what they believe in. From the American Revolution to the Civil Rights Movement and then the Women's Rights Movement, there were countless leaders who pushed for change.

Martin Luther King Jr. in his Letter from Birmingham jail said,

“I had hoped that the white moderate would understand that law and order exist for the purpose of establishing justice and that when they fail in this purpose they become the dangerously structured dams that block the flow of social progress.”

Social progress and justice cannot be reached without people who take a stand for what they believe in. Without MLK Jr. and countless others activists, would the Civil Rights Movement been effective? Without Susan B Anthony, Sojourner Truth, and numerous other women, would women have the rights they do today? Did these activists ever take a stance of “moderation” in their work? Likely not.

“The hottest places in hell are

reserved for those who, in times of great moral crisis, maintain their neutrality,” said Italian poet and philosopher Dante Alighieri.

That being said, neutrality or moderation is the easy choice. Especially if a person is not directly affected by politics, it is much easier to choose to ignore it. As young people, specifically under the age of 18 who are not yet able to vote, it is easy to see how complicated politics are and also choose to ignore it.

It's easy to think, “because it doesn't involve me, and I can't do anything about it, why should I care?” That is where privilege is shown. Young women are losing access to reproductive healthcare. Immigrant families are being split up by ICE. Minority voting pro-

tection is being weakened. It is a privilege to not be personally affected by politics, but it is a selfish choice to choose to not think about the people around you.

As young people, we inherit the consequences of current inaction. Climate change, student debt, gun violence, and countless other political issues will only grow worse without action. Moderation is a barrier to social progress, and social progress is the key to developing our world. The leaders who shaped our world today did not do so by hiding behind the shield of moderation. We must honor those who came before us and pave the way for future generations by disregarding moderation and choosing to care.

# Exploring obscure cuisines of Asia in Chicago

Opinion

By ELAINE NGUYEN

## Laotian Cuisine

If you are willing to try out different Southeast Asian food but have already had enough of eating (Americanized or authentic) Thai and/or Vietnamese food, look no further than eating Laotian food. Laotian cuisine heavily features rice, vegetables, and freshwater fish.

If you are willing to go to a restaurant that serves Laotian food, make your way to Lao Der (located at 3922 N Elston Ave) in the Irving Park neighborhood, the only Laotian restaurant in Chicago. When I was at this restaurant, I ordered nam khao (salad) and khao piak sen (noodle soup). At Lao Der, nam khao costs \$15.95 and khao piak sen costs \$14.95.

The nam khao was a spicy, savory, and crunchy salad. The jasmine, the coconut shreds, and the peanuts added crunch. The red curry paste helped make the salad spicy, and the spiciness level can be adjusted, influencing the amount of the paste used. The green onion and fermented pork tasted savory and brought the flavors to the salad. To make the salad more flavorful, specifically on the tangy part, use the lime.

The khao piak sen was a comforting and refreshing soup. The chicken meatballs and the shredded chicken pieces tasted tender, and so did the rice noodles. The fried shallots helped make the chicken broth taste more flavorful, affecting the taste of the entire soup. The fried Chinese donuts can be ordered to accompany

the soup.

If you decide to cook at home instead of going to Lao Der, you can cook Laotian dishes such as larb (meat salad), khao niao (Laotian sticky rice), and sai oua (pork sausage).



Nam Khao PHOTO BY ELAINE NGUYEN



Khao Piak Sen PHOTO BY ELAINE NGUYEN



Plov PHOTO BY ELAINE NGUYEN



Lagman PHOTO BY ELAINE NGUYEN

## Central Asian Cuisine

If you are willing to try out a different kind of Asian food that you've never had in your life, come to eat foods from various Central Asian countries (such as Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan). Central Asian cuisine in general, heavily features meat (specifically beef, lamb, and chicken), fermented dairy products, flatbreads, and stews.

If you want to savor Central Asian food, make your way to Arzan Cafe (located at 4702 N Kimball Ave) in the Albany Park neighborhood, one of the Cen-

tral Asian restaurants in Chicago. When I was at this restaurant, I ordered plov (rice dish) and lagman (noodle dish). At Arzan Cafe, plov costs \$16.99 and lagman costs \$18.49.

The plov was a comforting and savory rice dish. The beef tasted tender, and so did the basmati rice. The chickpeas and the carrots accompanied the taste of the rice itself. The pickles tasted sour and tangy, which brought the flavors to the rice dish. The hard boiled egg was the protein accompaniment besides the beef.

The lagman felt comforting,

and refreshing as a soup. The beef tasted tender, and so did the noodles. The vegetables accompanied well with the beef. The broth of the noodle soup helped make the dish taste more flavorful and influenced the flavors of each component.

If you decide to cook at home instead of going to a Central Asian restaurant like Arzan Cafe, you can cook dishes such as samsa (savory pastry), boursak (fried dough), and chuchvara (dumplings).

## Nepalese Cuisine

If you are willing to try out different South Asian food but already have enough (Americanized or authentic) Indian food, make your way to eating Nepalese food. Nepalese cuisine heavily features rice, stews, curries, chilies, dairy-based dishes, pickles, chutneys, biryani, kebabs, and various types of bread.

If you want to trek to a restaurant that serves Nepalese food, make your way to Himalayan Sherpa Kitchen (located at 2701 W Lawrence Ave) in the Lincoln Square neighborhood, one of the Nepalese restaurants in Chicago. When I was at the restaurant, I

ordered steamed chicken momos and fried chicken momos. Both steamed and fried chicken momos cost \$13.95. There are vegan momos for those that want to crave something vegan.

The steamed and fried chicken momos tasted savory and flavorful. The fried momos tasted crunchy and the steamed momos tasted tender and juicy.

If you decide to cook at home instead of going to a Nepalese restaurant like Himalayan Sherpa Kitchen, you can cook Nepalese dishes such as momo (dumplings) and dal bhat (rice and lentil soup).



Fried chicken momos PHOTO BY ELAINE NGUYEN



Steamed chicken momos PHOTO BY ELAINE NGUYEN

# 'U' is hyperpop heaven

By JULIA HICKSON

"I-i-it's you!" April Harper Gray of underscores sings as the opening line to her 3rd studio album, "U," released Mar 20. The opening track "Tell Me (U Want It)" immediately made me excited for the album with the heavy breathing and dinging of bells leading into a calm chorus and becoming more extreme with each passing minute, adding more sound effects and layered vocals.

In the chorus, Gray sings, "Is this doing anything for you, baby? / You gotta tell me you want it, tell me you want it," introducing the motif of love throughout the entire album and the many forms that it takes on.

Upon first listening, this was my favorite song due to the catchy lyrics and sound effects that all align with one another, with whistles leading into muffled and pitched down vocals at the end as she sings "I-O-U," a repeated element in the rest of the album.

The second track of the album "Music," was the first single, released on Jun 27, 2025. This track once again speaks about love with another person, but does so by using the metaphor of music. In sharing a love for another person, Gray also shares her love of music.

She sings, "When I'm with you, it feels like music / It's happening again, I feel the BPM, I feel the music" in the chorus, and this song follows in suit of the others on the album as they slowly build to a drop with more extreme vocals.

This makes each song feel like a rollercoaster, as if you are perpetually awaiting the next drop, falling in love with each part and how they come together as a whole.

The rollercoaster does not end in "Hollywood Forever" as this song has two separate drops that lead to the song becoming more dramatic and layered.

However, "The Peace" did not follow this same pattern and instead remained more consistent and calm, allowing the vocals to shine more. The vocalization and somewhat acapella aspect of this song absolutely drew me in, as it is not something I often hear.

This song speaks of love but through the experience of smoking with another person as a form of connection. Gray sings "I don't speak unless I'm spoken to / And I don't smoke unless you're smoking too," conveying intimacy within sharing an experience with someone you love.

"Innuendo (I Get U)" has become my favorite song on the whole

project. With its breathy vocals and repetition of the lyrics "Tell me, but don't tell me," this is the track I find myself coming back to most.

Additionally, the most intense drop of the album takes place in this song as the drums pick up and carry the second half of the song, making this a great track to dance to.

One spot that underscores does not lack in throughout the entirety of this album is a killer bridge that at times proves to be more catchy and alluring than the chorus.

This is true for "Bodyfeeling," as in the beginning of the song, I am almost bored by the calm bassline, but per usual, the rollercoaster takes another drop as the drums ramp up and she begins to sing with more passion: "What makes you think, I can't still love you?" The same thing can be said of "Lovefield," as the entire song is on a gradual incline to eventually reach a drop.

"Do It" was the track that made me become hooked on underscores. The song sounds like a keyboard smash of noise in the best way possible as the introduction builds and leads to the melding of both acoustic guitar and electronic sounds, only possible when created by a computer.

The changing of pitch in the vocals as well as the catchy lyrics

left this song on repeat for weeks, awaiting the release of "U." "Do It" continues with the theme of love, but shifts from a desire of craving one to tell her that they want it, and rather urging them to stay away because "I don't fall in love."

The final track, "Wish U Well" was a bit lackluster to me upon first listening, and I would often skip it when returning to this project. However, it serves as the perfect closing track of the album as it is much more tame than the rest.

After speaking of the craziness that love can cause, from needing your partner to tell you that they want you, or giving a warning that you don't fall in love, this track closes the chapter as Gray ultimately wishes them well forever.



Concord Music Group

# Feeling alive after listening to 'drop dead'



Sony Music

By SOPHIE WU

One of my favorite things about Olivia Rodrigo's music is that it encapsulates the life of a teen girl so well — all the joys, frustrations, excitement, and heartbreaks — and her latest single is no disappointment.

I love the way she sounds like she's ranting with every lyric she sings, addressing all of the little thoughts that float through her mind when crushing on someone new.

And speaking of crushing, I can't tell if this song is meant to capture the rush of finding someone new to fall for, or if it's a case of limerence.

Limerence is the temporary infatuation that comes with budding feelings over a new person, but they can turn obsessive, often idealizing that person instead of being attracted to them for who they really are.

Perhaps "drop dead" is a mix of these two things — the exhilaration of falling for someone with the hints of obsessive thoughts of him and them together that plague her mind night and day.

The obsession creeps through when she talks about the imaginary scenarios she comes up with in her head, and how she would "drop dead" if they kissed, despite feeling so alive when being with him.

The extremity and exaggeration of her feelings is what makes me think that she's leaning closer towards singing about limerence, rather than just the average crush a person might have.

Nonetheless, I find this song so fitting for those budding crushes that sometimes seem like the be all and end all, sometimes because of the other person's spontaneity and inconsistency. It's also reminiscent of Taylor Swift's "I Can Do It With a Broken Heart" from her "The Tortured Poet's Department" album, the lyrics that seem like a never ending rant about instability being disguised with an upbeat tempo.

And I think the song is a great way to preview the rest of her upcoming album, "you seem pretty sad for a girl so in love," as it introduces the beginning of something new, and it makes me think she'll track the development of her relationship sequentially throughout the album.

# Finding 'Somethin simple' in Ella Langley's new album, 'Dandelion'

By SARAH ROJAS

Some albums entirely captivate a certain season, but "Dandelion" feels like the messy, emotional, but full-of-growth shift from spring into summer.

Ella Langley's second studio album centers on what happens after heartbreak when you're left to rebuild and redefine yourself. After gaining attention with her 2024 collaboration "You Look Like You Love Me" with country artist Riley Green, Langley's new album feels more personal, like she's letting you know exactly what she's been through and all the improvements she's yet to make. The album moves through her journey track by track, and every song sets the tone perfectly.

"Choosin' Texas," the first single off the album, feels like driving with the windows down on a warm summer evening, with music loud enough to drown out your thoughts. Even though it's been out for a while, people still talk about this song and for good reason. The

guitar riffs, the chorus, the lyrics, everything just sticks with you. At its core, this song is about realizing someone you care about isn't choosing you, and noticing all those little signs you can't ignore. Even when you're trying your hardest, you can feel them slipping away and moving on to someone different.

"Low lights," slows everything down. It feels like one of those moments where you know something isn't going to last, but you go for it anyway. Her voice sounds really raw and emotional here, building intensity as the song goes on, which adds to its 'last dance' element. It's a song about giving in to temptations and choosing to feel something good even when you know it won't end well. There's a bittersweet acceptance to it. Langley sings "That smoke ring around you, oughta be a sign / To turn around and walk, but I'm striking up a light," which captures the moment perfectly. She knows she should walk away, but the moment feels too good and she's too tired to fight it.

"Loving Life Again," the eight

track, opens softly with her voice blending effortlessly with the gentler guitar strums. After all the heavier emotions of heartbreak in earlier tracks, this song leans into healing and optimism. It's about finding peace in small things and learning to appreciate a quieter kind of happiness. She's telling you to find what gives you comfort. The instrumental in the bridge stands out as it really pulls everything together and emphasizes the emotional shift toward acceptance.

One of the last tracks, "Butterfly Season" perfectly encapsulates the album's core theme of growth and reinvention. That shift from spring to summer becomes a metaphor for becoming a better and happier version of yourself. The feature from country singer Miranda Lambert adds to the track a lot. Their voices feel very different but they blend in a way that feels uplifting. Lyrics like "Right now, I'd like to show her / Who we've turned into / How the flowers look in June" reflect that sense of looking back and recognizing how far you've come.



PENGUIN RANDOM HOUSE

BLOOM BOOKS  
PIATKUS BOOKS

# New Staff Spotlight Pt. 3 *Staff new in the 2025-2026 school year*

By JILLIAN HAYES, HENRY LANDAZURI-MORTENSEN and ELAINE NGUYEN



◀ **Camille Burks**

Ms. Burks is a school assistant, working at the library with Mr. George Jensen, at Lane. Before coming to Lane, she taught middle school social studies to 5th-8th graders. Burks said she loves working at Lane because “it’s such a great community.” She said she loves getting to know everyone at Lane.



**Jonathan Osoria**

Mr. Osoria is a PE teacher at Lane. Before coming to Lane, he worked at Gonzales Scholastic Academy Elementary School for four years. Osoria said that he loves working at Lane because “it’s been an amazing transition” from an elementary school to a high school. He also said that he is ecstatic to be at Lane.

**Alexander Weldon** ▶

Mr. Weldon teaches AP Computer Science Principles and ECS at Lane. Before teaching at Lane, he worked at Taft and Hyde Park High Schools. Weldon said, “It’s weird to be in such a large computer science department, which is kind of abnormal around the rest of the city, so that’s been a change, definitely a positive one, though.” “Obviously, Lane students are some of the most motivated in the city,” he added.



## Six Flags hosts crowds, coasters, end of senior year with Grad Nite

By ALANA NICHOLS

Tien Tong moved across the long line for Raging Bull, surrounded by the faces of seniors from CPS schools that she had never seen before. The park’s tallest coaster, standing at 202 feet, towered above her, but what stood out most were the students from all across the city, packed into the Six Flags amusement park.

The overnight event on May 3rd brought together Lane Tech seniors along with thousands of students from other CPS high schools. The park remained open until 4am, with students moving between various attractions and food stands throughout the night.

For Tong, riding the Wrath of Rakshasa was the moment she

anticipated most. “The line was just really bad, but in general, I would say that ride was the most exhilarating because it was the longest one,” she said. “I’ve been anticipating going on that ride for the longest time.”

Tong said that being around students from so many different CPS schools felt unfamiliar. “I felt so uncomfortable and not going to lie,” Tong said. “Their vibe, it felt kind of hostile a little bit at times, like, someone would bump into me and they would glare at me.” She added that she did not meet new people but noticed classmates from schools she’d previously attended. “That was a weird interaction, I would say, because I haven’t seen or heard of them in so long, and it’s the way that they grew and stuff is pretty interesting.”

Other Lane seniors described

different moments that stood out from the night. Senior Sophia Andres said she remembered “eating funnel cake with my friends” and going on Maxx Force. “I was terrified,” Andres said. “I was screaming the entire time, but it was over really fast.”

As the night went on, some students said the experience shifted once the early crowds began to disperse. Senior Julia Pentangelo said the change was immediate. “Once the lines died down, it was super fun running around going on all of the rides,” said Pentangelo. “The workers even let us go on them multiple times!”

For others, the most memorable part came from seeing familiar faces in an unfamiliar setting. Senior Adam Parsons said the event brought together people he hadn’t expected to

run into. “It was so fun to see all my friends from other schools,” Parsons said. “It was like a giant crossover episode.”

Students expressed that senior events such as Grad Night can help bring CPS students together, especially when opportunities to interact across schools are limited. “There’s not really a lot of events like that,” Andres said. “I think it’s really good that, you know, we had this opportunity to see everyone from different schools.”

As the night came to an end and the park began to close, challenges rose for many students trying to find their designated buses. Tong said the confusion curated a sense of community among students. “A lot of people getting lost was a big issue,” she said. “Everyone was stressed out, So that,

I would say, that part brought everyone together too, because we all got lost together.”

Beyond the rides themselves, the night prompted seniors to reflect on what comes next. Andres said she felt “really excited about graduating and prom and stuff, I’m ready for it to be over.”

Tong said the night caused retrospective thinking on her four years at Lane. “It made me kind of sad,” she said. “I feel like I didn’t do enough in the past four years and doing these experiences with other people made me realize that I should have connected with them way earlier in the start of my high school career.” She added that she is “anticipating more for the future now,” even though “the change is scary, but good at the same time.”

## Seniors’ favorite moments from 2026 Grad Nite

By JULIA HICKSON and ALANA NICHOLS

“Once the lines died down, it was super fun running around going on all of the rides, and the workers even let us go on them multiple times!”

- Julia Pentangelo

“It was so fun to see all my friends from other schools, it was like a giant crossover episode”

- Adam Parsons

“[Grad Nite] represented fun and celebrating senior year with a bang”

- Sophia Andres



The Joker ride as Six Flags Great America lights up the night sky on May 1. Students arrived at 9:30p.m. and departed at 3a.m. the following morning.



Class of 2026 sign placed at the entrance of Six Flags.

“I would say [Wrath of Rakshasa] was the most exhilarating because it was the longest one, and I’ve been anticipating going on ride for the longest time too.”

- Tien Tong

ALL PHOTOS BY ALANA NICHOLS

# Love letters to the best places on campus

By ELLIE SANDERSON

## The Writing Center

Walking into the Writing Center for an appointment as a freshman was terrifying. Returning the following year as a new tutor was equally daunting. This space, though, is also where I found some of my closest friends at Lane. There's always much to do—from drawing on the windows to painting the walls. The conversations had here may not always be academic, but are full of ideas that would never be heard anywhere else. And it's the perfect rainy day lunch spot, too; a couple large tables and a plethora of chairs rest between the cherished booknook and community whiteboard. The Writing Center is full of life, always bright and airy.



PHOTO BY ELLIE SANDERSON

Students in third period Writing Center discussing ways to improve their tutoring.

## Guitar Room



PHOTO BY ELLIE SANDERSON

Diego Patino, Roman Brice and Jackson Shapley rehearsing a song before school for the Open Mic.



For three years now, my friends have gathered on the couches on Room 154 before the 7:55 bell. And although I lack the knowledge of how to play anything on a guitar, the space is one of the most comfortable ones around Lane. Murals line the walls—some of which are actually garage doors—and for those who are musically inclined, a soundproofed room. Most of my mornings involve the dim light of that room, or maybe just the L-shaped couch for a quieter morning. I am incredibly grateful for the Guitar Room's doors being open to my friends and me so early before school, even if we've gotten scolded for our too-loud morning performances.



PHOTO BY ELLIE SANDERSON

Friends greet each other and hang out on the couches before school.

## Girls' J Bathrooms

Home of repeating mercury spills, floods and closures, the J bathrooms are unlike any other. The black-and-white hexagon tile and radiators overhead are quick to remind you that this is still Lane Tech, despite the pale warmth. The quietness of these familiar stalls are the perfect spot for a moment of reflection—whether that be shedding a few tears after checking your ACT score or jumping with excitement when that boy finally makes a move (even if that means making eye contact for the first time in a week). The J bathrooms are elusive with their never-ending closures, yet still full of emotion.



PHOTO BY ELLIE SANDERSON

The second floor J girls' bathroom, with only one stall out of order. The first floor bathroom was closed as usual.



PHOTO BY ELLIE SANDERSON

One group plays football and runs while another group relaxes under the shade and eats lunch.

## The Lawn

During an environmental science project, I learned that Lane is home to 350 trees. Now, not all of these trees grow on the lawn, but a good amount of them do. (Mostly) green grass and (mostly) living, luscious trees: Lane's lawn is one of the picturesque places where you can spend hours. Sit outside and have lunch with your friends, or opt for an after school nap in the sun—as long as you aren't scared of getting hit with a ball. Green space may be limited in the city, but is always in surplus on our lawn.

# The stress of sports: preparing for the season

By VALENTINA VIANNA

Lane Tech, ranked among the top three for academics in Chicago and Illinois, is consistently considered to have top tier athletic programs by the Chicago Sun-Times. And behind the scenes, Lane's athletes start competing before the season even begins.

Tryouts for Lane's teams in fall can begin before the school year even starts, and for varsity volleyball athlete sophomore, Sophia Polec, training and bonding starts before the season. "We [varsity girls volleyball] do have weight room together, and then sometimes, we'll have team bonding hangouts, you know, just to make sure we stay a team," Polec said. "Like, not just physically, but mentally. And then we have a couple camps right before the season's about to start."

For those practicing in summer

as preparation for fall, the schedule can consist of more practices than some club teams. Fellow fall athlete, sophomore, Brooke Bornstein, a varsity tennis player said, "I make sure to play a lot in the summer, especially outdoors, because high school tennis is mostly outdoors, and I make sure to practice like 3 or 4 times a week and make sure that I'm staying active."

But many athletes who spend their school year preparing for their season combine training at school with club training. "I play a sport in the spring, and in the off season, 2 to 3 times a week, my team does conditioning," said JV Lacrosse player Zoey Marsh. "[That] consists of cardio and lifting, as well as I go to training camps, and participate in club."

To Marsh, the competition involved in making a Lane team adds to her drive to become a better athlete. Marsh said there was

"100%" an effect, "I think it definitely motivates me to train more and further."

Bornstein noted the effect of competition was apparent in planning her preseason training. "It definitely makes me want to practice a lot more and push myself," Bornstein said.

While athletes like Polec diversify their training routine by playing in different spaces and weightlifting, sophomore, Owen Zakaras, a varsity basketball player, trains specifically for basketball.

"I kind of just do basketball related workouts, trying to become more athletic, stronger," Zakaras said.

"A lot of shooting workouts just to, you know, get ready for the season."

Mental fortitude goes hand in hand with the ambition that drives athletes to train preseason. "I mean, I always want to make



PHOTO BY VALENTINA VIANNA

Lane Tech weight room filled with athletes from football and wrestling after school during spring sports season.

the team," Polec said. "That's the 1st goal, but making it past that, I aim to be the 1st starter. So that's my motivation to really workI want to be the best. I wanna be

better than my competitor, so that's what gets me out of bed every morning. That's what enables me to push myself."

## Spring varsity captains spotlight

By CHARLOTTE KNEER



### VOLLEYBALL

Martin Nguyen, Mohamed Abdelradi

#### Martin Nguyen

Position: Setter

Favorite Memory: Trying to fight Mo.



### SOCCER

Avery Beitel, Jackson Caffey, Lindsay Peterson

#### Avery Beitel

Position: Goalkeeper

Favorite Memory: My favorite memory was winning sectionals last year.



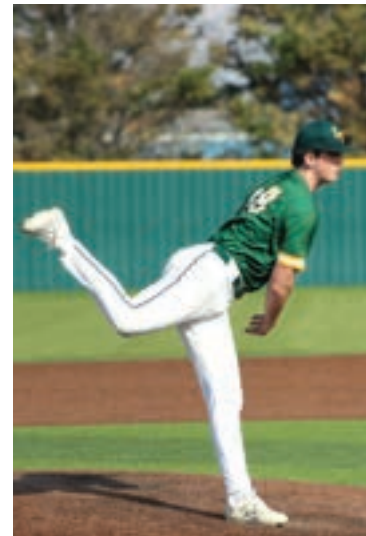
### GIRLS LACROSSE

Natalie Crosby, Olivia Walling, Audrey Nathaus, Sage Tenfelde

#### Sage Tenfelde

Position: Defense

Favorite Memory: Senior Night!



### BASEBALL

Rory Irwin, Conor Sullivan, Jacob Devinney, Miles Mazanowski, Ronan Owens

#### Ronan Owens

Position: Pitcher

Favorite Memory: Winning the city championship at Wrigley.



### GIRLS TRACK & FIELD (SPRINT)

Amelia Arquilliano, Julia Kiszynski, Gaby Vala Sora, Lexi Lawin

#### Amelia Arquilliano

Events: Short and long sprints (60, 100, 200, and 400) and relays  
Favorite Memory: My favorite memory on the track team is when our team went on a group trip to Tennessee and after our team races we tanned at the track meet.

## Girls soccer 11-petes; girls and boys lacrosse take city

### A pre-state playoffs snapshot of Lane's spring sports

By CHARLOTTE KNEER

Lane has made big waves in the sports season once again as the teams finish city playoffs and move into state.

**Girls soccer** earned their 11th straight City Championship on May 13 in a 3-1 victory over rival Whitney Young. The team had an in-conference record of 7-0 – the best in the city league – and an overall record of 14-5-1. Stand-out sophomore Rebecca LoVerde led the team with 14 goals and 13 assists and averaged 0.7 goals per game. Coach Robert Harkness continues the season with the team in the state playoffs May 19 against Von Steuben.

**Girls lacrosse** took home the CPL City Championship for the second year in a row after going undefeated (9-0) in conference,

the best in-conference record in the Chicago Public League. Overall, the team went 13-5, led to victory by senior Norah Rosenberg, who had 84 shots on goal and 54 points, with an average of 3 goals per game. Coached by Shelby Cosman, the team defeated Jones 11-7 on May 9 to win the CPL Championship. They continue their season in the state playoffs starting soon.

**Boys lacrosse** also took home the CPL City Championship for the second year in a row with a 12-1 victory over Lincoln Park. Similarly, the team went undefeated in conference with a record of 5-0 and an overall record of 8-8. Some senior players even earned recognition by the city league, with Ian Donohoe being named offensive player of the year, Adrian Christiansen being named

defensive player of the year, and Jared Harris being named specialist player of the year. They continue their season in the state playoffs starting May 22.

**Girls track and field** won 3rd in the city, with winners in four events. In the 4x800, Sydney Van Aken, Kate Siffring, Hailey Skowlund, and Josephine Zupko won their relay event. Ainsley Carter won the 800, Isabella Chapin won the 1600, and Amy Herzog, Ainsley Carter, Clara Weber, and Kaila Burns won the 4x400 relay. The team, coached by Laura McKnight, also competed at State Sectionals May 14 and are sending multiple runners to the State Finals.

**Girls softball** currently holds a record of 18-9 overall and 5-4 in conference. Olivia Segura leads the team in home runs, 10,

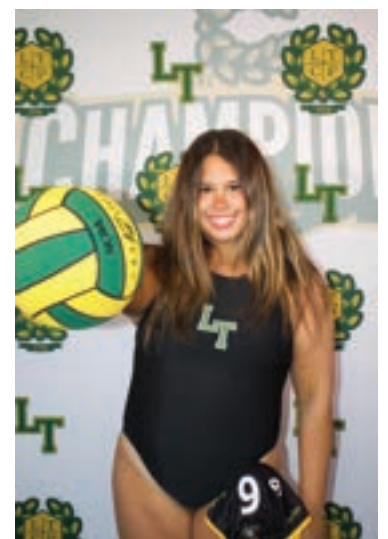
and runs, 35, as of their win over Conant May 14. Additionally, Junior Sofia Stronskey hit a major milestone with 100 career strikeouts this season following her college commitment to DePauw softball. The team, coached by Samantha Meiken, starts state playoffs soon May 20.

**Boys volleyball** is currently holding an overall record of 19-13 and an in-conference record of 5-1. Senior Martin Nguyen reached a milestone of 2000 career assists this season.

**Boys track and field** won the CPL City Championship on May 16.

**Girls water polo** won second in the City Championship.

**Boys water polo** won second in the City Championship.



### GIRLS WATERPOLO

Lydia Palilonis, Lexa Fleck

#### Lexa Fleck

Position: Wing

Favorite Memory: My favorite memory with my team was my freshman year when we won sectionals.

# Lane knocks their 25th consecutive win out of the park

By NAIMA JOHN

The Lane Tech Varsity Baseball team slid home with an 11-1 victory May 12 against Northside Prep.

Lane, who "won the game in five minutes," according to varsity pitching coach Henry Szumal, scored 8 runs in their fifth inning, bringing the game to an immediate end once they reached a 10-run lead.

"It was a total team effort," Szumal said. "We've hit well. I think we've pitched well, and I think that we're defending well."

Despite the blowout, Lane had a slow start. "I thought that Northside did a good job of heading out and trying to swing on early counts," Szumal said, referring to Northside's early run and base runners near the beginning.

Early on, Northside was strong at the plate. They started their first inning with four runners on bases and a run scored, when Lane had

only one runner who was held at first base by Northside's pitcher.

The turning point came in the fifth inning, the last of the game. The fastballs served by Lane Tech pitcher Cruz Warren were effective in holding Northside, striking out three batters in a row. According to Szumal, that "really was the biggest part of the game."

"After around the third inning, the fourth inning, it seemed like [Lane] started to pull away," said Andrew Wilson, father of Northside's catcher. Regardless, Northside put up a fight. "The man who was starting, he's a good pitcher," Wilson said. "He looked like he ran out of gas a little bit, but we've won a lot of games against some pretty good teams in the past."

Though Lane's win was attributed to their runs during the fifth, a mix of sloppy outfield plays didn't help Northside's case. The left fielder's constant slips when attempting to get the ball was

likely due to the light shower before and during the game, dampening the field and causing that extra struggle.

That, combined with the relentlessness of Lane pushed them to the win. According to Jacob DeVinny, centerfielder for Lane, "[We] started hitting low line drives, getting the ball on the ground," DeVinny said. "That's when you really come together as a team, and start scoring runs," he said.

With the CPL championship around the corner, DeVinny said he has "high aspirations" for future games. "We just want to take it one game at a time, see how far we can bring it this year," DeVinny said. "As long as our bats are hot, I don't think there's anybody that we can't beat."



PHOTO BY NAIMA JOHN

Lane Tech's team debrief after the game at Kerry Wood Stadium.

# Boys varsity volleyball defeats Taft in straight sets

By SARAH ROJAS

The Lane Tech Champions faced the Taft Eagles on May 5, winning 25-18 and 25-20. The bench stayed loud after every point, the crowd reacted to nearly every rally, and the players constantly regrouped and communicated after difficult plays.

Head coach Amy Wallace mentioned the team's chemistry was the biggest reason for the win. "The whole game plan was really to be a team through every single point," Wallace said. "They did a great job of being together through the whole match."

Lane pulled ahead midway through the first set with strong defense and quick reactions at the net. Several rallies stood out, including one long point where

a dig kept the ball alive and energized both the bench and the crowd.

The second set proved to be more difficult. Taft scored first and kept the score close throughout, with both teams trading points late in the set. A point was awarded to Lane after the results of a disputed call, causing loud exchanges between the team's fans.

Despite the pressure, Lane stayed composed.

"We came out slow in the second set, but I feel like once we got one pass, we sided out, and we just got momentum after that," junior Lukas Carlson said.

Carlson also pointed out the team's communication during chaotic rallies. "The outside hit it long, and we were just all scrambling and calling for it, and we

ended up getting the point," he said.

As the score tightened late in the second set, Wallace said she trusted the players to handle the moment themselves. "[I] took a step back and said if you want to get this done, it has to be on the court," she said. "It has to be all of you getting this done together."

Senior middle blocker Gray Jimenez said that tipping over his block became a major challenge throughout the game. "As a middle, I can't really do much about it," he said. "I had to really put my trust into my back row." He suggested that trust between teammates became especially important against Taft's offense.

Jimenez added that the match showed what the team is capable of when everyone works together,

calling it "a perfect demonstration of how working as a team makes it easier to win games."

The win also marked an important step forward for Lane after several recent matches had gone to three sets. "This season, we've had a lot of trouble winning the second set," Carlson said. "We're going to three sets a lot of the time, so it was nice to close it out in two tonight, and I think we need to carry that forward."

By the final point, the energy in the gym had not faded. Players rushed onto the court celebrating while the crowd showed their support from the bleachers behind them. It was a fitting ending for a match built on momentum, communication, and teamwork.

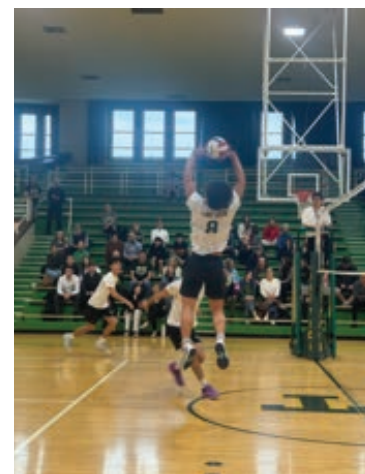


PHOTO BY SARAH ROJAS

Senior Martin Nguyen sets up the ball to teammates during the first set of the game.

## College Word Search

Made By JULIA HICKSON

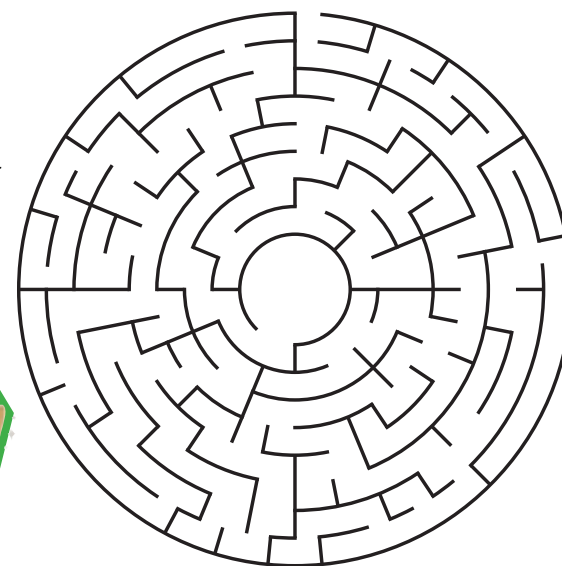
### Word Bank

1. University of Illinois
2. Marquette
3. DePaul
4. Illinois State
5. Miami Ohio
6. University of Michigan
7. Ohio State
8. University of Iowa
9. UWMadison
10. Northwestern
11. Indiana University
12. Michigan State
13. UC Santa Barbara
14. Boston College
15. University of Tennessee



## Maze

Made By VALENTINA VIANNA



I Z R U C Z I M H N P I S P N F Z B K T G S C M X W X U L O  
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 T L W I G I Y O J Q B X P Y F Q C C K D T Q W P H M E T E O  
 F Z U O A H T L G V B Y Q B Z A Z W I O P M P S Q K E T T C  
 O R U S U N I V E R S I T Y O F M I C H I G A N A U T Y A Y  
 Y H Q T P A S Q R I B R H A O V M N Y V X N W J Q U Y K T J  
 T H W A F Z R W E E Y E T L P N E M M N P R F R S C A G S Q  
 I K Y T I Z E R A U O E T V J X D B F G J K A V J S N I N Y  
 S P X E U Z E V U Q U D X D A Y G C Z R O W M H K H A Y F A C  
 R I J R O S I H Q V L Y V U T A U Z Q C C I P M N N H X G F  
 E L O J Z F N A A D T D N T T S C Z X M Y M F X E T J X I G  
 V Y Z J F W U S T S R Z N R E T S E W H T R O N M A Q C H D  
 I B T K A W V V V I C F C F F D G I M Y Z J V I Z B K S C O  
 N P T U V N T M H W U L W T B P X Z O P S N A V O A D L I K  
 U Y T I S R E V I N U A N A I D N I I N U M Y X G R D I M M  
 L M Q W A Z D A X C Q H H D K M C F M A I A S P O B R O M J  
 F C R L F V L D L H O K D O K I O H C O I L D A J A Q H L L  
 K L M Z Y J Y I O R E J G E K Y O H H Z S A L O E R J O C M  
 H S D Q B M S Q V N P J T T P S G I A C H H V I W A S U D D  
 Z V R U I C U Y N W X U V J P A O N N R D V U A U E Y C L Y  
 I L F C Q J H L O A G K T Q N T U Z F B S Z I F Z Z F G B Q  
 P U F Q B Q U Q J F J Z A V V R O L X W A P D Q G K S I X I