



### Senior Destinations

Check out where our senior will be headed next year on our map!

**Graduation - Page 7**



### Interview with Mr. Noeth

Bill Noeth: The Man, the legend

**Off Topic - Page 14**



# The Spectrum

◆ e cineribus et ad astra ◆

JUNE • VOL. 38, GRADUATION ISSUE

ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL

www.thespectrumabrhs.com

## Headlines

### Reconsidering the Skip Test

The fall of mathematically gifted children.

**News - Page 3**

### Interview with Mr. Hickey

Without him, AB's band will feel rather flat.

**News - Page 4**

### Spectrum's Evolution

A look back at the paper's golden years.

**News - Page 5**

### Interview with Mr. Mustchler

Getting ready to MOOve out of here.

**Graduation - Page 6**

### The Butterfly Effect

Graduation speech written by Jerry Wu.

**Graduation - Page 8**

### What We Will Become

Graduation speech written by Olivia Blaufuss.

**Graduation - Page 8**

### The Evolution of Beauty

You don't know you're beautiful.

**Forum - Page 11**

### Love Nest: Graduation Edition

Doctor Olson is signing out!

**Off Topic - Page 14**



The HeArt of AB: a project created by Grace Kirkman and Leah Bartle.  
Jasmine Mangat / Co-Editor-In-Chief

## Senior Projects: Students and Community

By NITHYANI ANANDAKUGAN '19 AND JASMINE MANGAT '19  
Co-Editors-In-Chief

With all the academic work that comes with high school, it isn't uncommon for students to forget to pursue their passions. At ABRHS, however, students entering their senior year have the opportunity to dedicate themselves to their interests through the Senior Project English Class.

In Senior Project, students work—often with a partner of their choice—to create a project that must impact the community in some way, allowing students to pursue their interest while learning about an important cause. As always, the results have been truly astounding. *The Spectrum* sat down with a number of Senior Project students to chat about their experiences.

When we met with Grace Kirkman ('18) and Leah Bartle ('18), it

was clear that they had been friends for a while: they were all jokes and smiles. In fact, when asked about their favorite part of the Senior Project experience, the girls were quick to respond: "working with each other." Kirkman and Bartle call their project, "The HeArt of AB." They were mainly interested in creating an event that students could attend to socialize, collaborate, and de-stress by creating art.

Through their project, Kirkman and Bartle sought to encourage wellness at AB and to give students an opportunity to relax amid their hectic days. Fortunately, the event coincided with mid-years week—perhaps one of the most stressful times at AB. Students gathered at South Commons to draw on and color paper tiles, according to a specific color scheme. After the event, the two gathered all the pieces students made and arranged them into a mural to "add some aesthetic appeal" to the walls of AB.

Both Kirkman and Bartle were

pleasantly surprised with the staggering success of their senior project. As Kirkman put it, "I'm proud of how we've been able to do so much" in such little time. Bartle expanded that the positive feedback was "way more than Grace and I could have ever expected." Both girls were incredibly proud that they were able to make such an impact on their community. Be sure to check out the HeArt of AB mural in Student Center West!

Becky Wolf ('18) and Natalie Silulu ('18) spent their senior year encouraging body positivity in the community. Wolf explained how the purpose of their project was to conduct research that would help them "start the conversation about [body image] and start to making our community more body positive," noting how "there's a lot more our school can do" to encourage a more body positive environment.

Wolf and Silulu explained how they both struggled with body image growing up. "...people were

definitely not the nicest towards me and my body image...so that definitely affected my self-esteem," Silulu said. Wolf added on by bringing attention to other issues linked with negative body image: "We know people that have struggled with eating disorders. It's something that we've seen people struggle with but it's not really talked about." The lack of conversation on body positivity is apparent: the high school, middle school, and elementary schools all lack curriculum on body positivity.

"We both work with kids...We hear things that kids say about other people's bodies and being embarrassed of their own and just don't want to have them grow up with a negative body image," Wolf remarked.

One part of Wolf's and Silulu's research was a survey for ABRHS students on the topic of body image. The survey showed some interesting points about how overall,...

See Graduation 2018 / page 6

# Intro

## Letter From the EICs

By NITHYANI ANANDAKUGAN '19 AND JASMINE MANGAT '19  
Co-Editors-In-Chief

Here at *The Spectrum*, the Graduation Issue has always been our favorite. At sixteen pages, it is our longest issue, and perhaps our best. Editing and laying out this final issue is never an easy task—it truly takes a village. So, the past two months have been “all hands on deck”: both old and new Chief Staff have worked tirelessly to meet our deadline. And, even with all the chaos that comes with AP exams and the final term of the school year, the entire Spectrum team truly put forth its best effort. This process certainly felt daunting at the beginning. But, in retrospect, it feels more rewarding than anything else.

The purpose of the Graduation Issue is threefold: we use this issue to reflect on our past year at AB, to reminisce in the experiences of the graduating class, and to say goodbye to our seniors before they leave for the next chapter in their lives. This particular issue feels especially meaningful to us because this will be our last working alongside our graduating seniors: Max, Jessica, Kavya, and Sydney (and Greg!). Over the past year, we've gotten to know each other pretty well. Max, for example, has the uncanny ability to identify every country's flag except Malta's (he thought it was Andorra's flag...rookie mistake). Jessica is our lord and savior when it comes to battling Layout Week. Her attention to detail is, well, divine. Kavya happens to have in-

credible diaphragm strength, which she often uses at meetings to project her voice and silence the general staff before we get started with a meeting. Sydney is incredibly fluent in the world of K-pop and can speak an impressive amount of Korean and Chinese. And lastly, but certainly not least, Gregory is our Spectrum mascot: he always shows up to meetings and brings his cheery attitude. Yet, somehow, he has managed to be unproductive every time, mostly because he technically isn't even a member of the club. We will also be saying goodbye to some of our most talented writers and editors, including one of our editors, Mira; our columnists, Jake and Olivia; and of course, the Love Doctor, Jack. As we say goodbye to our seniors, it is not lost upon us that in a year's time, it will be us saying goodbye.

But of course, this issue isn't all goodbyes. We also welcome to our New Chief Staff: Somya, Teagan, Kaitlyn, and Grace. They join our current Chief Staff members, Kirtana, Serena, Michael, and Anjali.

We began this issue late in March with the end of the year nowhere in sight. Now, as we finish our final days of layout, it seems that the end of the school year has come far too quickly. Before we know it, it'll be us walking to the endless rounds of Pomp and Circumstance in our blue graduation robes as the new Co-Editors-In-Chief pass out their own Graduation Issues. Until next year!

Cheers,  
Nithyani and Jasmine

## The Spectrum

Founded 1982  
*e cineribus ad astra*

**Nithyani Anandakugan**  
**Jasmine Mangat**  
Editors-in-Chief

**Somya Prabhakar**  
Chief Copy Editor

**Kaitlyn Chen**  
**Grace Du**  
Chief Layout Editors

**Teagan Smith**  
Mainspread Editor

**Anjali Raman**  
News Editor

**Grace Gong**  
Forum Editor

**Michael Xu**  
Off Topic Editor

**Serena Han**  
**Kirtana Krishnakumar**  
Publicity and Finance

**David Brusie**  
**Genevieve Hammond**  
Faculty Advisors

**Contact Us**  
36 Charter Road  
Acton, MA 01720  
www.thespectrumabrhs.com  
theabspectrum@gmail.com  
Facebook and Instagram @theabspectrum

### Copy Editors

Katherine Gu, Mira Mulgund\*, Sydney Smith\*, Alex Zhang

### Staff

Bri Baang, Siena Brolin, Anna Charisse, Annabella Chen, Sam Chen, Michael Cheng, Akash Choudhury, Natalie Dawn, Matt Fleming, Ananya Gade, Paulina Garro, Pratik Gazula, Michelle Gong, Swetha Hariharan, Nithya Jonnavithula, Ritika Koirala, Divya Krishnan, Rohan Muralidhar, Srija Nagireddy, Kam Narra, Julia Olney, Daniel Poulton, Sonali Rai, David Tsitrin, Aadhiti Vallatharasu, Kavya Uddaraju\*, Neha Vijay, Emily Xu

### Columnists

Katherine Chen, Lizette Sta. Maria, Olivia Oliyawole\*, Jack Olson\*, Mila Rushkin, Niraagi Shah, Vera Tsang, Jake Verilli\*

**Layout Editors:** Peter Bi, Maxwell Kim\*, Isaiah Lee, Amber Li, Jessica Luo\*

\*Graduating Staff

## Good News: Graduation Edition

By ANJALI RAMAN '20  
News Editor

News often focuses on sad, disappointing, or even scary stories in an effort to create change in politics, opinions, and society. Rarely does there remain time or energy to celebrate change and the flood of good news that remains hidden in the ocean of bad news. For a few minutes, forget the current troubles of the world and embrace the progress and excellence we often overlook.

A dramatic improvement in the lives of many homeless people, the Sacramento City Council approved the West Coast's first hospice facility for people who do not have a place to live. Dedicated to providing state of the art care to homeless individuals with terminal ailments, Joshua's House was designed with comfort in mind. The \$3 million budget will pay for twenty beds, a garden, a library, and many other facilities. The facility's name is also sentimental. Marlene von Friederichs-Fitzwater, associate professor at the UC Davis School of Medicine's grandson, Joshua Lee, died living on the streets of Nebraska. Now, the facility erected in his honor will ensure that nobody else meets the same fate.

An off-duty police officer saved the life of a three-month old unresponsive infant when the child's mother, Nechole Crowell, flagged him down frantically from the side of the road. K9 Deputy Jeremie Nix performed CPR on the child named Kingston, but when he failed to start breathing again, he bypassed calling an ambulance and made the decision to rush him to the hospital himself. Doctors say that had Deputy Nix not brought Kingston to the ER at the speed at which he did, Kingston may not have been able to make a full recovery. In the ER Nix assured Crowell that he was going “to make sure they saved her baby.” Nix is grateful that he was able to help and that Kingston is alive and “will be for a long time.”

Costa Rica has announced plans to become the first carbon-free nation in the world. President Carlos Alvarado's says that “decarbonization is the great task of our generation and Costa Rica must be one of the first countries in the world to accomplish it, if not the first.” The country plans to be completely fossil-fuel free by 2021, the 200th anniversary of the country's independence. While this may seem to be a monumental task, Costa Rica


already generates 99% of their energy from renewable sources, such as hydropower and solar energy. Already a model of change, Costa Rica proves to be a beacon of improvement for the rest of the world.

Legislators presented the Protection of Pollinators Bill to the British House of Commons in an effort to save the diminishing pollinator population. The bill entails building plots of shrubs and wildflowers that guide pollinators around multiple plants, helping both the insects and the plant life. Essentially, it's a highway for bees, moths, and butterflies. If the bill passes, unused public areas would be identified in order to create pollinator corridors of “B-lines.” The proposal is especially welcome after the recent ban on bee-harming pesticides by the European Union.

Finally, the Acton-Boxborough Regional High School saw the Class of 2018 graduate on June 1st. After four long years, the students said goodbye to ABRHS and will join the world as adults, many matriculating into universities across the country. Their hard work paid off, and dressed in blue gowns, they say hello to summer and bright futures. Congratulations, Class of 2018!



**PEDAL  
POWER  
BIKE & SKI**  
Acton. MA  
www.pedpow.com



THIS YEAR,  
**BE GREATER THAN**  
*My fear of geometry!*

Tae-Ho K., Freshman

**MATHNASIUM**  
The Math Learning Center

707-709-MATH (6284)

**ENROLL NOW**  
707-709-MATH (6284)

Mathnasium Acton  
acton@mathnasium.com  
mathnasium.com/acton

Mathnasium BurlingtonLexington  
burlingtonlexington@mathnasium.com  
mathnasium.com/burlingtonlexington



Other good news: dog.  
Aarushi Nohria / Correspondent

# News

## Compostable Trays

By JENNA FRIZZELL '19  
Correspondent

With the help of student leaders in Resource Force, a club which works to improve energy and resource efficiency at ABRHS, the school has implemented new compostable lunch trays in place of the older polystyrene or styrofoam trays. This change came after careful consideration by the school committee, along with an evaluation of studies and data showing the many benefits of compostable trays.

The new, eco-friendly, 100% compostable trays were initially introduced by some of the largest city school districts in the country: Los Angeles, Miami, Chicago, and New York City. These districts joined forces under the Urban School Lunch Alliance to combat the environmental problems associated with the polystyrene tray, including the production of pollutants that have direct effects on drinking-water pollution, marine debris, and hazardous airborne materials. In fact, the number of lunch trays used in New York City each day alone stacks up to the equivalent height of eight and a half Empire State buildings. But lunch trays, of course, are not going away. The problem is not the need for trays but how we have come to produce and dispose of them. And so, the compostable tray was born.

Before compostable trays, ABRHS had made some progress to-

wards eco-friendly lunch trays. The "brown boat" tray used for some lunches such as sandwiches and pizza is completely compostable, but brown boats are not suitable for every meal. The new round compostable trays have a more diverse set of uses. These trays are made locally in Waterville, Maine, at a paper plate company, which guarantees a sturdy and trustworthy product made from local forest products. Additionally, the placement of the milk carton in the center of the plate balanced with four other large compartments for the main meal provides an effective means of carrying food to the lunch table for students.

Actually implementing these trays during lunches wasn't as easy as simply swapping one lunch tray for another. A significant setback was the cost; these trays used to cost \$0.11 each, which was an expensive alternative to the \$0.03 polystyrene trays. Continued research and development, however, reduced the cost significantly to just \$0.07 per compostable tray, a price that is consistent with school committee policy and is expected to continue to drop.

Regardless, the environmental benefit which accompanies the switch to compostable trays remains priceless. As a community, we are on our way to improving the world we live in, but this is not the job of one or two leaders; each and every person is responsible to do their part towards a cleaner, safer future.



Beware of Tray Day (5/4).  
Isaiah Lee / Layout

## ABRHS Track Star

By DANIEL POULTON '19  
Spectrum Staff

Acton-Boxborough's Sam Friberg has had quite the track career during her four years of high school. Her impressive achievements range from an undefeated record during the past season to being the state champion in the 1000m race for indoor track. Friberg's talent culminated into the designation of All-American at the nationwide competition in March.

According to Friberg, track has been an extremely valuable part of her high school experience. She says, "Some of my best friends have been [made] through track. Competing with friends is one of the best parts of any sport, and although track is often considered a very individualistic sport, I've found that it doesn't feel that way at all." She credits the community in the sport to its "competitive camaraderie" because you "know your competitors on a different level than in a team sport," as everyone is responsible for their own performance. Additionally, she says, "I think those lessons of accountability and being able to work hard when no one is watching have transferred into other aspects of my life beyond track." The individualistic part of track is what tends to scare many people; there is no team to back you up if

you make a mistake. However, Sam views this as "a moment of opportunity [rather] than fear because you are the one who can change the result of the race and you are the one who can make a race one that you are proud of."

Over the past years, Friberg has also gained a lot of mental fortitude in persevering through hard workouts and competitions. She recalls one story when this mental toughness was invaluable: "I remember one race where I got the baton in the 4x400 and we were in 6th place with a good amount of distance to the girl in 1st. When I got the baton, my mind was not on that girl in first; it was on trying to past the girl in 5th. Then the girl in 4th, 3rd, then 2nd. I hit the homestretch and there was just one more girl in front of me. I ended up passing her with a few meters left in the race." This experience taught Friberg to focus on enjoying the process of the race rather than just the end result.

Friberg recommends the track team to all up-and-coming AB athletes, as the lessons and skills developed there are useful in every competition. Next year, Sam will be competing for Yale University's Track and Field Team and likely their Cross Country Team as well. Sam Friberg has had an incredible track career here at AB, and we wish her all the best at Yale and beyond!

## Schedule Changes and Wellness

By Ben Orr '21  
Spectrum Staff

In the administration's quest to find ways to lower stress in the student body, they tested a potential schedule that may be used during the 2019-2020 school year. During the weeks of March 12th and 19th, the ABRHS administrative team implemented a pilot schedule consisting of a modified block schedule. The new schedule included two days each week where students attended only four classes. The class periods were eighty-seven minutes on one day and seventy-four minute on the other. The seventy-four minute period day ended with an X-Block, during which students attended a study hall, sought out academic help, or participated in other wellness activities. Leading up to and during the pilot weeks, students and teachers alike voiced mixed opinions about the experimental schedule and how it would affect the daily high school routine. To learn more about the schedule and the feedback from students and teachers, *The Spectrum* sat down with Associate Principal Beth Baker.

Over the past few years, students have seen the administrative team focusing their efforts on how to promote wellness and balance among students. Ms. Baker explained that administration has been trying to prioritize a specific aspect of wellness each month, including mental health and homework. Through their research on homework, administration members found two main trends: concerns about assessments and the pace of the day. With the forty-seven-minute period schedule, it's difficult for many teachers to try out alternative ways of testing such as authentic assessments in which students create or work on a project that directly applies to and affects the real world. The Pulsera Project from the World Language Department and the Senior Projects in the English Department are examples of these types of assessments. In addition, administration looked into the effect that an eight-period

schedule has on a student, finding that it may actually add to students' stress. Switching between classes every forty-seven minutes may make the day seem hectic by forcing students to switch mindsets quickly. In accordance with these findings, the administrative team explored new schedules as a structural way to help promote wellness and balance among students. With the schedule change, the administration planned to have few transitions to allow for a slower pace in the school day, longer class periods for alternative assessment opportunities, collaboration time for the faculty, and enrichment opportunities for students through X-block. However, instead of implementing a four period block schedule every day, the Administration decided to test out a modified block schedule in which only two days consist of four periods while the rest of the days stay the same, allowing for a "compromise schedule."

Following the two pilot weeks, the administration sent out a survey to the students on their opinions of the block schedule.

"[The survey] was pretty evenly split around people liking it and not liking it," said Ms. Baker.

Although administration has not yet fully analyzed the data they received, some major patterns stuck out to Ms. Baker. She found that classes "felt good and engaging" for students when teachers "used the long blocks to teach differently and...do different things." This was not the case for students whose teachers mostly taught the same way, just in a longer class period. As the school continues to analyze the data, they hope to come up with a list of follow-up questions they can ask teachers in an end-of-year survey. Administration also hopes to address some of the "what if" situations, such as snow days, that may come up with the modified schedule.

During the interview, Ms. Baker also discussed the debate over "depth versus breadth." The block schedule does mean that all classes across all departments will have to cut some content since teachers are

not allowed to "double up on homework." Instead, the modified block schedule is geared more towards delving deeper into certain topics and allowing teachers to experiment with different techniques when teaching. Longer class time would also allow students to develop their skills in a certain subject more through more hands on learning.

"It's a pro and a con," Ms. Baker says. She also acknowledged that there is "no skills work without content," so the school needs to find the right balance between the two.

Students have also expressed various concerns and opinions on the block schedule. Some students felt as if they were less productive with the new schedule when they knew that they have an extra day to work on homework. Others complained that their schedule was not balanced since they had four academic periods on one day while just one on the other. However, we cannot know the overall perception of the schedule until a full data analysis is completed.

The next steps for the administration include examining the survey results through different perspectives such as assessments, transitions, stress, and X-Block. The administrative team will also have focus groups consisting of students and staff members. Overall, the school wants to have a good sense of the new schedule by the beginning of next year to allow all the departments time to plan. Even if the traditional schedule changes, administration hopes to develop other ways to implement wellness and balance as well.

It seems that administration has found a means to finally remedy the prevailing issue of stress at AB. The key, now, is implementing this new schedule as tool to carry out change. The problem with change, though, is that people are often afraid of it. Perhaps the backlash to the experimental schedule arises from a hesitance to reform old habits. Yet, once students and staff at AB can overcome this fear, AB can truly evolve its culture and its pace.

## Reconsidering the Skip Test

By SOMYA PRABHAKAR '19  
Chief Copy Editor

Everyone knows his or her go-to skippie when they are stranded in the middle of a math problem or struggling to make sense of a unit the day before the test. However, the skippie clique as we know it will be dissolving in the near future as the math department plans to phase out the district's skip test option.

For a long time, AB has administered the "skip test" to 6th graders in the district, allowing students to skip Pre-Algebra in 7th grade and to let them take Algebra I instead. This test, in turn, allows students to skip a year in math and ultimately become a "skippie." In a few cases, skippies finish Calculus during junior year, so they can take Multivariable Calculus in a college class during senior year. However, with the new changes, all incoming students in the middle school and high school will have to take Pre-Algebra in 7th grade and either Algebra I or Geometry in 9th grade.

The administration decided to eliminate the skip test because they believe that skipping a year of math has no true benefits for

most students, and may actually be detrimental to their mathematical skills over time. Math Department leader Mr. Noeth tends to joke that kids who skip 7th grade math never graduate because they do not know what a stem-and-leaf plot is and therefore end up failing the MCAS. In all seriousness, he explains that "Our [honors] math program is already providing the students who take BC Calculus the opportunity to start college in Calculus 3 and thus have credit for two college math classes before they get there. We don't see that getting further ahead than that is in anyone's best interests."

Moreover, taking AB or BC Calculus in junior year may actually be harmful to skippies' math skills. Since the number of skippies in each grade is so low, it is not feasible to start a Multivariable Calculus course at the high school. Due to this, Mr. Noeth says that "half of the kids in this situation, if not more, have just taken zero math in grade twelve. This has meant that skipping grade seven math has actually been harmful to them, as a year without math means they forget a lot." The more challenging courses, in addition to skippies inevitably forgetting material during

their fifteen month break, may lead them to struggle more with college math than students who take BC Calculus as seniors and move on to Calculus 3 the next school year.

However, skipping 7th grade math is not necessarily harmful to all skippies. Kaitlyn Chen ('19) makes the point that "skippies are expected to retain material from each year of math to perform well in each of their courses... these kids are expected to either remember everything or be studious; they are avid math geeks and will likely use that extra period to go beyond the high school curriculum and pursue STEM subjects that ultimately help, not harm them." As Mr. Noeth says, one is not "true honors" until one has a 100% retention rate, and the skippies tend to embody his idea of "true honors."

Ultimately, the decision to get rid of the skip test touches a very small percentage of AB students. Although it bars students from taking Multivariable Calculus in their senior year, it may prove to be a good decision if the administration succeeds in raising college success rates and ensuring that students retain all the material that is necessary to their higher education.

# News

## What it is Like Being an Asian-American at AB

By KATHERINE CHEN '20  
Politics Columnist

*Alicia Yang ('18), Chinese-American*

"My ethnicity does not make me feel special, especially in a school as diversely populated as AB... embracing my Chinese-American identity means realizing the collective experiences that shape who I am. In sharing the unique stories of my parents' immigration story, Chinese music, and the language that I am able to mostly speak, I can widen someone else's worldview and allow others to gain more empathy and understanding. And in that sense, Asian-Americans aren't so different from other people of color. We're all just as interconnected and different from one another."



Student Alicia Yang  
Emily Richardt / Photographer

*Nithyani Anandakugan ('19), Sri Lankan-American*

"As a second generation American with two immigrant parents, I often feel that my story, like the stories of many Asian-Americans, doesn't necessarily fit into the common narrative surrounding American race relations because our stories go back only a few decades. So when we talk about race and ethnicity in America, it's often difficult to know where we, as Asian-Americans, fit in. I think 'Asian Bubbles' form because it's easier to place ourselves into a narrative when we have others like us to share it with."

*Andrew Chen ('21), Chinese-American*

"As a Chinese-American, I definitely feel that many people in the community would associate us with getting top grades in our class



Student Andrew Chen  
Emily Richardt / Photographer

and taking loads of AP classes. It is a common stereotype that Asian parents are all about pressuring their children into getting into Ivy leagues. In reality, our parents only want what's best for us, with a common saying to their children: knowledge will help your future... So really, most Asian-Americans, at least the ones I know of, are motivated and stressed out by no one but themselves. We feel that our ethnicity places us in a position where we have to be the stereotypical Asian everyone knows."

*Iris Shu ('21), Chinese-American*

"Most Asian students feel pressured to not only reach above and beyond their potentials but graduate at the top of their class and get accepted into the best colleges. There's pressure coming from all areas, from the accomplishments of their peers to the pushing of their parents... Being Chinese, my culture clashes a lot with the environment in America. Growing up, I never appreciated the uniqueness of my culture, instead comparing it to the place I grew up, the United States, and only seeing how "weird" or "different" it was. As I've matured, I've been able to see the true beauty of Chinese culture and really appreciate it."

*Daphne Wong ('20), half-Chinese-American*

"I think being Asian has really heavily affected my identity. I'm

biracial, so my mom is white and my dad is Chinese. I struggled a lot because I didn't look like a lot of the women I grew up around, and I didn't see myself reflected anywhere in the media. I felt too Asian but at the same time not Asian enough to split into either category. The first Asian woman I saw on a mainstream TV show was Cristina Yang on Grey's Anatomy. The show itself is mostly drama fluff, but what was most significant for me was seeing an Asian woman be more than the nerdy best friend who's good at math. Cristina was complicated and beautiful and ambitious, and was a real complex character instead of a comic relief. I guess one of my goals is to, in some way, increase representation of complex characters of color on TV and in books. I think it's really important because stereotyp-



Student Daphne Wong  
Emily Richardt / Photographer

ing starts as early as picture books when you're a kid, and when we break down that barrier, we can start to really understand each other."

*Peter Bi ('19), Chinese-American*

"I feel as if being Asian at AB is a challenge that isn't necessarily bad or anything important; it's just what you make of it. It's not my entire identity. But I still love everything and all aspects about it."

*Deeyana Touserani ('20), Iranian-American*

"I think that a common misconception of Asians is in the way we look. When you think of an Asian, you don't typically think of someone from the Middle East. However, we are Asian, and we don't have to all look the same to be considered [as] such!"



Student Peter Bi  
Emily Richardt / Photographer

## Interview with the Great Band Director Mr. Hickey

By Somya Prabhakar '19  
Chief Copy Editor

By the time our graduating seniors started kindergarten, Mr. Hickey had already been working as AB's Music Director for ten years. Although he has now decided to move on, his twenty-four years in the Music Department leave behind a legacy that bespeaks his hard work. *The Spectrum* interviewed Mr. Hickey for some final thoughts on his time at AB.

*When did you first start teaching at AB?*

"I was hired for the '94-'95 school year. I met my students for the first time that summer at band camp. The school grounds were much different then. The marching band practiced on the parking lot where the tennis courts are now, and in the summer heat...man, it was hot. We really toughened those kids up! All while having so much fun getting to know each other."

*Did you have a vision for the years to come? Did it come true?*

"AB was and is a school that values excellence in academics, athletics, and the arts. The band program was already great. I just hoped I wouldn't screw it up. In the end, I feel good about how things played out. It is nice to know there is some truth to Mrs. Marino's bull horned cheer "the Greatest Band in the Land!" (if you've been to a football game, you know what I mean). In my humble opinion, we have some of the finest choral and drama programs in the state. With the addition of a string program, our department is providing excellent opportunities for all students. The string program will become as wonderful and vibrant as our other

programs within a few short years. I would never take credit for these successes. It is the community that creates this environment where we can flourish. I often hear from my fellow band directors how amazed they are by the parent support we have for our program. ABFOM is the BOMB!!!"

*When did you become the director of the music department? How did your responsibilities change?*

"I was hired as the director of music. With this role came responsibility. Our drama program became much more than an extracurricular. Our choral program grew substantially, we added elementary staff, the Blanchard School, and a string orchestra. Understanding that all of these things come at a cost, and the community bears the financial burden, we have built programs that are fiscally lean but robust in their offerings. Because so much of our success depends on the relatively small staff, one of my greatest responsibilities is to hire the right people for the job. I think we have an outstanding team of teachers who are passionate about their craft and their students' arts education."

*What was your impression of students when you were just starting out, and how has it changed over the years?*

"I started teaching 35 years ago (1983), and so many things have changed. It is a different world. Kids are kids and always will be, but the society we live in is drastically changed. In '83 we were still using vinyl records, the phones were attached to the wall and, computers were the size of a football field... Nobody carried these things around. Terrorism was cer-

tainly happening, but it was never so close to home. The world is such a smaller place now. The pace of life is frantic now compared to those earlier days. But through it all, kids are kids. Kids love to learn, and I have loved being some small part of that learning."

*What is your favorite memory from your time at AB? What about just the past year?*

• "Oh man, so many great memories. No way to pin one down, but here are a few."

• "Our trip to Toronto my first year. We kicked some major butt at the festival and I think the kids didn't expect to do so well. They were so excited."

• "Earning Gold at the MICCA concert festival and being invited to perform with the band at Boston Symphony Hall."

• "Commissioning a new work, "Ghosts of the Minutemen," with Thomas Duffy."

• "Trips: Great Britain. Ireland" "Marching in Dublin with a half million people in the way. Wash-

ington, DC—the band performing on the steps of the capitol building. Orlando—They run a great parade, and who doesn't love a good roller coaster?"

• "Little moments of great joy, mostly in rehearsals, when a particularly beautiful moment would bring chills. Who else can say they get these kinds of chills from doing their job?"

• "This year's band performance at the MICCA Wakefield show. The performance that night was incredible, and yes, I got chills. The band went on to earn a Gold medal at finals, but it was that Wakefield performance that stays with me. Like anybody else, I love gold medals, but as I try to impress upon the kids, the medals mean nothing next to the experience of working hard with other people and performing a show that means something to you personally."

• "Memories of all the talented and wonderful students, parents, and staff, who have each helped to make the AB Performing Arts program what it is today. You are the

BEST!"

*What is the greatest change you have seen in the band over the years?*

"You know they say... 'The more things change, the more they stay the same.' I am proud of the traditions we have established and through the course of time we have stayed true to those things that make our band special. I think the band has stayed on top of trends within the marching arena, but been able to balance tradition with contemporary flair."

*What will you miss the most?*

"The kids. The staff. The community. I've been blessed."

A heartfelt thank you goes to Mr. Hickey for his unceasing hard work and belief in his students' abilities over all these years. We wish him luck in his future endeavors after retirement, and congratulate him on a job well done! Mr. Hickey, the community and your students will miss you.



Mr. Hickey will be retiring from being the head of the Music Department after twenty-four years.  
ONLINE SOURCE

# News

## Interview: Speech and Debate

By SAM CHEN '20  
Spectrum Staff

High school graduation is a major milestone—a transition from adolescence to adulthood. Despite leaving high school, graduates retain their ties through the memories they made and experiences they shared. More specifically, extracurriculars leave a huge mark on the vast majority of students' lives. This mark is especially relevant in the ABRHS Speech and Debate Team. Following the recently-held farewell banquet for their graduating seniors, Speech and Debate captains sat down with *The Spectrum* to discuss the impact their team and its members had on their futures.

Although students participating in speech and debate events practice separately, the group comes together before each practice for a general meeting and still maintains similar goals and experiences. Jerry Wu ('18), co-captain of Lincoln-Douglas Debate, put it simply: "Speech and Debate is really a family. Some of my closest friends and best experiences have been formed at meetings or at tournaments." Interpretive Speech captain Daisy Yin ('18) agreed that "Speech and Debate has been a great community for much of my high school life." The captains connected the notion of community to individual development: through communal support, participants build off each other and learn and grow together.

Wu further reflected on how the skills he acquired from Speech and Debate have transformed him. He explained, "Speech and Debate is one of those unique clubs that apply to everything you do in life... where[ever] you go, whether it be the boardroom or soccer field or classroom." Co-captain Arif Hari-anawala ('18) built off of this idea:

"Even if someone ends up pursuing a major or career path that has nothing to do with this activity, the time management skills they gain are invaluable and can be utilized in any work environment."

Co-captain Anna Wu ('18) spoke specifically about debate: "[it] makes students more aware of the world around them. From learning the philosophical backings of the different sides of an argument, to research and case-writing, debate has honed my ability to keep up with the greater issues of the world, think critically about them, and communicate my beliefs." As both global and domestic controversies increasingly find their way into the media, Public Forum Debate co-captain Anshul Joshi ('18) discussed how "a huge problem in the real world is that people blindly defend their point of view without trying to engage with the other side. By preparing arguments both for and against given topics, I'm forced to confront my own biases and seek the truth by starting with the belief that both sides are equal." In an increasingly contentious political climate, the practicality and applicability of debate has flourished.

On the speech side of things, Daisy Yin revealed the contrast between speech and debate: while debate stresses argumentation, "speech is much more focused on presentation...[it] is based on the way you hold yourself, present certain things to the audience, and interact with them." She furthered that "[S]peech is definitely more creative, as most of it is based on personal interpretations of text." Regardless, "you'll always be interacting with people [and] presenting your ideas." Speech brings out each participant's individuality in a society that continually seeks conformity. While debate fosters critical thinking skills, speech

allows for self-expression. Each discipline promotes a different aspect of communication, but the two remain inherently connected in their advancement of the individual.

As the senior Speech and Debate Captains graduate, they have the opportunity to reflect back on their individual growth. Public Forum Debate co-captain, Gaurav Asthana ('18), remarked that "seeing how my role on the team has evolved from freshman to senior year has also been something significant to me. As someone who was nervous to start debating as a freshman, supporting and coaching novice debaters who are going through the same [transition] I went through has definitely been one of the more formative experiences of my time on the team. Physically seeing the development of several novices from being too nervous to talk for two minutes to qualifying to nationals or the Tournament of Champions has definitely been the most rewarding aspect of the past four years."

Harianawala concurred: "While I wasn't good enough to leave behind a legacy of being 'the best debater,' I hope that my efforts to make the environment [for future debaters] less stressful have an impact."

As the Class of 2018 leaves AB and ventures out into the world outside of home, the school loses a group of impactful scholars. For them, Yin remarked that leaving Speech and Debate behind is "pretty bittersweet." However, Jerry Wu revealed that "graduation from speech and debate isn't really leaving the event but rather translating it into a new context of college. I'm not sure whether I will do debate in college, but I do know that when I 'graduate' from Speech and Debate, I'm really just taking my next round to a new environment."

## Senior-Staff Basketball Game

By NITHYANI ANANDAKUGAN '19  
Co-Editor-in-Chief

Growing up, I have never been much of an athlete. Nor have I ever harbored much interest in sports. My father, on the other hand, cared about basketball—and sometimes, he cared too much. Every March, I would hear the madness oozing from the television. Between May and June, I would always get regular updates on the NBA championships on the car ride to school. In fact, by no coincidence, my sister's initials are N.B.A. No matter how hard I resisted, the sport of basketball found its way into my life.

In 2012, my father installed a basketball hoop at the end of our driveway. For the next few years, when my cousins came over, we could count on that hoop as our source of entertainment. Though

it's been a few years since I've taken a shot at our hoop and though I still lack interest when it comes to sport, I always associate basketball with these wholesome memories of community and camaraderie. In many ways, Student Council's annual Senior-Staff Basketball Game completes this fond image of basketball in my head.

The Student Council hosts this Senior-Staff Basketball Game annually as a fundraiser for their projects and future events. Every year, the event is a huge success. This year was no different.

Students trickled into the Upper Gym on March 16th at a steady stream beginning around six o'clock. Student Council members bustled around, setting up the concession stand and ticket booth in preparation for the big game. By the end of the first quarter, the student section of the risers had

grown fairly full.

The students in the risers dressed in red, white, and blue to support the seniors. But as the night went on, the students cheered not only for their peers on the court but for the staff as well. In fact, through the ceaseless cheering, the enthusiasm for the students and teachers' plays and the general enjoyment of the game became quite evident. The game itself remained fairly tight throughout. The score board frequently shifted back and forth like a pendulum, favoring one team briefly and then the other. Points from a clean shot by a senior would be promptly returned in the form of a three-point swish by a member of the staff team. For the third year in a row, the staff defeated their seniors, this time with an eight-point lead.

The Class of 2019 better step it up for next year.



The seniors being owned by their teachers.  
Nithyani Anandakugan / Co-Editor-in-Chief

## Spectrum's Evolution

By KIRTANA KRISHNAKUMAR '20  
Publicity and Finance Manager

In the distant future, a scrawny freshman squints at the pictures on the back of this newspaper, staring at pictures of *The Spectrum's* alumni. He marvels at the fact that these high schoolers once stood in his place—joining a club that has become an inextricable part of AB. Having looked at past staff pictures myself, I wonder how future members will remember us. Hopefully, we will have achieved our goal: to help *The Spectrum* grow within our community. We want to keep providing students with an outlet to express themselves, while simultaneously covering issues affecting our community, the country, and the world. However, before we plan for this future, perhaps taking a look into the past will give us some insight; to ensure that the club thrives, we must learn from our predecessors' successes and failures and see what truly characterizes *The Spectrum*.

*The Spectrum* was founded in 1982 and hit its peak of popularity through the rest of the decade. Since the 1990s, it has retained a decent readership, which the current staff hopes to continually improve. Back then, the staff received a steady flow of interested freshmen—often other staff members' siblings. Former Layout Editor Adam Steeves ('98) said that "the paper felt like an institution that was part of the school as a whole." Although it retained this position for some time, *The Spectrum* nearly disappeared in 2014 due to lack of funding; the club went almost bankrupt, forcing the staff to post only articles online. Former Editor-in-Chief, Pooji Jonnavithula, ('17) talked about how the previous staff had maintained the paper in the short-term, but focused little on sustaining it for the future. Luckily, upon assuming leadership, Jonnavithula ensured that the new Chief Staff could support the paper after she graduated. Her efforts certainly paid off: current Co-Editor-in-Chief, Nithyani Anandakugan, ('19) expresses gratitude for the strong foundation Pooji left for the current Chief Staff.

Although *The Spectrum's* success has varied over time, a few characteristics have remained constant. A sense of lightheartedness has certainly lasted, bringing the staff closer. Former Off Topic Editor Mailin Li ('10) described running through the library late at night screaming "WE'RE DONE!" upon finishing an issue. With similar fondness, former Off Topic Editor Rollin Hu ('15) reminisced recording and uploading a lip-sync of "It's Raining Men" by The Weath-

er Girls for publicity. The laughter continued this year when the staff learned to tap dance during a meeting. These moments ultimately create a feeling of community in the club. Many on the general staff described *The Spectrum* as a second family with whom they can enjoy snacks and unwind after a stressful week of school. Jonnavithula added that "once you go through layout week with someone...you're buddies for life."

By connecting students of all ages, *The Spectrum* further strengthens this feeling of community. When they join the club, underclassmen find themselves among more experienced members who they can look to for advice and support. Co-Editor-in-Chief Jasmine Mangat recounted that she held the newspaper in awe the first time her brother brought it home; she was astonished that *students* could create their own paper. After joining *The Spectrum*, she realized that it did more than just create a newspaper. It let her channel her energy into something other than her stressful academic life. Even though she has added responsibilities, *The Spectrum* has made her much happier overall. Former Features Editor Tim Dalton ('98) felt similarly empowered by the club. A new student at AB, he was instantly plunged into the school's competitive nature. Everyone told him he was "unprepared" for AB's "rigor," and he felt overwhelmed. However, when attending his first Spectrum meeting, Tim met an editor "with this invincible certainty and fearless purpose." Although he felt like an "ugly-duckling" at first, he felt inspired by this senior as well as many others; to him, they were "some models of the kind of swan [he] could be."

*The Spectrum* has touched the lives of many individuals in the past, and we hope that it will continue to do so in the future. Ms. Hammond, *The Spectrum's* long-time adviser, reflected that despite the changes in staff, the club itself never failed to develop students' leadership skills. It has had an impact on a more personal level too. A general staff member remarked that writing for *The Spectrum* has allowed her to express herself, and to her, "individuality is above all freedom." Providing this individuality is student journalism's purpose. Since a student-body newspaper must reflect the school and its students, *The Spectrum*, too, must give students a place to voice their opinions. Thus, we have a promise for our future journalists: our staff will strive to sustain this club—along with its resilience, community, and individuality that has defined its history.

**ACTON**  
**COFFEE HOUSE**

West Acton Villageworks  
525 MASS AVE #103  
ACTON, MA 01720

Monday - Friday  
6:30am - 5pm

Saturday  
7am - 5pm

Sunday  
7:30am - 5pm

978.263.3700 WWW.ACTONCOFFEEHOUSE.COM




# Graduation 2018

## Senior Project: Students and Community (cont. pg 1)

By JASMINE MANGAT '19 AND  
NITHYANI ANANDAKUGAN '19  
Co-Editors-in-Chief

...there seems to be a stigma against men's body positivity as compared to women's. Additionally, over 90% of the respondents noted that they compare their bodies to those of other people's and have felt insecure about their bodies. They also asked about whether respondents have tried to change their eating habits to make their bodies look a certain way, with a majority of the respondents responding "yes."

Wolf and Silulu presented all their research in a presentation in the auditorium, hoping they could help create a conversation among high school students on the importance of body positivity and striving to achieve a more body positive environment. They even played a video they made of different AB students expressing their own struggles of with their body image and why they believe body positivity is important to them.

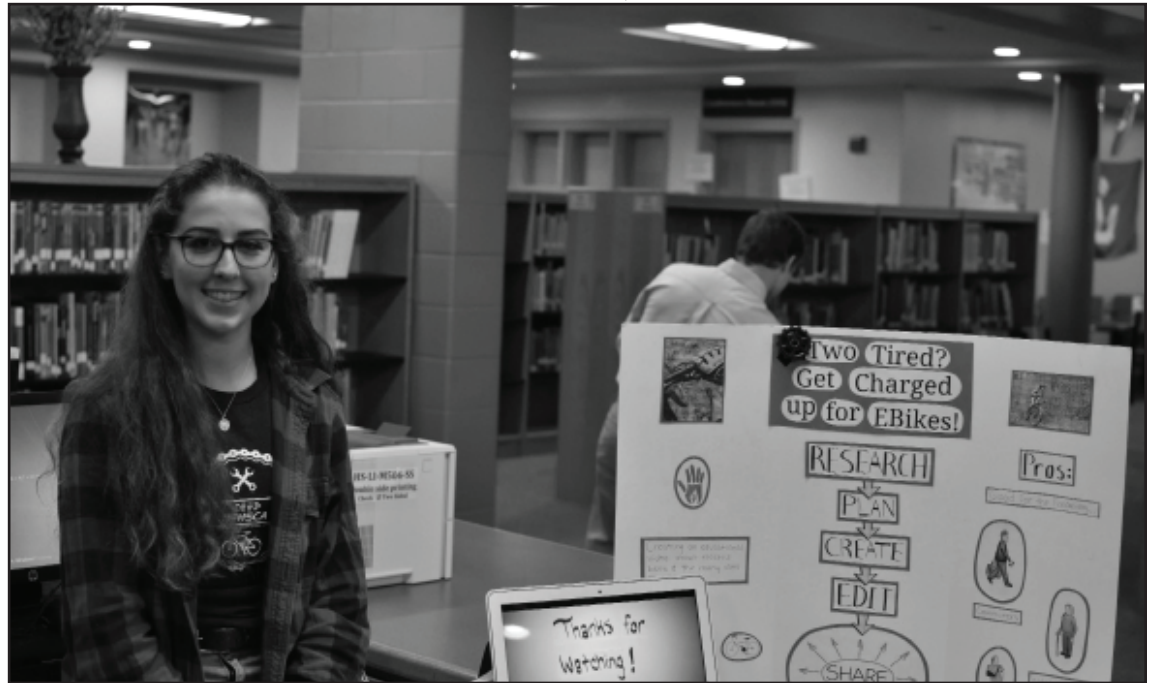
In terms of actually achieving a more body positive community, Wolf and Silulu encourage students to surround themselves with more body positive content and realize that photoshopped

models are not the norm. By following more body positive influencers and activists, students can have body positive outlook when it comes to talking about other people's and their own bodies, helping them create a more body positive community overall.

Since they were children, Jon Rong about Thurston Mann have been passionate about cars. They wanted to create a project that would emulate that passion; however, more importantly, they wanted a project that would be a "respectable yet effective project for the community." The pair thus filmed multiple five to six minute videos about drivers' safety, specifically targeting teens.

"We want to get the issues known and make educational videos that will help people be better and safer drivers all around," Rong said.

Rong discussed the importance of teen driving safety, especially considering the fresh group of new drivers that enter the school every year. Rong and Mann focused especially on distracted driving that stems from using the radio and cell phones while driving. Rong's biggest hope is to have more updated videos that actually express how teenagers feel and think when



Kiera Cudmore ('18) helped promote the use of EBikes in the community.

Jasmine Mangat / Co-Editor-in-Chief

driving.

To reach a wider audience, Rong and Mann played their videos during the Senior Project Expo Night on May 17th, hoping both to show the community what they have done so far and to share their message about drivers' safety. Rong and Mann also plan on creating a YouTube channel with their videos and post their content on other social media. By seeing videos with ac-

tual high school students that can relate to the rest of the student body, Rong and Mann hope they can have a bigger impact on their community.

This year's seniors have certainly impressed the community with their creativity and their work. The students showcased their projects at the Senior Expo Night on May 17th in the ABRHS library. The students gathered to share their year's

work with the rest of the community. The excitement and enthusiasm in the atmosphere was almost tangible. The seniors meandered from project to project admiring each other's creativity. Soon their friends and parents arrived to do the same. By the time everyone trickled out of the library that night, one thing became very clear: if this is what students can do within a year, the future is undoubtedly hopeful.

## Thank You, Emperor Mutschler!

By BALWANT SINGH '19  
Spectrum Staff

Thomas Mutschler, a beloved Geometry and Statistics teacher, will be retiring this year after twenty-three years of teaching at ABRHS. However, before we begin to say good-bye, here is a little Statistics humour:

**Null Hypothesis:** Mr. Mutschler will not be missed after he retires

**Alternative Hypothesis:** Mr. Mutschler will be missed

**Conditions:** Data collected were from a simple random sample of Mr. Mutschler's students, tested from 26 surveys so the Central Limit Theorem applies, 26 people is less than 10% of the entire population of ABRHS. All of the conditions are met, proceed with test.

**Conclusion:** I can safely reject the null hypothesis that Mr. Mutschler will not be missed after he retires at the 5% significance level because I have significant data to prove otherwise. With the extremely low p-value of .0001, I conclude that the population of ABRHS will miss Mr. Mutschler very much after he retires.

After conducting a survey with some of his current and former students, it is safe to say that Mr. Mutschler will be missed after years of teaching at ABRHS because of the impact he has left on this school. Whether screaming at students in the hallways or making them laugh in class, Mr. Mutschler has created a memorable experience both inside and outside his classroom for his students. In the survey, many students remarked how Mr. Mutschler made math more enjoyable for them. With every lesson came at least five jokes and one story that made each student not only laugh but also understand the material thoroughly and effortlessly. According to a student, "before our test, Mr.

Mutschler wrote on the board and shouted 'MEAT PIZZA! MEAT PIZZA! MEAT PIZZA!' and while this may seem like a random and funny phrase, it actually helped us remember that we use means with T-scores (MeaT) and proportions with Z-scores (PizZa)!"

Mr. Mutschler's influence comes not only from jokes but also from his ability to teach valuable life lessons. Many remember his saying: "Life is a lie with an F." Another student wrote that "freshman year was a bit of a reality shock." Many students enter high school with high standards for ourselves and, for some, these high expectations can ultimately take a toll on them, especially when facing failure. Some students entered freshman year thinking that we had to do well on every test without realizing that failure is also necessary to succeed. Mr. Mutschler's saying is a reminder that failure is a natural part of life and should be embraced and con-

sidered a learning opportunity.

Aside from his jokes, stories, and many life lessons, people remember Mr. Mutschler by the many cheese soup cans in his closet. He keeps soup cans that have been expired for over ten years, and he likes to sash the expired contents in front of students—especially during tests! Legend has it that he will open the soup by the end of this year in front of all of his current and former students in celebration of his retirement.

The love for Mr. Mutschler is strong. A student notes that he "has always walked out of [Mr. Mutschler's] class with a smile because [he] enjoyed the class so much." After twenty-three years of teaching, telling jokes, playing weird noises on his phone, scaring students in the hallway, and being The Supreme Ruler of the West Wing, Mr. Mutschler has decided to retire to the warm beaches of Florida, where he will have SMF—so much fun!



Mr. Mutschler, a math teacher and cow fan, will be retiring after twenty-three years.

Balwant Singh / Spectrum Staff

SAT/ACT preparation, academic support & organizational coaching  
one-on-one instruction & free consultation & diagnostic  
www.opendoor.education | 978.263.6387 | 492 Main St, Acton MA

## Graduation Playlist

By SERENA HAN '20  
Publicity and Finance Manager

God's Plan - Drake  
Coaster - Khalid  
Flare Guns - Quinn XCII  
Playinwitme - KYLE, Kehlani  
Sun Comes Up - Rudimental  
Barcelona - Ed Sheeran  
C'est La Vie - Maurice Moore  
Celeste - Ezra Vine

Good Old Days - Macklemore, Kesha  
I Will Follow You - RIVVRS  
Still the One - Ingrid Michaelson  
ocean eyes - Billie Eilish  
8TEEN - Khalid  
Burn the House Down - AJR  
Waiting for Love - Avicii  
Audio - LSD  
Fake Denim - Quinn XCII



Spend your summer jamming to our favorite tunes.  
ONLINE SOURCE

# Graduation 2018

## What Seniors Learned From HS

By SONALI RAI '20  
*Spectrum Staff*

Graduation is an accomplishment every senior should be proud of. By the time they wear their blue caps and gowns, these students can officially claim that they have overcome high school—perhaps the hardest obstacle in their path so far—and that should be recognized. While it is important that graduates continue to transition into the next stages of life, moving on also requires self-reflection to learn from the past. As the wisest, most knowledgeable students at ABRHS, the Class of 2018 shared their adversities, advice, and lessons learned over the course of their four years here.

In a strenuous district like Acton-Boxborough, difficulties are bound to arise in any part of a student's life. Whether it be through academics, sports, or family and friends, every senior has found a way to move past and mature from their struggles. For example, while they currently may be the talented captains of the AB Girls' Ultimate Frisbee team, Stella Cai ('18) and Mehak Sikka ('18) admittedly found self-image issues to be problematic at the beginning of their high school years. However, they're not alone. Many students have a hard time finding and understanding themselves. Self-image can be easily harmed by peer pressure, physical appearance, and even grades. It can be tough to rebuild one's self-esteem, but Cai says it became easier for her once she realized that

“it doesn't matter what other people think of [her].” Similarly, Sikka wisely states how “[one] can either succumb to society, ignore society, or motivate [one]self and prove society wrong.” Similarly, while the captains developed a sense of self-acceptance, Aidan McCullough ('18) speaks about how he learned to move on. He jokingly remarks how one thing “[he] was unable to overcome [was] Geometry.” But because of his struggles, he learned how to cope with failure. Students can be discouraged easily upon receiving bad grades, but being able to look past disappointing news and growing from these adversities is how the seniors got to where they are today. McCullough was able to overcome his difficulties and keep going, making him stronger than he used to be.

While most seniors are glad to have completed high school, there are always feelings of remorse. Many students often wish they could change something that happened in the past. As a result, both Cherry Jia ('18) and Josh Marlow ('18) explain that, if they were able to give advice to their younger high-school self, it definitely would be regarding wellness. Jia regrets not having enough time to “enjoy [herself] and [her] family, instead [taking] time for other things” like academics. While it may be hard for many to understand, she mentions how one should “focus less on school (the pressure of academics)” and not overwhelm oneself. There is a fine line between studying hard

and working too hard. “There are other important things,” Marlow says. He also explains that once students push themselves too hard in school, “only focusing on straight A's, [their] confidence and mental wellness suffers.” Hopefully, these seniors will take these lessons with them to college and through their adult lives to further help improve their wellness.

Along with their challenges and remorse, students from our Class of 2018 shared the lessons learned from their time in high school—lessons they will remember for the rest of their life. Kavya Uddaraju ('18), the former Columnist Editor for *The Spectrum*, says the main thing she is taking away from high school is how “[learning] to become comfortable with various situations,” and getting involved in extracurriculars is very important. Many people go through high school and even college without bothering to open themselves up to people or find interests they enjoy. Most of this behavior stems from the fear of embarrassing oneself in social situations. Regardless, Emily Jeong ('18) states that one “should not be afraid to make mistakes. . . other people make them too!” What seniors should realize as they continue into adulthood is that while perfectionism in high school might be manageable, in real life plenty of mistakes will be made. Of course, with the resilience they've acquired over these four years, it should not be hard to recover from any errors they make.

High school comes with many challenges; every student faces issues in their ABRHS careers at some point. The seniors however, have finally completed their secondary schooling years, and are more than ready to advance forward. Not only have they gained immense amounts of knowledge, but they are also taking away many personal insights. As the Class of 2018 makes an exit, the rest of ABRHS wishes them good luck and bids them farewell.



Four years of experience all in one article.  
ONLINE SOURCE

## High School Cliches

By ELIZABETH ATHERTON '18  
*Correspondent*

When my family announced that we were moving to the US, I decided to do some research. By research, I mean that I continued watching American TV shows and movies while pretending like I was doing something useful. However, upon arriving at Acton-Boxborough Regional High School, I discovered that several of the stereotypes from the cinemas were true.

The most immediately obvious of these was the absence of the school uniform. In the UK and other countries, students are required to wear uniforms from the age of four to at least sixteen, and sometimes even until they graduate high school. Not being required to wear a uniform allows students to express their individuality, even if AB students seem to express such individuality with sweatpants and hoodies.

Another cliché of US schools is the transportation: huge yellow buses that drive by every single house and seniors who reject the system, choosing to drive themselves instead. This seems strange to me as British students cannot learn to drive until they are seventeen, meaning there are far fewer who drive themselves to school. Similarly, fewer British schoolchildren are bused to school. They walk or catch a ride instead; although, even then, buses stop at central locations, not at individuals' houses.

American high school sports perhaps deserve an entire article to themselves, but the two most glaring stereotypes come from “student athletes”—another foreign term I learned—who are supposedly con-

sumed by their sports and are often surrounded by eager student spectators. The latter in itself seemed impossible to me. I had presumed that such a stereotype had been created by some movie executive and copied by her successors in Hollywood. For me, this had to be the explanation because British sports teams would consider themselves lucky if a handful of parents showed up to watch. Instead, I discovered that American students conform to the stereotypes and often spend their evenings cheering on peers who compete in basketball, football, and many other classically American sports. This expression of school pride felt utterly foreign to me but still deeply powerful. Through these school sports games, a connection between the players and their peer spectators develops. Moreover, athletic events provide an opportunity for spectators to socialize and celebrate regardless of the final score. To learn later that AB is considered lacking in school spirit came as quite the surprise to me.

Nonetheless, ABRHS is, in many ways, an American high school straight out of the movies and TV shows I watched growing up. AB is a place where students wear clothes emblazoned with the school logo; it is a school that hosts an annual Seniors vs. Faculty basketball game. However, it has become clear to me that it is also somewhat unique because of its students. There are almost two thousand of us, and we are far too diverse ever to fit perfectly into a representation of high schoolers from a movie or TV show. While I may occasionally laugh at how stereotypically American AB is, I'll always be grateful that I ended up in this particular iteration of the classic American high school.



Cliches in American highschools.  
ONLINE SOURCE

## Class of 2018: Our Seniors' Destinations



# Graduation 2018

## Thoughts on College

By GRACE GONG '19  
Forum Editor

The founder of Facebook, Mark Zuckerberg, dropped out of Harvard University just like Bill Gates, founder of Microsoft. Steve Jobs, founder of Apple, was a college dropout, too. What, then, stops an individual from questioning the need for a college degree? The truth is that Zuckerberg, Jobs, and Gates all had extraordinary minds who, through a combination of talent, hard work, and lots of luck, got the chance to become some of the most influential people in the world. What happened to them is very atypical.

Typical students, on the other hand, see college as a segway to life in the workforce and a necessary transition from adolescence to adulthood. Although college is the usual path for those pursuing a fulfilling career, still, others argue that, for a lot of jobs, college is completely unnecessary. Applications are also a challenging and stressful time for many seniors. For all the applying, studying, and changes one has to go through in college, it brings up the question of whether college is actually worth it.

Some people want to enter a field that does not require a degree from higher education. Often times, these are people such as mechanics or agricultural developers. For them, college would only waste precious time, investing in a degree that does not provide substantial benefits. Other careers, on the other hand, require a bachelor's degree or even a master's or doctorate certificate. Surgeons and physical therapists are just a few examples of those who need to complete several years of higher education to excel at their jobs. In the end, most white collar jobs do require a college degree. However, for those who are unsure about what they want to pursue for a career, college is a safer route.

Some think that attending university is too much of a hassle or takes too long. College can last for at least two years, if not four. College proponents argue that these college years are essential to finding one's self and identity. They consider college a rite of passage key to growing up. Many people take college as a learning experience in which they continue to grow and expand their horizons. During this period, people figure out what they want to pursue in life, find their lifelong friends, and lastly, experience life away from the guidance of parents. While college feels daunting in length, it can be a key aspect to personal development.

Lastly, university is costly. Many people choose not to apply to college solely based on the numbers that are tagged onto the tuition. According to *College Board*,

the average tuition for students in the US in 2017 was \$35,000, including financial aid packages, student loans, and grants. Those with lower-socioeconomic backgrounds rely on hefty financial aid packages to support sending their child to college. However, often, colleges are unable to offer enough necessary aid, rendering those at an economic disadvantage unable to afford college. To avoid costly tuition and to support their families, many high school graduates may seek work. However, one must weigh the benefits of going to college with future outlook. College graduates earn an average of \$50,000 per year, a whole \$14,000 higher than those without a college degree. With this in mind, one can see how the cycle of poverty is perpetuated by the college system. Those who cannot afford college fail to receive a college education, setting them up for a more difficult life than those who do achieve higher education. Their children grow up poor, they are unable to attend college, and they live a life similar to that of their parents. Larger institutions are working hard to break the cycle of poverty, with Affirmative Action, although controversial, at the forefront of the movement for educational equality.

However, with the rise of technology, a lot of people, from social media influencers to game designers, have been able to lead successful lives without college. Alyssa Mazzina of *Stack Overflow*, a question and answers site argues that while a degree from college was necessary for success in a computer science-related field in the past, now, because of the widespread amount of online resources and free coding sites, a formal college education isn't needed. The rise of the computer science industry has caused an increasingly overwhelming amount of people questioning if college is worth it when one can get the same level of education through work experience. It seems as if with the rise of technology, the newer generation of students has become more open to alternative options after high school.

Ultimately, college is only one portion of a person's life. When people say that "college is what you make of it," they're right. Going to an excellent university does not necessarily mean you'll thrive if you don't work hard. By the same token, going to a university that was not your top choice doesn't mean you shouldn't try your best to flourish in that community. In the end, people's post-high school experience depends on them. Whether or not you plan on attending college, these next few years will truly be the time you learn more about yourself, whether in school or the workplace, helping you prepare for any challenges that are bound to come your way.



Is college really worth it?  
ONLINE SOURCE

## '18 Speech: Our Butterfly Effect

By JERRY WU  
Class of 2018

I moved to Acton the summer before our freshman year. I can still remember greeting everyone that first day with:

"Hi, my name's Jerry. I'm a freshman here, are you?"

The first five people I greeted were freshman too ... then six ... then seven. Then it struck me, that would make sense, considering it was freshman orientation day.

But even here at Graduation, as I look across this field, there are many of you that I still do not know. I wasn't sure what to talk about. I don't have secret lessons for success nor life changing epiphanies. What could I offer to you? And so I've decided to do neither. Instead, I'm here to offer a discovery; a discovery of two ideas that kept me up at night.

The first is the Butterfly Effect. Essentially, every action we take has an infinite number of consequences. My finger snapping changes the air current, which alters the direction of the wind, which shifts climates, which changes the rotation of the earth thus ultimately varying the trajectory at which our solar system hurtles through space. But problematically, the butterfly effect means I can't predict the effect of my actions. If I give a donation with the intent of helping disaster relief, how do I know whether the food I pay for feeds a family versus a murderer? What if the people I help grow to become those very monsters?

Short Answer-We don't know,

and we never will know. See, your life, my life, and this magical universe of ours is just one big bold beautiful butterfly effect. You were born because your parents met, whose grandparents met. And all of this exists because a tiny dot in the middle of nowhere decided to go Bang. Our autonomy is nothing but a ripple in the ocean of a trillion stars

The second idea is that of the "Six-Degrees of separation." In our interconnected world today, we exist a mere six human interactions away from everyone single person on the planet. Through 6 humans, I can connect to everyone from my bus driver to the president. Yet, despite this possibility, we often limit ourselves to one or two connections. We meet our friends and perhaps our friend's friends, but never more. Humans have an unbelievable ability to form tight knit communities, but in doing so we become ignorant to those outside our bubble of comfort. 6.8 Billions people are a mere six handshakes away and we somehow care more about our 600 Instagram followers.

What does this all mean? Well if you consider these two theories together, you recognize something thrilling. Every human interaction has a butterfly effect as well. Your interaction will influence others, and that interaction influences the next person. After six ripples, one act can touch a world. And while the butterfly effect postulates that we cannot possibly predict a physical consequence, it is psychologically proven that humans return

kindness with kindness. An eye for an eye, leg for a leg, love for love, its all hard coded into our instinct.

So I urge you, as we venture out to make a mark across the world, to not forget about the small moments of kindness. Don't get drowned out by the cold noise of adulthood, materialism, and politics. Don't limit yourselves to one or two connections. At the end of the day we're all just on a tiny rock, hurtling through space and time.

Your legacy won't be your income but rather how others remember you. So push yourself to leave a positive impact on as many people as you can meet. Through smiles, laughter, and pure gratitude, your acts of kindness ripple out to touch every individual. These moments of purity are precious, no matter how minute our existence may be. That's true permanence.

Am I being too naive or optimistic? Maybe so. I don't expect us all to purge ourselves of animosity. But in a world seemingly succumbing to decisiveness; homophobia, xenophobia, racism, sexism, ableism and every other -ism in the dictionary, I think a little kindness won't hurt.

And before we are given our final farewell and let our caps fly- Let me finish what I started that fateful freshman morning. "Hi, my name is Jerry. I'm a senior now. And this is my message to you. Every interaction you have is significant. Every act of kindness can change the world. And we need your smile today, more than ever."

Thank You.



**The Minor Chord**  
MUSIC OUTFITTERS

Littleton MA - (978) 485-0112 - www.TheMinorChord.com

## '18 Speech: What We'll Become

By OLIVIA BLAUFUSS  
Class of 2018

My sister (who is fourteen and will be going to this high school next year) likes to tell the story of a little kid who, when asked what he wanted to be when he grew up, replied "a mailbox!"

I don't remember what my answer would have been. I think it varied, from the bizarrely specific ("astrophysicist!") to a stock answer like "artist" or "scientist". It's probably a good thing the idea of going to space scared me as a kid, because it saved me the trouble of getting my hopes up. I never understood why "astronaut" was one of the stock professions they told us about, alongside more common ones like "policeman" or "fireman". Less than 600 people have ever been in space, ever. I suppose it never hurts to dream big.

The craziest part about senior year, for me, was looking around and realizing that those dreams weren't just dreams anymore. I went to elementary school with some of you. I remember us eating playdough and crying on the playground and playing Oregon Trail in the computer lab and memorizing our times tables up to 12x12 and collecting those weird rubber bands in the shape of animals that we all forgot about a year later. When you were half your current height I sat with you on a brightly colored rug and listened to the teacher read out

loud, and now you're looking at me and telling me that you're going to be a psychologist, or a diesel technician, or a manager, or an astronaut. The crazy part is that I believe you. Do you believe me, I wonder, when I grin and say "I'm going to make robots!?" Am I still a kid to you, dreaming of being a mailbox? Or do you see an adult in me?

This is where I want to end the speech. I want to end by congratulating you all for figuring out what you want to do with the rest of your life at the tender young age of 18. Or 17, I'm still 17. I am not going to end here, though, because the world is actually unpredictable and completely insane, so now I'm going to contradict everything I've already said.

Have you ever heard of a phenomenon called the "End-of-History Illusion"? People wildly underestimate how much they're going to change in the next ten or twenty years, assuming that the present version of them is the final version. What did you want to be when you grew up...in 2008? Do you think that your elementary-school self could imagine the you that's sitting in your chair right now? Can you really imagine what you'll be up to in 2028?

Some people here might have a definite plan for the future. This is AB. I'm sure some of you have minutely planned out your next four to six years of life, color-coded for your convenience. Then again,

some people here might still not have an answer for "what you want to be when you grow up?", even as you realize that you are supposed to be grown-up starting now. Most people, like me, are probably in between. But I don't think any of us really have a clue where we're going.

Maybe that scares you. It scares me when I try to think of my future like that. 2028 is a blob of terrifying, nebulous uncertainty. 2023 feels distant and unknown. The key is to break it down a little bit. 2019 will be full of new experiences, but it's more imaginable. This summer I have a good idea of what I'm doing. I know what I'll be doing tomorrow. And in the next couple of seconds, unless there's a cataclysmic meteor or lightning strike, I'll be reading words off a paper. ... Nope, no lightning. Here I still am, and here you are. You've survived five more seconds! Nice job! Ready for the next 3 million seconds until 2028?

You didn't start high school knowing who you'd be when you graduated. Maybe you had times you didn't think you'd made it for graduation. But you didn't have to know, you just had to make your choices second by second. Who you are and what you've done evolved naturally. I'm really proud of you for getting this far. You don't have to be scared of the knowing, or the not-knowing. Just get going. And good luck.



# Graduation 2018

## Sixth Graders' Advice to Seniors

By AADHITI VALLATHARASU '20  
*Spectrum Staff*

Believe it or not, the Class of 2018 and the Class of 2024 have one life-changing thing in common: both will be graduating this year! Acton-Boxborough's sixth-graders in the Class of 2024 will be graduating elementary school and moving on to junior high this fall, while the seniors in the Class of 2018 will be graduating high school before they proceed with their post-graduate plans.

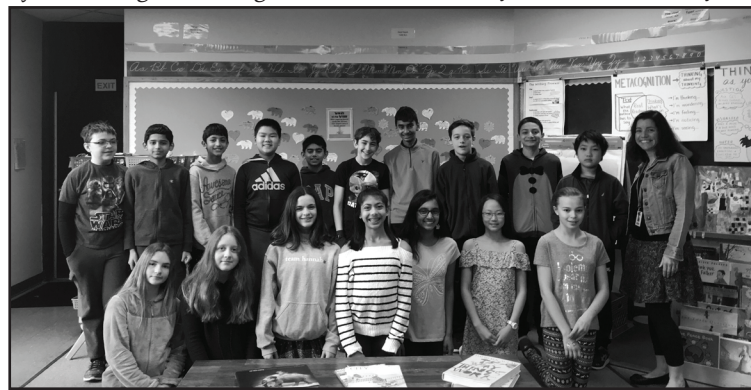
For me, at least, sixth-grade was far more relaxing and stress-free than high school. Looking back, I remember coming home after school to play outside and watch television instead of studying for hours on end. Given their care-free and innocent perspectives, we here at *The Spectrum* believe that sixth-graders can offer the best advice to the Class of 2018. So we decided to conduct a series of interviews with a sixth-grade class at Conant Elementary School to see what they had to say.

In the eyes of sixth-graders, the similarities between graduating elementary school and graduating high school are endless. One student talked about how graduating is simply "leaving the school you are at". That of course is right. But for others, graduating is much more than just leaving: graduation means "you are moving on to a new chapter in your life". With this definition, the students sweetly emphasized the essence of graduation.

The students reckoned that the most exciting part about graduating high school is leaving your parents

behind. In fact, they truly look forward to the independence that the seniors will soon be granted. One student noted that, without his parents, he could eat "some good desserts". The other kids proposed insightful ways for seniors to celebrate their newfound independence and graduation. My favorite was that you can "borrow a bunch of money and go on a big vacation"—a wise way to kick off your soon-to-be college debt. If that's not your thing, they also suggested "partying with your squad," but with that, they adamantly denounced the use of drugs, cigarettes, and alcohol. Their D.A.R.E lessons have taught them well.

The sixth-graders are well aware that college can be quite stressful, but they know how to counter this stress. They suggested "taking a break and playing Fortnite," a now-popular time-killer for our generation. Additionally, one could always "enjoy a good book" or partake in "yoga and meditation" to unwind after a long day. One sixth-grader even suggested to de-stress by "watching some Logan Paul."



Elementary school seniors advise high school seniors.  
Aadhiti Vallatharasu / *Spectrum Staff*

Yet, the best answer of all was simply "sleep"—a slightly foreign concept to Acton-Boxborough students, but an outstanding solution nonetheless.

On a more serious note, high-schoolers are quick to forget what it was like being in sixth-grade. For most students, life's obstacles seemed uncomplicated, and almost everything was viewed with a positive attitude. In general, sixth-graders have a more innocent, happier perspective on the future. Through these sixth-graders' advice, we remind our graduates to maintain that same optimistic attitude with regard to their futures after high school. The kids encouraged "following your dreams," "enjoying yourself," and "making a difference in the world." These simple messages remind us of the potential one has when graduating. The Class of 2018 will soon embark on a completely unfamiliar journey, which can be overwhelming. However, by thinking simply and optimistically, they will see that their journeys are filled with the endless possibilities to turn any dream into a reality.

## How Friendships Change

By LIZETTE STA. MARIA '19  
*Girl Heroes Columnist*

"As we go on / We remember / All the times we / Had together / And as our lives change / Come whatever / We will still be / Friends forever"

I remember the days I used to sing those lyrics in a loop on the bus ride home from school, back when I was young enough not to care who heard me singing, back when I could still get lost in my own world without needing to face reality.

I was a naive, wide-eyed first-grader then, and the song—"Graduation" by Vitamin C—was just a catchy tune. The melody was sad, but the lyrics were hopeful. Now, about to embark upon my last year at AB this fall, I find the song more relevant to my life than ever before. Sad, but hopeful—I think that's exactly how my high school graduation will feel.

I'll have to say goodbye to all the friends I've made, reassuring the ones who stayed with me all this time that we'll keep in touch. But, I've always wondered how realistic staying in touch would be.

In elementary school, I had a best friend named Alisha. She was the first person I told about my first crush, and she told me hers. We spent a lot of time laughing, screaming, and trying to get these boys to sit at our lunch table. On her tenth birthday, I gave her a huge stuffed animal—a whale. Recently, on her seventeenth birthday, I found out that she had kept it all these years. It was sweet, but the reality is, Alisha moved away during middle school, and the our journey

as friends reached its final destination somewhere in between Massachusetts and North Carolina. We lost touch.

Since she moved, I moved on. I met my core group of best friends—my tribe, if you will—towards the end of seventh grade. We went on our class field trip to Kimball Farms together. We then planned a trip to Orange Leaf to eat frozen yogurt on the last day of school; this would mark the first of our annual group picture tradition. That summer, we all spent the fourth of July at NARA, watching the fireworks give way to a promising future.

By eighth grade, we all seemed to be living the best life. "Looking back, there were big revelations, full-blown arguments, and daring risks that were made," I wrote in a letter to my friends in June 2015. "There were also sincere apologies, lessons learned, a ton of laughter, and times when those risks resulted in something great... Everytime I'm with you guys, you manage to turn moments into memories."

Also in that letter were the words "Who knows what will happen in high school? No matter what, we will always have this time together." I can chuckle now at how naive those words must have sounded.

Come freshman year, things started to change. It became harder to coordinate trips. Everyone was too busy trying to maintain their GPAs, and, somehow, at least one person had at least one assessment to study for on any given day. The circle of friends grew smaller and smaller, and a lot of our interactions had been reduced to texting

on a group chat that we had kept since seventh grade.

My friend Helen summed it up perfectly: "I miss just being able to talk to my friends about whatever was on my mind... sure you can put a crazy thing in a group chat and hope that friends see it or respond to it, but those responses used to come a lot quicker and were more immediate, whereas now, because of the pace and speed of life and how busy our schedules are, the response is slow to come, and sometimes things are ignored because people are just too busy."

I then asked how we should spend our senior year, as it will be our last guaranteed year of togetherness. And it's these people—the ones who stayed with me and stuck by me through everything—who I will miss the most.

Their responses, including frequent "gal pal-entines" dates and a road trip to Cape Cod, had one thing in common: we should all make more of an effort to coordinate, get together, and carve out quality bonding time when we don't have to worry about the impending stresses of the college application process, when we can all just be.

Friendships change throughout the course of our time as students. We say goodbye to many of our childhood friends, but we meet new people and form new bonds. Although I will make it a mission to make the last year of high school count, it's natural to be sad knowing that we'll all have to say goodbye once again. Yet, by the end of it all, come graduation, I want our song to sound a little more hopeful than sad. Here's to the future. And to the friendships to come.

## College Fashion

By OLIVIA OLAYIWOLE '18  
*Former Fashion Columnist*

When going to college, students look forward to finally achieving independence. Many students express their independence through the way they dress. However, with college, students take on an immense amount of debt; the stereotype of college students left destitute during their four-year stay is regrettably accurate. Working to pay off this debt while buying other expensive college necessities like textbooks makes it harder for students to afford the clothes they want to wear. Luckily, there are many ways to be stylish and to save money at the same time!

One way to find unique pieces for your style and save money is thrifting. These days it's common to see young people shopping at their local thrift store to find great styles at better prices. I myself enjoy thrifting and can attest to finding designer clothes at bargain prices. The plethora of vintage clothes available at thrift stores also makes it easier for shoppers to find unique pieces that fit the trendy vintage styles of today. Even if you tend to avoid wearing vintage, you can easily find closet essentials at thrift stores that fit your specific look because these shops receive clothing from hundreds of different people.

Another way to work with a tight budget is to go simple. Choose simple items of clothing and add your own unique spin to them. It's very easy to wear classics such as a t-shirt and jeans in new ways—for example, by layering your pieces. Layering allows you to create multiple outfits with just a few simple pieces of clothing. Try layering with just your closet essentials. It is best to have at least two pairs of jeans, simple shirts, a jacket such as a blazer or denim, a skirt, and a dress. These few items will help you come up with various outfits, helping you create a simple style while keeping up with today's trends!

Finally, revamping old, worn clothes that you already own by embellishing them or changing the fit can transform them into your favorite customized piece. Old jeans can become fashion-forward denim skirts, and oversized shirts are easy to turn into dresses. These DIYs are a fun way to pass time and can result in cute clothes that are catered to your personal style, size, and clothing preferences. DIYs are also great way to learn basic life skills like sewing and embellishing. From thrifting to DIYs, there are many ways college students can maintain an original style and their independence while saving money for other necessities.

## Level Up Your Ramen

By MILA RUSHKIN '20  
*Food Columnist*

For many college students, Ramen is an extremely familiar dish. College cafeteria food and restaurants on campus can get boring and even expensive after some time. Simultaneously, as the college course load becomes more and more rigorous, students are left with little time to cook their own meals. To avoid these struggles, college students often turn to a nice cup of instant ramen. All one needs is a portable water boiler or a microwave. However, most people do not know how to make ramen properly, and if the Class of 2018 is going to survive college, they need to know how to make ramen right.

The most important step is not making your ramen too soupy. You have to start with about 2-2 ½ cups of water. If you add too much water, your soup will be diluted, and your ramen will taste flavorless. You then want to boil your water, but only allow it to boil for around a minute or two, so your noodles don't overcook. The key to good ramen is the consistency of the noodles. Ramen is best when it is just a little bit chewy. A lot of the time, noodles can end up being mushy, but nobody wants ramen that smushes apart when you eat it! If you care enough, you can fan your noodles or blow on them to make sure they don't cook too much. When putting the noodles in the water, make sure you do not break them up. You want to let the noodles sit and slowly, with a fork or chopsticks, pull apart the

brick of noodles. If you break your noodles before, you won't get those long delicious noodles that characterize ramen.

Now, on to the soup. Often the broth for the noodles is way too salty. You should never add the whole pack of seasoning unless you want to increase your blood pressure. About half of the packet is perfect, and adding hot sauce will help with more flavour. You want to add the seasoning before the noodles so when the noodles cook they can absorb some of that juicy flavor.

But, even after the ramen is cooked, people seem to forget an essential part of good ramen: toppings. The best topping on ramen is arguably a soft-boiled egg. As soon as your water boils, plop an egg in. This will poach the egg, but still keep the yolk running. Right after you put in your egg, start adding the noodles to cook. Green onions, also known as scallions, add more crunch and flavor. Additionally, sesame seeds add a little protein into your noodles. If you want to make your ramen healthier, adding some veggies like carrots, snap peas, or corn, can add a nice crunch and nutritional value to your meal. Adding deli meat like ham or turkey makes your ramen a little tastier and definitely makes it more of a full meal. Other toppings to add flavor include cilantro or herbs.

Not only is Ramen delicious, it is also an easy dish to make. And for many incoming college students, ramen will be a best friend during those late nights of homework when the dining hall is closed.

# Forum

## Self-Empowerment

By PRATIK GAZULA '21  
Spectrum Staff

Every year, many seniors receive rejection letters from their dream colleges. Rejections can be demoralizing, but it is important to maintain a sense of confidence and to stay empowered.

Self-empowerment necessitates self-awareness. By understanding ourselves, we can develop positive attitudes and make better decisions. Our self-esteem creates confidence and allows us to trust ourselves. Even though you might not always be right, self-esteem prepares us to face obstacles and make decisions. By becoming more aware of ourselves and our self-esteem, we build confidence and knowledge, which empower us to trust in ourselves. This can lead to life inspiration, guiding us towards our goals.

Secondly, setting goals is a necessity for self-empowerment. Goals help us prioritize obligations, helping us take charge of the most important things in life. Not only does this help us take control, but it also helps us make decisions that are beneficial for certain situations. For example, creating a checklist can emphasize which jobs need to be completed sooner and which ones can wait. Goals also guide us towards our long term ambitions. The important thing to remember is that our goals need to be realistic and achievable; unrealistic goals

can hinder our progress in life because they make us lose motivation and feel inferior. Humans have an inherent desire to achieve. Setting realistic goals can provide short-term motivation and long-term direction. For example, an athlete's long-term vision could be to complete professionally attend prestigious competitions and become more agile. But by setting short-term goals to work out at the gym everyday and build muscle, the athlete helps himself achieve his goal little by little.

Finally, our values and beliefs serve as an unseen but crucial aspect of self-empowerment. Defending our values and beliefs makes us feel unique. Conforming prevents us from thinking critically and questioning society's beliefs, thus defending our values proves more important. Additionally, the reasons we may prefer one thing over another may not always be obvious or known: understanding the rationale behind our ideals helps us understand ourselves more.

It is important to have a positive but realistic view of ourselves. Not only does positivity and self-empowerment makes us feel better and make better decisions, but it also helps us have self-confidence. Instead of making us fear what the world thinks, self-empowerment helps us achieve our own personal goals and feel proud of our accomplishments.

## Planting Seeds You'll Never See

By MICHELLE GONG '21  
Spectrum Staff

Living in a world filled with 7.4 billion people, it's difficult to think that you, one person, can leave any lasting impact during your short life span. We learn about great leaders in social studies classes such as Charlemagne and George Washington; our teachers elaborate on how their accomplishments impacted our world today. We know the names of inventors and CEOs, and we use their creations constantly in our daily lives. If I asked someone who the founder of Facebook is, they would almost certainly know the answer. Because we know the role Zuckerberg plays in our daily routines, we can evaluate his importance and legacy in our community. However, when comparing yourself to Mark Zuckerberg, to our esteemed president, or the Queen of England, you start to wonder if anyone a hundred years from now will remember you.

Unfortunately, it's likely that the majority of people on Earth will have no idea you even existed.

Before scrambling to invent this century's newest scientific breakthrough and creating a legacy, know that everyone leaves an impact without realizing it. To put it simply, our actions have unimaginable consequences. *Back to the Future*, *Meet the Robinsons*, and other

time travel movies all show how a single, insignificant moment in the past can have enormous effects on the future. Your actions now, no matter how insignificant they seem, will have an impact on both the people around you and the future.

With social media, it's even easier to have more of an impact on the world around you. People create social media campaigns to garner a large following, and in turn, help an important cause. Simply helping these causes by donating or taking action allows you to have an impact and to better the world. Having a legacy can also mean simply voting during elections. This is

a democracy, after all, and who we vote into office or which laws we support significantly influence the rest of the country and the world.

On an even smaller scale, people have their own legacies. It is unlikely that AB students will end up locating a planet capable of supporting human life or curing cancer, but their impact will certainly continue to exist. Whether it was holding the door for a struggling freshman trudging through the hall with a heavy backpack, or helping a friend through a tough time, AB students continue to make a positive impact on their community. In doing so, they foster their own legacies.



Legacy. What is a legacy?  
ONLINE SOURCE

## Is North and South Korean Unification A Reality?

By NEHA VIJAY '21  
Spectrum Staff

Although the armistice provided a temporary end to hostilities between North and South Korea following the Korean War, perpetual disputes between the two halves have forged a permanent divide between two independent nations. Over the years, North and South Korea have settled their disputes with treaties, the Six Party Talks, and arbitration by other nations. Since the Pyeongchang Olympics, it seems as if the seventy years of tension between North and South Korea has decreased significantly. However, even if the Koreans are approaching the negotiating table, there are still some major disparities between these two countries that make it difficult for them to reunite.

First, South Korea maintains a democratic government while North Korea is governed by a

socialist dictator. This fundamental difference influences each nation's alliances. North Korea found its allies in communist Russia and China. In contrast, South Korea forged stronger relations with the United States and Japan, which have similar democratic governments. In terms of economy, North Koreans remain poorer than their neighbors because a majority of North Korea's state funds are spent on nuclear developments. On average, North Koreans have a shorter lifespan than South Koreans due to malnutrition. However, the biggest difference between the two is freedom. In North Korea, the government prohibits freedom of speech and expression. Conversely, South Koreans are allowed to creatively express themselves through clothing, music, and speech. These tremendous differences between North and South Korea bolster the idea that reunification is im-

possible. To unify, both sides would have to make sacrifices. Kim Jong-un's current method of governance shows that the North would refuse to make the key sacrifice of allowing citizens more personal freedom.

The idea of Korea as two separate countries started around World War II. Before then, Japan controlled Korea after the Russo-Japanese war in 1905. During WWII, Japan surrendered to the Allied Powers, losing influence over Korea. This led the US and the Soviet Union to split the nation into two spheres of influence. The Korean War ensued in 1950 when North Korea's army violated the boundary between the two countries. This fight continued, killing thousands of civilians until an armistice was signed three years later with both countries agreeing to stay on their own side. Finally, there seemed to be tentative peace between the two nations.

Fifty years later, the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, which would help prevent the spread of nuclear weapons, was established. However, North Korea broke the treaty's promise by testing new nuclear weapons, creating immense tension with the rest of the world. North Korea's nuclearization led to the 2003 Six Party Talks, which attempted to end North Korea's nuclear program in response to their repeated missile testing. Discussion between North and South Korea and their allies continued until North Korea left the negotiations in 2009. A few years later, Kim Jong-un became the new leader of the country, declaring that they would halt nuclear testing if they received food aid from the US. It was only a few months later when

North Korea broke the truce with another missile launch, inducing Russia to bring the Six Party Talks back. North Korea may also have an offensive chemical and biological weapons program. In 2017, North Korea successfully tested an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) and conducted a test of a thermonuclear weapon. Because of all the nuclear weapon testing North Korea has been doing, allies South Korea and the US have decided to take action.

After North Korea tested its ICBM, the US and South Korea started joint military exercises in the Korean Peninsula to improve the air power of both countries. This show of military force along the Korean border has provoked Kim. To retaliate, North Korea continues to test missiles as a threat to America. They claimed that their ICBM can reach as far as the United States. President Trump lashed back at North Korea, saying he would unleash "fire and fury" if North Korea continued to develop its nuclear weapons. These military threats continue to go back and forth between the two countries. However, the separated Koreas now seem to be trying to repair their relationship after years of conflict.

In February of 2018, the Winter Olympics took place in Pyeongchang, South Korea. During the Opening ceremony, the world witnessed the two Koreas marching together under one flag. Kim Jong-un's sister even visited South Korea, becoming the first member of the Kim dynasty to visit the South after the Korean War. The Olympics continued to shock people with the news of a united Korean women's hockey team and the sight of the North Korean cheerleaders. South Korea

even sent many K-pop acts such as the girl group Red Velvet, Seohyun of Girls' Generation, EXO, and others, to push forward diplomatic efforts. Until now, warmth and generosity between the two Koreas had been unimaginable, especially after all of the disagreements in the past. Although it is still too early to tell, with all the courtesy exchanged between these two estranged countries, there may be a possibility of a unified Korea in the future.

As North and South Korea try to repair their relationship, they also reach out to the United States for diplomacy. South Korean officials who visited the White House delivered an invitation for a face-to-face meeting with Trump. For this visit to occur, North Korea even offered to stall their nuclear missile testing. This unexpected proposal is a stark contrast from the insulting remarks the two leaders exchanged just a few months ago. Trump accepted the invitation and both Korean leaders will be discussing the possibility of an inter-Korean summit.

Even with these negotiation efforts, some suspect that North Korea wants to take advantage of the US and South Korea; with its obvious desire for isolation, it is out of the question for some that North Korea would want unification. In this case, the government must have a specific reason for why it would want to stimulate peace talks. Yet, it is not utterly impossible that Korea could once again be a united nation. It has happened before, with the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, which unified the democratic West Germany and the communist East. As seen in the past, if these efforts to release tension are meaningful, then we may see history repeat itself with a united Korea.



South and North Koreans may consider unifying their countries.  
ONLINE SOURCE

# Forum

## Evolution of Beauty: Eurocentric Standards in Asia

By LIZETTE STA. MARIA '19  
*Girl Heroes Columnist*

The colors of the island always seemed to shine under the sun: ocean-blue sky, emerald green palms, and the Filipino people with their chestnut hair and milky white skin... wait...

Colorful though it may be, there was something off-putting about this image, a scene that I witnessed often during my one-month vacation back in my homeland last summer. It was very strange for me, having been born in Manila but raised in Acton. How was it that I'd managed to retain my tan skin and dark hair through all those sunless New England winters while people in the tropics had somehow become lighter since I last saw them?

*Kayumangii* is the Tagalog word for "brown." The word itself is beautiful, but it has almost completely disappeared from the vernacular. There are essentially only two ways to describe skin color in the Philip-

pines nowadays: *Mestizas* are the fair-skinned, tall-nosed Filipinas, while *morenas* are their dark-skinned opposites. In an essay submitted to *Clover Letter Magazine*, fifteen-year-old Tanya Gransey describes how the mestizas have essentially "won the genetic lottery." The prize is a ribbon of social implications, which include being rich, educated, and, most importantly, beautiful. Meanwhile, *morenas* are "poor, uneducated, and filthy" in society's eyes.

CutVideo's "100 Years of Beauty" series published a feature showing the evolution of Filipina beauty over the course of a century. What began with traditional tribal tattoos culminated into the glam look popularized by the country's beauty pageant culture. The most striking transition occurred between the 1920s and 1930s, which showcased a dramatic change in Filipino complexions. According to anthropologist Chris Chan, the researcher behind the video's makeup looks, the 1920s' look was inspired by painter

and Philippine nationalist Fernando Amorsolo, whose work evoked a nostalgia for the "simpler, pre-colonial" Filipina woman with natural brown skin. However, as she transitioned into the 30s, the model's skin was painted pale white, the beauty standard that persists today.

The Philippine archipelago was subjected to three hundred years of Spanish rule and another half century of American rule after that. "It's no question where this glorification of Eurocentric features comes from," Tanya Gransey says in her *Clover Letter* essay—"But why does it still happen?"

The answer can be found in the media. Every day, Filipinos are bombarded with advertisements for skin-bleaching soaps and creams, promising to grant them *kutis artista*, or the complexion of a star—a curious thing to offer when the country's entertainment industry is primarily comprised of half Filipinos and their half Caucasian features, while tan-skinned actors, no matter how

talented, are almost always cast as sidekicks.

With advances in media comes more ideas exchanged across cultures. Globalization patterns have lent Filipinos exposure to other beauty practices around the world like the use of Fair & Lovely, an Indian skin whitening cream, and ten-step Korean skincare routines to ensure an absolutely flawless and fair face. Evidently, skin-whitening is not uniquely Filipino; it's a craze that exists in neighboring countries. One should therefore be cautious of attributing the prevalence of colorism in the Philippines to an Americanized global mass culture.

Ironically, for a country that loves Starbucks cafes and taking selfies, the Philippines has yet to pick up on one of the biggest American fads: tanning to look more beautiful.

Beauty—the word itself so subjective and the concept all too complicated. For one thing, beauty changes over time, and it can be quite a hassle to try to keep up with the trends.

The "white is superior" mentality set the ideal in the New World and throughout US history for centuries, but in the 1920s (around the same time when Filipinos were trying to obtain fairer skin) western fashion icon Coco Chanel popularized the idea of tanning as an indication of having the means to enjoy pleasure, relaxation, and health.

As such, beauty also varies between cultures, only adding to its mystique. Journalist Esther Honig sent her bare-faced picture to different photoshop artists across the world. Some lightened her skin, while some darkened her skin. There was no uniformity and no worldwide standard. Yet, this project began a global conversation and reiterated a fact that everyone knows but few acknowledge: beauty is diversity.

Our friend Tanya Gransey has a call-to-action: "Stop putting beauty inside a box. Let it be discovered. Let it be celebrated. All types of it must be represented proudly." That's what I'm hoping for the future of beauty.

## Call Me By Your Name Review

By VERA TSANG '20  
*International Affairs Columnist*

*Call Me By Your Name* is a coming-of-age drama based off the novel by Andre Aciman. Taking place in 1983 in northern Italy, it tells the love story between seventeen year-old Elio Perlman and doctoral student Oliver. For days, I couldn't stop thinking about this movie. It was like that song, "You Really Got a Hold on Me," by The Beatles. From the cast and plot all the way to the music, it somehow combined everything to make a love story that was both romantic and relatable. The film artfully made the viewers long for the chemistry between the two main characters.

The movie is different from most LGBTQ+ films. It simply guides the audience through the romance; there are no "under societal pressure" or "I'm still in the closet" vibes: it simply presents the connection between two unlikely lovers.

With the contrast between Elio's introverted, bibliophile personality and Oliver's carefree vibe, both characters initially grow a dislike for each other because they lack common interests. However, as they slowly spend more time with each other, a seductive connection develops. There is a scene in which both are laying in bed as Oliver whispers to him "[c]all me by your name, and I'll call you

by mine," hence the title of the story. While this quote has been questioned, many believe it's the equivalent of saying "you complete me." From there, Elio finds himself completely lovestruck, as the characters closer both intimately and emotionally.

Timothee Chalamet, who plays Elio, has gained immense popularity, and after watching the film it's easy to understand why. With his brown curls and green eyes, he has a "soft boy" style that mirrors his profound talent. Armie Hammer, who plays Oliver, also performs beautifully. Hammer's performance continues to receive high praise, and many were surprised when he wasn't nominated for an Academy Award as supporting actor. The actors develop such a deep chemistry that it's hard to believe it's solely on-screen. According to the actors, it wasn't difficult to display the strong feelings. On *The Ellen Show*, the actors described one of their first rehearsals before filming, when director Luca Guadagnino informed them to randomly select a scene from their script. Landing on "Elio and Oliver roll around in grass making out," Hammer mentions how seemingly casual this was, saying that "[w]e kind of look at each other, and we're like, 'All right, here we go! That's why we're here, let's do this.'"

Yet, despite its beauty, its still surrounded by controversy. Most

notably, there is controversy around the age gap because the lovers are seven years apart. I remember discussing this with a friend who commented that the movie "glorifies pedophilia." I was intrigued by her comment and decided to do some further research. The age of consent in Italy is fourteen. Elio is seventeen-years-old in the movie, and Oliver is twenty-four. While he is only three-years-older than the age of consent, it is legal. Initially I myself was uncomfortable: I thought it was weird that a student just nearing the end of high school—which for many is technically still a child—was with an adult graduate. However, there have been relationships in movies and in real life where the age gaps have been much wider. In the beloved *Clueless*, for instance, there is a budding romance between a high school and college student. Despite critiquing *Call Me By Your Name* for the age gap, actor James Woods himself was sixty when he dated a nineteen year old girl.

In the end, the movie is more about the chemistry between the characters and the love they have for one another. Between the serene countryside settings, the stone-paved cities, and the songs such as Sufjen Steven's "Mystery of Love" and "Visions of Gideon," the movie is simply beautiful, impacting audience members in ways they did not expect.

## Affirmative Action

By JAKE VERRILLI '18  
*Former Politics Columnist*

In today's social climate, we continue to ask ourselves how we can make society fairer for everyone. One answer to this question has been affirmative action. Affirmative action, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures, is an action or policy made by an organization to improve opportunities for historically disadvantaged groups in American society. Because of affirmative action, many schools and businesses give selective advantages to certain prospective students or employees. These types of policies are implemented to increase diversity, foster tolerance, and offer opportunities to people who might not otherwise have had access to them. However, these policies have received extreme backlash despite the supposed benefits of affirmative action. It is said that affirmative action can lead to acceptance of unqualified candidates, increased racial discrimination, and overall tension around the subject of equality.

In the first half of the 20th century, racial discrimination had an oppressive and debilitating presence. The *Brown v. Board of Education* ruling exposed the horrors of racism, and people began to see the inequity of segregation laws and discriminatory ideas. Because of this, President Kennedy issued an executive order coining the term "Affirmative Action." In this order, he asked that employers hire without considering an applicant's race or ethnic origin. Kennedy's executive order represents one step that was made to mitigate the racism instilled in American society. Certainly, affirmative action has changed, but the original sentiment and goal still remains: to create equal opportunity for minority races that have experienced and continue to experience discrimination.

However, people continually question whether these practices really work. Affirmative action supporters cite the time when California and Florida banned affirmative action policies in 1998 to show the necessity of such policies: the percentages of African American and Hispanic students

at major colleges dropped and have not recovered at colleges that do not take affirmative action. In addition, according to a new study conducted by the Georgetown Center on Education and the Workforce, black students are now more underrepresented at top colleges than they were twenty years ago. This means that the disparity between the number of black people living in the US and the percentage of black students at these colleges is larger than it has been ever before. This is the crux of the argument for affirmative action: if black people are being underrepresented at these colleges, then that means we are not doing a good enough job at ensuring that these groups are being represented.

If affirmative action's only goal was to encourage the higher diversity of African American and Hispanic students attending college, it would be considered a success. However, some claim that affirmative action perpetuates racial discrimination rather than helping to solve it. This argument is especially compelling when considering that colleges turn down many qualified Asian American candidates in favor of more desirable, but possibly less qualified, African American and Hispanic candidates. Because African American and Hispanic students are being prioritized over white or Asian American students, many qualified students of color are being rejected.

Overall, it would seem that the United States' complicated history with racial discrimination is far too complex to be solved by a single solution. There are many deeply rooted racial issues plaguing the nation, and simply accepting more black students into some colleges is not going to solve them. While it is true that black students are being underrepresented at these colleges, it is also true that there are fewer black students applying to them. This problem stems in part from the quality of urban school systems. So while affirmative action could be considered either a step in the right direction or a furthering of racial discrimination, one thing is certain: more needs to be done to make America truly equal.



Elio and Oliver build a summertime romance in the movie *Call Me By Your Name*.  
ONLINE SOURCE

# Forum

## Body Image: Double Standards

By BEN ORR '21  
Spectrum Staff

Body positivity emphasizes that every individual should embrace their physique, whether overweight or underweight, tall or short. It encourages people to adopt a healthier lifestyle both physically and mentally. Body positivity was created as a response to the “perfect body” image that dominated Western advertisements for generations. This image consequently led to a stigma that comes with a body that does not fit the idealistic standard.

The body positivity movement has taken the media by storm in recent years, initiated by a second-wave feminist campaign in the 1960s. The movement remained dormant for decades, but more recently, it has skyrocketed with a nationwide trend for acceptance. This new age feminist campaign caused people to reconsider appropriate advertisement standards, with various companies and social media platforms endorsing this change.

Victoria's Secret, an industry leader in lingerie and women's swimwear, has done its part by hiring plus-size models and increasing the range of their underwear and bra sizes up to XL. Business campaigns, such as Dove's self-esteem project and Target's unphotographed 2017 swimwear debut, are revolutionizing the fashion and cosmetics industries and promoting self-acceptance among women worldwide.

However, recently, the tides turned as men became a victim of neglect when it comes to body posi-

tivity. A photoshoot featuring Gabi Gregg, a plus size model, has received praise because of its message that attractiveness comes in all sizes. In the background, a man with a “desirable” body shows interest in the plus-sized model. This photo sends the message that, although it is acceptable for women with all different kinds of body types to be attractive, men still need to conform to strict expectations. As more billboards, commercials, and advertisements alike have finally shown realistic women's bodies, male models continue to sport bronzed six-packs and dashing looks, mocking the average man. An increasing number of commercials, including Kellogg's Special K “Own It” Campaign for women, have filled the world with empowering ideas about how women can do anything. Considering how for centuries women have been neglected by society, these ads are a positive addition to the media. However, this empowerment should

be universal; the painful truth is that body positivity, a movement made to abolish gender inequality, blatantly neglects men.

Feminism is set on creating equality between both men and women. First, second, and early third wave feminism have fought and continue to fight inequality against women. These movements have helped gain respect, power, and even women's suffrage, among other significant feats. Recently, more women have felt empowered to speak out about sexual harassment, further helping close the gap between men and women. But, even with this progress, society has become desensitized to some issues faced by men; the exclusivity of movements such as body positivity have begun to work against equality. Thus, gender equality is not complete until it considers both women's and men's issues, because in the end, everyone deserves to feel confident.



Body positivity is growing for women, but more work is needed for men.  
ONLINE SOURCE

## The Russian Elections

By VERA TSANG '20  
International Affairs Columnist

In the 2016 U.S. presidential election, Russia drew national attention due to rumors over meddling. Two years later, Russia attracts the world's attention, this time to its own election. For the fourth time, Vladimir Putin has won the presidency. A majority of children living in Russia have now spent their entire lives knowing only him as their leader. According to the Constitution of the Russian Federation, because this is his fourth term, it also means these will be his last four years in office. However, considering his actions during past presidencies, it is certain that these next four years will be filled with more and more violations of human rights and democracy.

During the elections, there was no denying that Putin would win. His main opponent, Alexei Navalny accused Putin's campaign of being “built on corruption” and criticized the Kremlin's relations with the West. This accusations led to him being banned from running in the 2018 presidential elections by the Russian Central Election Commission. According to many rumors, the Kremlin played a big role in Putin's victory and in developing his propaganda. Reportedly, people “overstuffed” the ballots to meet the Kremlin's golden 70-70—a win of 70% of the vote with a turnout of 70%.

For a while, Putin was losing popularity in Russia and worldwide. He supported the controversial annexation of Ukraine in 2014. He supports Syrian president Bashar al-Assad's Syrian

War in Aleppo, giving him aid to fight against the Syrian civilians. By endorsing his leadership, Putin only perpetuates the war, allowing Assad and his men to continue killing innocent citizens.

However, the many conflicts sparked between him and the West that truly make him a figure of debate. Recently, Russia and the United Kingdom entered a diplomatic crisis. Russia's Foreign Ministry forced out twenty-three British diplomats from Moscow and declared that they would close the British Consulate General in St. Petersburg. This was all due to the poisoning of former Russian spy Sergei Skripal and his daughter, along with the murder of Russian-British businessman Nikolai Glushkov. British prime minister Theresa May accused Russia of causing the incidents, only to receive a denial from Putin.

Most importantly, there's the argument over whether or not Russia influenced the 2016 U.S. presidential elections. In fact, during the Russian presidential elections, one of Putin's opponents apologized for Russia's interference with the U.S. elections. According to the Council on Foreign Relations, the CIA, FBI, and National Security Agency have all stated their belief in the Russian government influencing the U.S. election outcome. It's believed that Russia was involved in undermining Hillary Clinton and the Democratic Party's other candidates by releasing Clinton's emails on *WikiLeaks*. Russian motives may have included suppressing American democracy. It is likely that the Kremlin

hired internet trolls to post false news stories and, as the CFR says, “socially divisive content,” on Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube.

Since the Ukrainian crisis, Russian state-media have enforced the pro-Kremlin, nationalistic tone to their news. This, as the *BBC* describes it, means news encouraging the rejection of Western ideas, insulting opposers of the Kremlin, and displaying intense idolatry for Vladimir Putin. Since Putin's elections, the Kremlin has been reporting news in favor of him.

From the ongoing conflicts with the West to the allegedly biased government to the restricted media, Russia is on the road to becoming a country that values the exact opposite of democracy. People expect very little to change, considering the little voice and interaction the country's citizens have with the rest of the world. Many believe that the government should work for the people. Its role is to create a society and country that matches the demands of the citizens, not the desires of one single person. Forcing a whole population to agree with one person's views and opinions is a blatant violation of human rights. No matter how long or how often the Kremlin forces the Russian people to feed off of their propaganda, some day it will all combust and result in more convulsion than before. Going from Soviet spy to holder of the highest political role in Russia, there's no denying that Putin is successful in what he does. But having such an influence and success does not make his actions justified.

## Public vs. Private

By EMMIE OHNUKI '19  
Spectrum Staff

As they watch the seniors graduate, underclassmen can't help but think about their own plans following high school. For most, the future includes higher education and a marketable major. The college application process is highly stressful and involves lots of careful planning, consideration, and effort to build up skills, grades, and extracurriculars. This planning and effort all lead people to make one of the most important decisions in their high school careers: which college or university they will attend. Everyone wants to choose the “perfect college.” After all, they will be spending their next four years there. For many, their decisions come down to whether they want to go to a private or a public college.

Public colleges are funded by state governments, and as a result, they offer lower tuition costs. Private colleges, on the other hand, tend to demand higher fees to replace government funds. According to *PrepScholar*, the average annual tuition for a private college was around \$31,231, whereas for public colleges, it was \$22,958. There are actually two different types of private colleges: nonprofit and for-profit. Whereas for-profit private colleges run their school as a business, nonprofits focus more on providing for their students' interests. The most reputable private colleges are non-profit because they offer unique educational opportunities. Because of the high-quality education, alumni are more willing to donate after graduation, making schools such as Harvard, MIT, and Stanford extremely wealthy.

Additionally, for public colleges, in-state students pay lower tuition. In fact, the average yearly tuition for an in-state student is only \$9,139. Being an in-state student in a public university definitely saves thousands of dollars in debt. It is well known that public colleges favor in-state students over out-of-state students because in-state tax money helps fund the universities. On the other hand, private colleges have a wider demographic diversity because they accept more students from other states. Since tuition at private institutions is the same for students from all over, they have a widespread applicant pool. Furthermore, private colleges are typically smaller than public colleges resulting in smaller class sizes. Of course, public colleges do offer small classes as well; howev-

er, popular courses may have over two hundred students in one classroom. The smaller class sizes in private colleges allow students to better connect with professors for help or for research opportunities.

Public colleges, given the larger student body, provide a greater range of majors, thus offering students the opportunity to explore multiple interests. Furthermore, due to government funding, public colleges can afford more resources for research. Therefore, students of public colleges may be exposed to more opportunities if they make an active effort in seeking them. Unfortunately, because of the high student population, students must strive to create connections with their professors. In contrast, private colleges offer less courses, but tend to focus on a certain field. A private college generally has a specific area in which it specializes, for example, liberal arts or engineering. Thus, students who already know what they want to study will thrive in an environment focused on their interests. Similar to public colleges, they have specialized research programs and opportunities even though they may have less access to government funding. Additionally, because students have easy access to professors and advisors, they may feel encouraged to pursue their own projects and research.

Choosing the best college for you ultimately depends on your social ability and academic interests. Remember, the campus life of public colleges and private ones are similar, except that public colleges are usually larger. Someone going to a public school will most likely meet all kinds of new people and be exposed to more social activities, parties, and events. Private colleges will have all these activities, but on a smaller scale. This means being surrounded by more familiar faces more often—something that may be more comfortable for those who are less outgoing.

There are many factors that can make a college the perfect fit; it is important to consider all of them when making a decision. Keep in mind that there are various kinds of public and private universities, and some may not fit into these general descriptions. Therefore, it is important to consider each college individually. The college process is undeniably a stressful one, but before students get too anxious over choosing the best colleges, knowing these basic differences between certain types of colleges will certainly make the search a lot easier.

**KUMON** Where Smart Kids Get Smarter.

Meet with your local Kumon Instructor today!

**Kumon Math and Reading Center of Acton**

271 Great Road, 1st Floor  
Acton, MA 01720  
978-266-1747  
[kumon.com/acton](http://kumon.com/acton)

\* Enroll between 6/1/18 and 7/7/18

**GIVE YOUR KID essential skills for success WITH THE KUMON METHOD**

- ensures your kids move through math & reading schoolwork with confidence & precision
- starts preschoolers on the right track & helps older kids fill learning gaps and earn great grades
- develops life-long skills for success!

# Off Topic

## Local Citizen Has Had Enough

By SIENA BROLIN '20  
Spectrum Staff

Marty Donovan, a local citizen released a formal statement last Tuesday announcing that he officially had enough. He went on to describe how fed up he was and decreed that he simply could not take it anymore. Naturally, these outlandish statements garnered quite a bit of attention. One tweeter asked that he elaborate on what was upsetting him. Donovan very graciously responded: "I'm just sick and tired of being sick and tired, you know?" Despite the controversial nature of these remarks, public reactions appear to be overwhelmingly positive. Donovan has accrued a following of people who, like him, feel fed up but have been too afraid to say anything. One of these weary followers published a tweet defending his affiliation with fed-up citizens like Donovan, saying, "I finally feel spoken for. People everywhere put up with what's going on, but deep down they know that it's just not right. Now, we finally have a voice," finishing the tweet with a #Had-

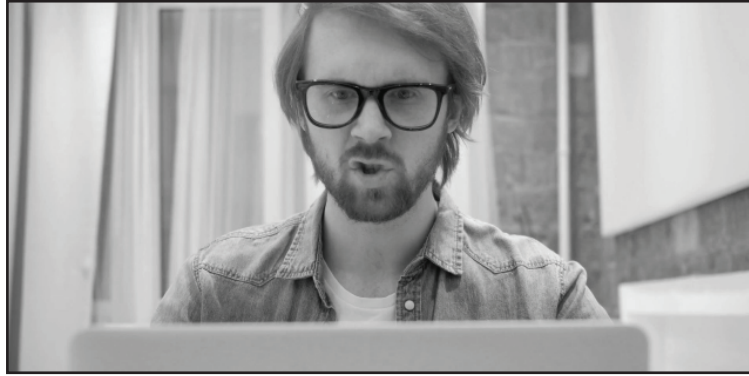
Enough.

In response to positive feedback, Donovan has pushed his stance further. Just a few days after the original statement was published, he went on a twitter rant, talking about how many others are upset like he is, but nobody is really taking action. He emphasized that the government especially is not doing anything.

Despite the largely positive reaction to this indignant citizen, there is some opposition. Critics believe that, by not providing any details about how to take action, Donovan is pushing people to be creative and

take their own stands. Others argue that while enough is enough, more must be done to correct the current situation, and therefore enough is not enough, so the statement "enough is enough" is inappropriate.

We, *The Spectrum*, however, believe that this man is revolutionary. His admittedly shocking opinions are ahead of the curve, and he is opening our eyes to an important truth about the world around us. We wonder when people will finally stop putting up with whatever is going on and decide that they have had enough as well.



Ed Sheeran and other celebrities have tweeted to address this problem.  
ONLINE SOURCE

## Student Debt Prep Program™

By SRIJA NAGIREDDY '19  
Spectrum Staff

In response to the growing dissatisfaction over how well students are prepared for college, Acton College Planning, Inc., announced a new service aimed at giving students a more nuanced, holistic, and comprehensive view of college. Discussing the rather alarming consequences that a college education entails nowadays, owner Darryl Hopkins cited the necessity for a service designed to help students prepare for these consequences, specifically focusing on one of the most pressing issues students face today: student debt.

The idea for the Student Debt Preparation Program™ was born after Hopkins witnessed one of his own employees struggling to pay off her student loans. Hopkins recalls: "I asked her, 'You're already forty years old, you have a good job, and yet you still have those student loans you need to pay off. What happened?' She stayed silent for couple of minutes, didn't say anything, just looked at me dead in the eye. It was actually kind of uncomfortable. Anyways, after that she responded, 'No one can escape

them. They stay with you, always,' " Hopkins began to understand America's student debt crisis. "There are all these students who think that things will be good after they graduate." Staring darkly off into the distance, Hopkins continued: "It won't. And we need to make sure our students are ready to face the despair that will inevitably arrive."

This service is designed to give students a hyper-realistic view into what a life with student debt entails. On average, Americans in their twenties have \$22,135 in student debt. However, the average American between twenty and twenty-four makes only \$27,300 per year. In order to emulate this, students will take part in a fun, interactive lesson where they are instructed to set fire to approximately 80% of their own money. In their official statement, the Acton College Planning, Inc., emphasizes "the importance of giving college bound students a realistic view of their future." By watching their money slowly burn into oblivion, students will be able to properly understand the feelings of hopelessness they will soon face. Additionally, by having students bring in all their money before they know

the content of the program, Hopkins hopes to correctly illustrate the element of surprise that comes with student debt. "You graduate college, and then it's just like, bam! You're broke." After this lesson, the program ends. Simple.

So far, the program has received glowing reviews from participants. Bob, a junior at ABRHS, praised how the program offered an innovative alternative to traditional college planning. "Most college planning is so basic and boring," Bob complained with a sigh, "but with the Student Debt Preparation Program™, I know I'm getting something real. I mean, the real world, is just like, awful." Janice, a senior, believes that the service fulfills an important need: "Everyone talks about what happens when you get into college. Not what happens when you get out."

As a parent, Janet Stevenson offered a point of view shared by many: "As parents, we're always worried for our children. We want them to be prepared for life, and now I can rest easy knowing my child understands the feeling of watching all her money go up in flames, just like what happened to me. It's comforting."

## University Milestones

By VERA TSANG '20  
International Affairs Columnist

In a new column at *The Spectrum*, we will answer questions about a specific topic and its history. As graduation marks the end of one's time in high school, it also marks a fresh start at college. Accordingly, for this edition, we will answer questions on the history of higher education in the United States.

*So, what was the first U.S. college?*

Harvard College was founded in the United States in 1636. It was modeled after the highly-respected English universities Oxford and Cambridge. The school was originally focused on training young men for the clergy. Despite the school's initial intent, only half of the first graduating class proceeded to work for the church. The rest became lawyers, physicians, or public officials.

*But what about the first college for women?*

The first women's college and first member of the Seven Sisters is Mount-Holyoke College, located in South Hadley, Massachusetts. It was opened as a female seminary by Mary Lyon, a deeply religious woman inspired by the theology and ideals of Jonathan Edwards.

*What was the first public university?*

The University of Georgia received its charter from the state in 1785, making it the first state-chartered public university in the United States. As a result, the school often calls itself the "birthplace of the American system of higher education."

*What about community colleges?*

Joliet Junior College, established in 1901, was the first public community college in the United States. Many early community colleges, which were called "Junior Colleges" when first established, served as normal schools that trained school teachers. In larger cities, community colleges became an extension of high school: they focused on liberal arts and prepared students to transfer to four-year colleges or universities.

*Who were the first people from minority groups to enter college?*

Alexander Lucius became the first African American student to graduate from a college in the United States. In 1823, he received a bachelor's degree from Middlebury College in Vermont. In 1854, Yung Wing was the first Chinese person to complete his studies in America. He graduated from Yale University with a bachelor's degree.

## Boxborough Insurance Agency

650 Massachusetts Ave. Boxborough, MA

Call Us At:  
(978) 635-0044

kerry@boxboroughinsurance.com

Open 9am - 5pm  
Mondays-Fridays



## Breaking News: Local Able Woman Has Feelings

By SARIKA CHAWLA '19  
Correspondent

WAGON WHEEL, NEW MEXICO — 28-year-old Kerri Bailey, a non-disabled person living in a community where the majority of people use wheelchairs, said on Friday that she "feels excluded by the lack of access to public facilities for those who don't use a wheelchair." Sources confirmed that Kerri, who moved to the bustling city of Wagon Wheel a mere six months ago, is already planning to move out. I sat down with Kerri last week to talk about the kinds of discrimination she's faced since moving to town:

*Interviewer: Hi Kerri. How are you?*

Kerri Bailey: Could be better. How are you?

*I: I'm doing well. I understand that last week you put your house up for sale.*

KB: Yes! After a few months of living in this awful city, I'm very excited to leave.

*I: What made you want to leave?*

KB: Everyone is so rude, and I can't get anywhere; I had the most awful day a couple of weeks ago!

*I: You were out celebrating your birthday, correct?*

KB: Yes, I was celebrating my 28th birthday. I had wanted to go to the Museum of Science ever since I moved here, so I thought it would be a great way to start off my birthday. Well, I got to the museum and the parking lot was almost full, but I figured I would be able to find a spot since there are usually a few non-handicap spaces in every parking lot. To my surprise, those spots were taken by people with disability stickers. Can you imagine that? As an able-bodied person, I need to park in the designated spots, which are much farther away from buildings than the handicap spots, as it helps me get my daily exercise. People often park in the non-handicap spaces even when they're handicapped. I guess it's because they're too lazy to find another way to exercise.

*I: Did you eventually find a place to park?*

KB: I did... but did you know that there are no stairs at the main entrance?

*I: Really?!*

KB: Nope. There are just ramps and escalators with tracks that only fit the width of a wheelchair. I spread my feet far apart, tried to walk on them, and nearly fell! I ended up having to sit on some guy's lap and let him carry me up to the door, which was humiliating. By the time I got to the exhibit, I was in such a bad mood that I couldn't enjoy it and quickly left. I decided to go to the mall next, which thankfully didn't have any type of problematic entrance... but boy, was the mall an experience.

*I: What happened?*

KB: Well, I was just minding my own business and waiting in line for the bathroom (because the only non-handicap stall was occupied by a wheelchair user) when two old ladies came up to me and told me what a tragedy it was to never get to experience life in a wheelchair. Then, they said they would pray for me and asked me if I have a disease! Later, while I was shopping, random strangers kept looking at me weirdly, and their kids

occasionally said things like "Since you don't have a wheelchair to sleep in, do you sleep standing up?" and "How do you go to the bathroom without sitting in a wheelchair?" My personal favorite was a teenage girl who said I'm "so lucky" I'm able to walk because I don't have to endure the exhausting process of sitting around in a chair all day long.

*I: Please tell me your birthday ended on a good note.*

KB: As a matter of fact, it got even worse! Halfway to the restaurant where I'd made a dinner reservation, my car broke down. I had to get it towed and wait for a bus. When the bus finally came, I discovered that it couldn't accommodate me because it didn't have any seats. All it had were spaces with wheelchair tie-downs.

*I: Oh no. What did you do about it?*

KB: I had to miss my reservation and dine alone in the nearby Starbucks while I waited for my car to be fixed. You know, I think that was the worst of all: having to eat my birthday "dinner" alone. To

be honest, living in Wagon Wheel has been a very lonely experience. I don't know anyone here. I've tried to befriend people I meet at work or in the community, but no one cares. No one approaches me on their own either. It's almost like I scare people off, like I intimidate them or something. People don't seem to know how to behave around me since I don't use a wheelchair. I don't see how that really sets me apart from them in any major way, but I guess everyone sees me as "different," abnormal, and incapable of having feelings or emotions. It's frustrating. A few days ago, I was talking to one of my colleagues about this; she said, and I quote, "Why would anyone be friends with you when they can just be friends with someone who has a wheelchair?"

Kerri and I continued talking about her time in Wagon Wheel for another hour. At press time, local residents complained that she had been nothing but a burden on them, and that she should be grateful there were any public accommodations in place for people like her.

# Off Topic

## Newly Graduated?

By MATT FLEMING '20  
Spectrum Staff

For 2018 graduates, the future awaits. While the uncertainty associated with graduation and moving on is celebrated by some and feared by others, only one dreaded fact remains clear: unclaimed land on planet Earth is running out fast. Currently, almost all available land on Earth remains under the jurisdiction of 200ish nation-states. With no more high school to drag you down, now is the time to join in with this craze and establish your own nation.

Before you set out to establish your country, you'll have to study up on the process of nation-making. The 1993 Convention on Rights and Duties requires that a country must possess a defined territory, a permanent population, some form of government, and the capacity to enter into relations with other states.

The simplest route to founding a nation is claiming a patch of unclaimed land. However, seeing as so little is left on Earth, a few loopholes may come in handy. Look for land that may have a poorly-defined border due to vague international treaties. Better yet, claim a patch of land that a local government would rather get off its hands.

Luckily for the reader, Boxborough is blessed with more than its share of ponds, complete with their own definitely haunted islands. The community would really prefer if they were someone else's problem as it would save the people from the task of sending out a newborn lamb every blue moon to appease the island spirits. From both my own knowledge and some snooping around on Google Earth, Boxborough's ponds contain approximately five islands. Given that my own republic will be established on the pond near Littlefield Road, that leaves four islands just waiting for nationhood. A defined border will be formed by the pond surrounding your deepwoods island country; be prepared to defend by land, air, and sea, should the Boxborough Minutemen invade (they will likely be too busy shepherding the newly-saved baby sheep, though).

Now that you have the land, you'll

have to establish a permanent population. Essentially, this means that someone needs to live in the country at all times, so it absolutely cannot be a seasonal destination. Unless you can convince some friends to join your venture and settle permanently on an island in the Boxborough wilderness, you'll have to assume that role and inhabit the land year-round, through rain, snow, sleet, sharknado, or flood. Pack enough Trader Joe's mac and cheese balls to last the century.

Unfortunately, government is one of the more challenging sectors. Start out by summoning the Founding Fathers via seance to ask for some advice on creating a state that fits your needs. A total dictatorship may seem ideal, but if you want your nation to thrive on a global scale, it'll have to live on after your death. Perhaps a socialist fishing society works best, or a theocratic regime that aims to satisfy the angry spirits of your island. Remember, as long as you're not violating basic human rights, any government is fair game.

But why bother with establishing a hip new forest paradise if your new country can't participate in globalization? It's time to connect with other countries. Seeing as it may be difficult to host an embassy from other nations in your limited space, consider keeping a canoe or two handy to ferry any diplomats across international waters.

Now, don't forget about the specifics! Although they may seem unimportant now, it'll come in handy when your descendants are living in a few-hundred-foot island metropolis. Currency, flags, and national anthems convince the world that your country is legitimate. Get creative. Perhaps consider establishing the Black Eyed Peas' smash hit "I Gotta Feeling" as the national anthem.

Congratulations! You've successfully developed a modern island nation in the backwoods of Boxborough from scratch. Now, your future is solely to protect and preserve its sovereignty. Remember to keep it classy and follow these steps. However, no matter how powerful your nation may become, always remember: the island spirits are coming for you.

## Love Nest: The End of an Era

By JACK OLSON '18  
Love Doctor

*Hey doc, I'm going to a bunch of music festivals with my boyfriend over the summer and was wondering: what if I see hotter guys there? Like, do I leave him for an alternative music-loving dream boys?*

As an alternative music-loving dream boy, I say no! We are so weird and honestly very hard to handle. Not only are we music obsessors but we also have such an abstract sense of humor that only the smartest and most "with it" people understand it. It's hard being alternative and beautiful, take it from me. Good luck, baby boo.

*Simple question: how do you get a prom date?*

Simple answer: you don't! You may be asking yourself "well, why?" Prom is so overrated. Go by yourself. Who cares?! I honestly think you'll have a better time tak-

ing hot pics with yourself than with someone else! And just THINK about how many people you can flirt with if you don't go with a date. Now that's amazing.

*Should I stay with or dump my girlfriend before college?*

I'm going to answer this question seriously. Stay with her! You totally shouldn't end things nicely to have a good fresh start at your college! You totally shouldn't "zip code" and just hang out and be a "thing" when you're both back in Acton. Literally, how dare you ask me such a silly and obvious question? I'm sad now! I'm so sad now, and I'm crying at the Acton Memorial Library writing this. The librarian just asked me to leave because I was crying too loudly. Thanks for that. Love you, though!

*I've always wondered how you've stayed so hot and cool in high school, Doc. Any tips for people who want to be like you someday?*

It's so hard to be beautiful. I got to bed every night at 5PM and put thirty facemasks on before then. It's so hard to be cool. You have to follow so many people on Instagram that it gets tiring. To be like me someday, all you have to do is three things: smile, laugh, and wave. If you do those simple things, you can be the most relevant person in town. Don't get me wrong: it's actually quite hard to remember to do all of those things, but it's so amazing to get attention. Thank you for flattering me, though; it means the world to me.

To my beloved fans, readers, friends, and enemies, I bid you farewell, my sweet, beautiful babies. I will miss you all, and I will miss high school so very much. Best of luck in the future my little lovebirds!!!!

XOXO - Jack Olson

P.S. You guys better not ever forget who I am.

## Bill Noeth: The Man, The Legend

By SYDNEY SMITH '18  
Former Chief Copy Editor

The Facebook group "Bill Noeth, the Man, the Legend" boasts 823 members, including myself. In this pseudo-cult, math students past and present discuss flingature and swingature, equivalent humpature, the evils of pottery, and the folly of daydreamers. As a proud math person and Finney-worshiper myself, I jumped at the opportunity to speak with Mr. Noeth for a few minutes of his busy, busy, busy schedule to learn some of the wisdom he has accrued over his forty-one years at AB.

When asked about what he has learned during his tenure as department head, Mr. Noeth responded that he became more flexible; thirty-three years ago, when he took the position, he sought a certain kind of teacher. Over time, his teaching style became less important to him because he recognized instead the importance of organization and continuity across different math courses. As any BC student knows, "the calculus AP is our life of math AP." Synergy between different math levels matters.

Then came the question whose answer we all dread: "When are you going to retire?" To my surprise, Mr. Noeth gave a genuine answer, stating, "I'm seriously thinking about doing it in two years." Not to worry, though, BC-aspiring freshmen—he followed, "I'm thinking that I would want to come back and teach part-time, like maybe two classes." Without the immense additional work of the department head position, he would be able to relax more.

Why in two years, exactly? Mr. Noeth continued, "When people keep asking me when I'm going to retire, I figure that's the time." Surprisingly, the question comes not from students but from curious teachers!

Every Noeth student knows the story of the time that his thumb got sliced off by a glass door, resulting in a trip to the hospital. Aside from being an experience that Mr. Noeth relates with odd enthusiasm, it's one of the few times he's missed school. During the interview, Mr. Noeth recalled with stunning precision each occasion he has been absent and, like a good math student, I added them up: approximately 23.5 days. For context, he "[has] probably 470 sick days saved up."

Mr. Noeth has rarely missed school, but has he ever daydreamed? "Yes, actually, in boring classes." Contrary to what one might expect, he always paid attention in English and foreign language classes. Instead, he found biology and physics either boring or poorly taught. But how did he space out without being caught? "I had long hair and, when I daydreamed, I would whip it in front of my forehead," he recalled.

Next, I asked Mr. Noeth a hard-hitting question about religion: "How many times per day do you venerate the long-dead math people? What are your worship practices?" Mr. Noeth answered pragmatically, "I just know that whatever they said was true, and I believe what I'm told to believe. I always figured that since I don't have a theorem named after me, or my name on a book, I should listen to the people who do." I reminded him that, in fact, he has a planet

named after him.

We continued discussing divisive issues with the talk of corporal punishment. Mr. Noeth often tells us to punish daydreamers by wearing cleats, kicking them in the head, and drawing blood. But how many students have suffered the consequences of their mistakes? Apparently, not a single one. "Luckily, people have realized it was metaphor," he continued. Because he is nonviolent, "it's okay to smack them silly instead of drawing blood."

Finally, we reached my last potentially controversial question: "What is your favorite polar graph and why is it the limaçon?" I realized I had been presumptuous and added, "Am I right? Is it the limaçon?" Mr. Noeth immediately lit up. "It is the limaçon. I really like the cute lil accent under the 'c,' and I like that it could either be a lima bean or have a loop. And the last thing taught in BC Calculus is the area within the loop of the limaçon, which has very nice alliteration. The loop of the limaçon."

Mr. Noeth continued by giving a word of advice for all the seniors: don't go to college and skip classes. Every time you skip class, you're basically "flushing \$225 down the toilet," which is something only a dope would do. Dopes also learn things just for the test and forget them, which is tantamount to math heresy. Everything builds on everything else! Mr. Noeth summed up this view simply but poignantly: "A dope lives only in the present."

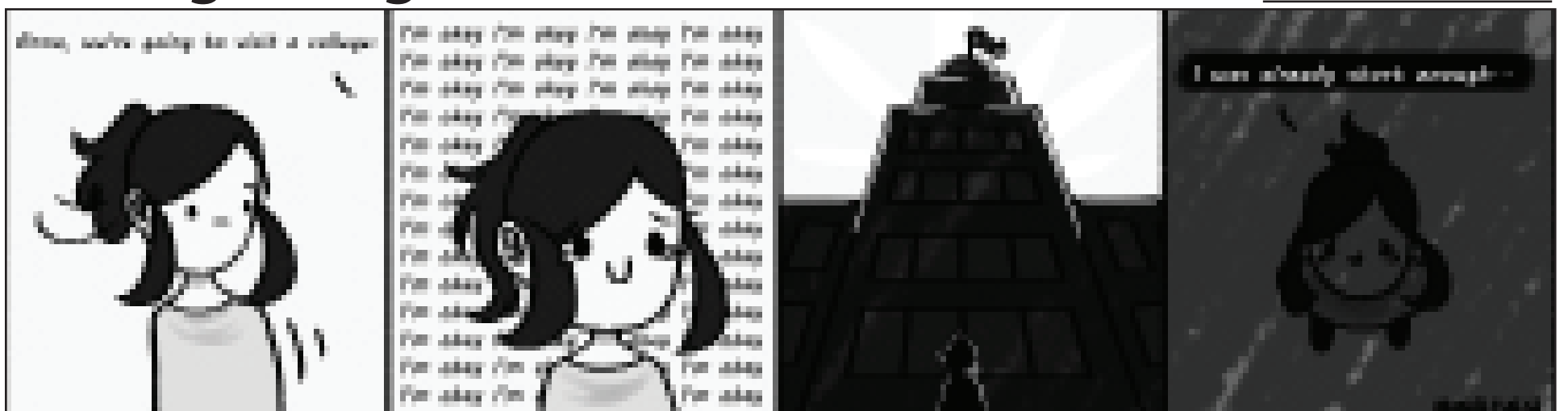
As the interview wrapped up, I asked him what we've all been wondering: what inspires him to be the way he is? Mr. Noeth beamed. "I just love what I do."



The Boxborough minutemen, ready to invade your land.  
ONLINE SOURCE

## Visiting Colleges - A Tall Order

By ANNABELLE CHEN '20  
Cartoonist



# Spectrum Staff

## Our Favorite Memories

By Spectrum Staff  
2017-2018

"My favorite memory is when Jasmine asked me to write about the AB Walkout. I'd initially planned to just do a small article that was more on national news, but when she told me that she wanted to expand and connect my idea to AB and the Walkout, it was the most exciting moment because I knew it was going to be a much bigger, more involved article."  
-Sam Chen, '20

"Definitely getting issues to print because it's so much work, but it comes out looking so great, and I'm a sappy person :)"  
-Somya Prabhakar, '19

"When we tried to find a razzmatazz prom dress for Maximilian Kimchi."  
-Kavya Uddaraju, '18

"Taking pictures of the staff outside for the website."  
-Anna Charissé, '20

"I remember walking into my very first Spectrum meeting, feeling so nervous, until Nithyani came up to me with a huge 1000-watt smile on her face and greeted me by name. As a freshman, every new experience is always very scary and intimidating since you typically don't know anyone. However, the second I was greeted, I knew I would love *Spectrum*; that idea has proven to be true time and time again. I love coming in and seeing the now-familiar faces of our staff, so welcoming and kind."  
-Teagan Smith, '21

"Writing the love nest!"  
-Jack Olson, '18

"That time Anjali and I wrote a [VERY] passive aggressive email and accidentally sent it mid-sentence."

-Serena Han, '20

"Working with a fun and relaxing group of layout editors."  
-Isaiah Lee, '20

"Ordering pizza at Spring Layout Week."  
-Grace Du, '19

"1) Eating snacks while chilling in the lab  
2) Watching Nithyani learn how to tap dance"  
-Niraagi Shah, '20

"Discovering that Max Kim and I are the same person."  
-Kaitlyn Chen, '19

"My favorite memory was when we were brainstorming for the Spring Issue and you guys left Off Topic off the board accidentally."  
-Michael Xu, '20

"Distributing the newspaper that I wrote the cover article for; it was something tangible that I could hold and say 'I'm proud of that.'"  
-Lizette Sta. Mari, '19

"My favorite memory this past year was when Mila taught the entire staff one Thursday how to tap dance and we could not stop laughing because we kept messing up."  
-Aadhiti Vallatharasu, '20

"Eating food in the other classroom with my friends all while dancing."  
-Paolina Garro, '21

"Honestly, there are so many so it's hard to pick one, but I'll try. One of my favorite memories this year was during the layout meeting over the summer when we all just hung out in the library and played hide and seek. It was a freeing moment when we got to talk at full volume in the silent section. Later, we sat outside of the library eating pizza and drinking soda, having

one of our first bonding moments as a chief staff. Other highlights include Jessica placing a keyboard on Kaitlyn's head to order pizza and me looking up from my computer and seeing the whole club learning the tap dance from Mila."  
-Jasmine Mangat, '19

"Learning to tap dance from Mila watching a youtube tutorial in 233S."  
-Anjali Raman, '20

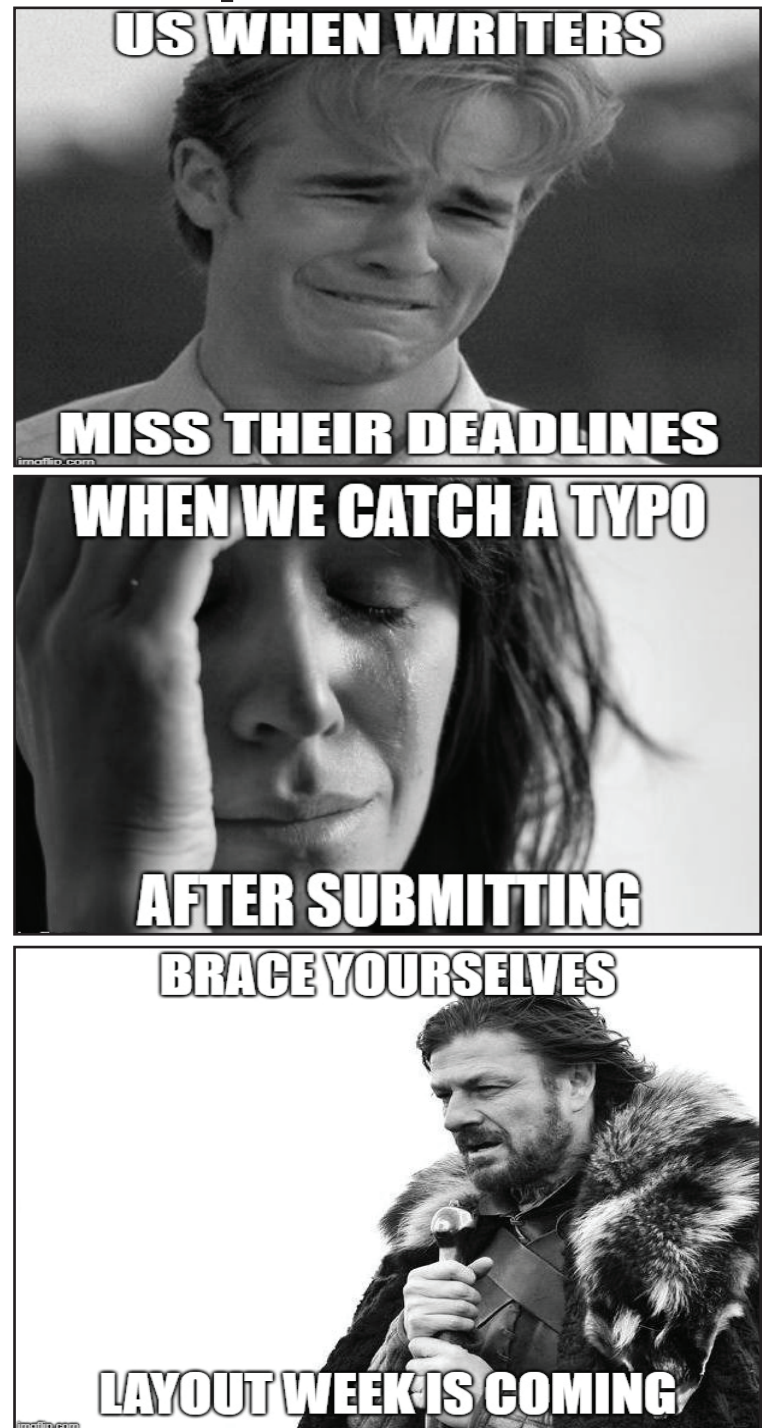
"Being welcomed into The Spectrum community even though I didn't join as a freshman or sophomore. The community made me feel really included and everything was really well organized. I couldn't have been more happy with my experience as part of such an amazing group of people!"  
-Grace Gong, '19

"Overall I've enjoyed getting to know all the members. This is my first year at The Spectrum so it was nice meeting such supportive, helpful people."  
-Sonali Rai, '20

"My favorite memory comes from the end of Layout week for Winter issue."  
-Max Kim, '18

"Like Maxwell Kim, my favorite memory is the last Friday of our Winter Issue layout week. I remember us being there for quite some time until only a few of us were left. We ended up all clumped by door to the Mac Lab. Everyone was working, but I was just wandering around. Should I have been doing something productive? Probably. Why wasn't I? These are the questions we'll never know the answer to. But the reason I remember this specific day so clearly is because I remember it feeling particularly comfortable: just a handful of hooligans on a Friday night doing some layout. It just felt right."  
-Nithyani Anandakugan, '19

## Just Spectrum Stuff



A Spectrum story as told through memes. Nithyani Anandakugan / Co-Editor-in-Chief

## Staff Superlatives

By Spectrum Staff  
2017-2018

- Most Likely to Eat all the Food- Sam Chen
- Most Likely to Criticize Your Grammar in Public- Somya Prabhakar
- Best "Ok Guys!"- Kavya Uddaraju
- Just Here to Take Photos And Eat Snacks- Anna Charissé
- Most Likely to Forget Your Name- Teagan Smith
- Most likely to Make Readers Slightly Uncomfortable- Jack Olson
- Most Likely to Send Emails at 1 AM- Serena Han
- Most Likely to Ignore People and Work Quietly- Isaiah Lee
- Most Likely to Enjoy Her Own Jokes Way Too Much- Grace Du
- Most Likely to Miss Deadlines- Niraagi Shah
- Most Likely to Gain Weight During Layout Week- Kaitlyn Chen
- Most Likely to Be Salty For No Reason- Michael Xu
- Most Likely to Forget to Fill Out This Survey On Time- Lizette Sta. Maria

- Most Unlikely to Concentrate During Meetings- Aadhiti Vallatharasu
- Most Likely to Forget to Read Comments on Articles- Paolina Garro
- Most Likely Not to Call My Businesses- Rohan Muralidhar
- Most Likely to Tell Max Kim to Finish the Website- Jasmine Mangat
- Most Likely to Send a Passive-Aggressive Email Before it is Finished- Anjali Raman
- Most Likely to Ask For Extensions- Sonali Rai & Grace Gong
- Most Likely to Break in Mila's Tap Shoes for her during a Spectrum Meeting- Nithyani Anandakugan
- Most Likely to Become Maximilian Kimchi, Overlord of all. Or Most Likely to Sleep During a Meeting- Maxwell Kim
- Most likely to forget to call business- Ananya Gade
- Most Likely to Submit an Article at 12:00 AM- Neha Vijay
- Most Likely to Bother the Editors-in-Chief with Questions- Kirtana Krishnakumar



Our very happy Spectrum family. Aarushi Nohria / Correspondent

**Hansen Auto Body**  
QUALITY, AFFORDABLE AUTO BODY REPAIR & PAINTING  
SERVING THE AB COMMUNITY SINCE 1995

- Handle Insurance Claims
- Environmentally Friendly
- Towing Available
- Satisfaction Guaranteed!

5 Willow St. Rear, West Acton  
978-263-6606  
HansenAutoBodyActon.com

STOP BY HANSEN AUTO BODY TODAY FOR A FREE ESTIMATE!

**Sal's Auto**  
COMPLETE CAR CARE

Quality. Trusted. Local.  
Family Owned & Run for 40 Years!

**Call Today! 978-263-2614**

5 Willow Street • West Acton, MA  
SalsAutoTruckRepair.com

**Q Cleaners & Tailor**  
Dry Cleaner, Tailor, Shoe Repair, Laundry Service

- Voted #1 in Acton
- Environmentally-Friendly
- Local, Independent Business

\*Mention this ad for 20% off Any Uniform Cleaning\*

QCleanerTailor.com 159A Great Road Acton  
Call (978) 264-4005 and Ask for Kim!

**Indo American Convenience Store**

485 Great Road, Acton, Massachusetts  
Phone: (978) 263-0144

Come! Visit our store to shop for wide variety of spices, Dals, flours, Indian breads, frozen Indian food/dinner, Indian Sweets, Fresh Vegetables, Canned, Pickled items and more....

Persian Groceries Available too....

Open 7 Days A Week From 9:30 am - 8:30 pm

# Spectrum Staff

## Thank You and Farewell to Our Graduating Staff!

By NITHYANI ANANDAKUGAN AND JASMINE MANGAT  
*Co-Editors-in-Chief*

Dear Sydney,  
This past year, we've grown to truly appreciate your wisdom. As we gradually absorb the obscure grammar rules that you have somehow already internalized, we often wonder what we'll do without you. For instance, who would have thought that "media" is plural and that its singular version therefore must be "medium." I remember this being the first of my many grammar lessons from Sydney Smith. Good luck next year. We know you'll be brilliant wherever you go.

Dear Jessica,  
We speak on behalf of the entire *Spectrum* team when we say that, without your mad layout skills, pulling this paper together for each issue would have been virtually impossible. Your work ethic and attention to detail have been truly admirable. For these past issues, layout has come and gone incredibly smoothly, and we can honestly say that this is all thanks to you. We've always felt safe knowing that, with Jess at the helm, little could go wrong. And over the course of this year, that has stayed true. Good luck next year, Jess! Stay Stern! Get it?

Dear Kavya,  
What would we do without that strong diaphragm of yours? Our meeting would be complete and utter chaos! Thank you for all the work you've done this year. You're always willing to help out when we need an extra set of eyes and a helping hand. We truly appreci-

ate it. Good luck at UConn next year! We now you'll do wonderful things there.

Dear Max,  
Oh Maximillian, where do we begin? Having you around this year has been so much fun. Whether it be messing with you or quizzing you on the various flags of the world in the room across from the Mac Lab, we've so enjoyed your general presence at the *Spectrum*. Your reactions (or lack thereof) always make us laugh. Good luck next year! We know you'll do something amazing with that brilliant mind of yours. Please, finish the website!

Dear Gregory,  
You are not necessarily part of *The Spectrum*, but you are certainly part of our hearts. You are a good mascot. Whatever happens, remember this.

Dear Mrs. Hammond and Mr. Brusie,

Although you are not seniors and we are not saying goodbye, we still wanted to have a little section for you. This year has been something of a rollercoaster. Between junior year and our responsibilities at *the Spectrum*, we were often at the verge of insanity. But you both were always there as a stable presence when we needed it. You left us to our own devices when we needed the space to go crazy. You bought us snacks when we were hungry (which was admittedly always). We cannot thank you enough for all of the support you give us throughout the year. *The Spectrum* simply could not be without you both, and we are so grateful that you can be here for us.



Kavya Uddaraju: Former Columnist Editor  
*Aarushi Nohria / Correspondent*



Sydney Smith: Former Chief Copy Editor  
*Anna Charisse / Photographer*



Maxwell Kim: Former Chief Website Editor  
*Aarushi Nohria / Correspondent*



Jessica Luo: Former Chief Layout Editor  
*Aarushi Nohria / Correspondent*



Greg Yao: Beloved Team Mascot  
*Anna Charisse / Photographer*



Spectrum Family Picture.  
*Aarushi Nohria / Correspondent*

## Introducing Our Chief Staff 2018-2019!



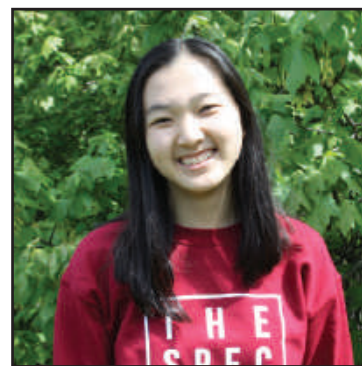
Nithyani Anandakugan '19: Co-Editor-in Chief  
*Aarushi Nohria / Correspondent*



Jasmine Mangat '19: Co-Editor-in Chief  
*Aarushi Nohria / Correspondent*



Somya Prabhakar '19: Chief Copy Editor  
*Aarushi Nohria / Correspondent*



Serena Han '20: Publicity and Finance Manager  
*Aarushi Nohria / Correspondent*



Kirtana Krishnakumar '20: Publicity and Finance Manager  
*Aarushi Nohria / Correspondent*



Michael Xu '20: Off Topic Editor  
*Aarushi Nohria / Correspondent*



Grace Gong '19: Forum Editor  
*Aarushi Nohria / Correspondent*



Teagan Smith '21: Mainspread Editor  
*Aarushi Nohria / Correspondent*



Anjali Raman '20: News Editor  
*Aarushi Nohria / Correspondent*



Kaitlyn Chen and Grace Du '19: Co-Chief Layout Editors  
*Aarushi Nohria / Correspondent*