English | Math | Science

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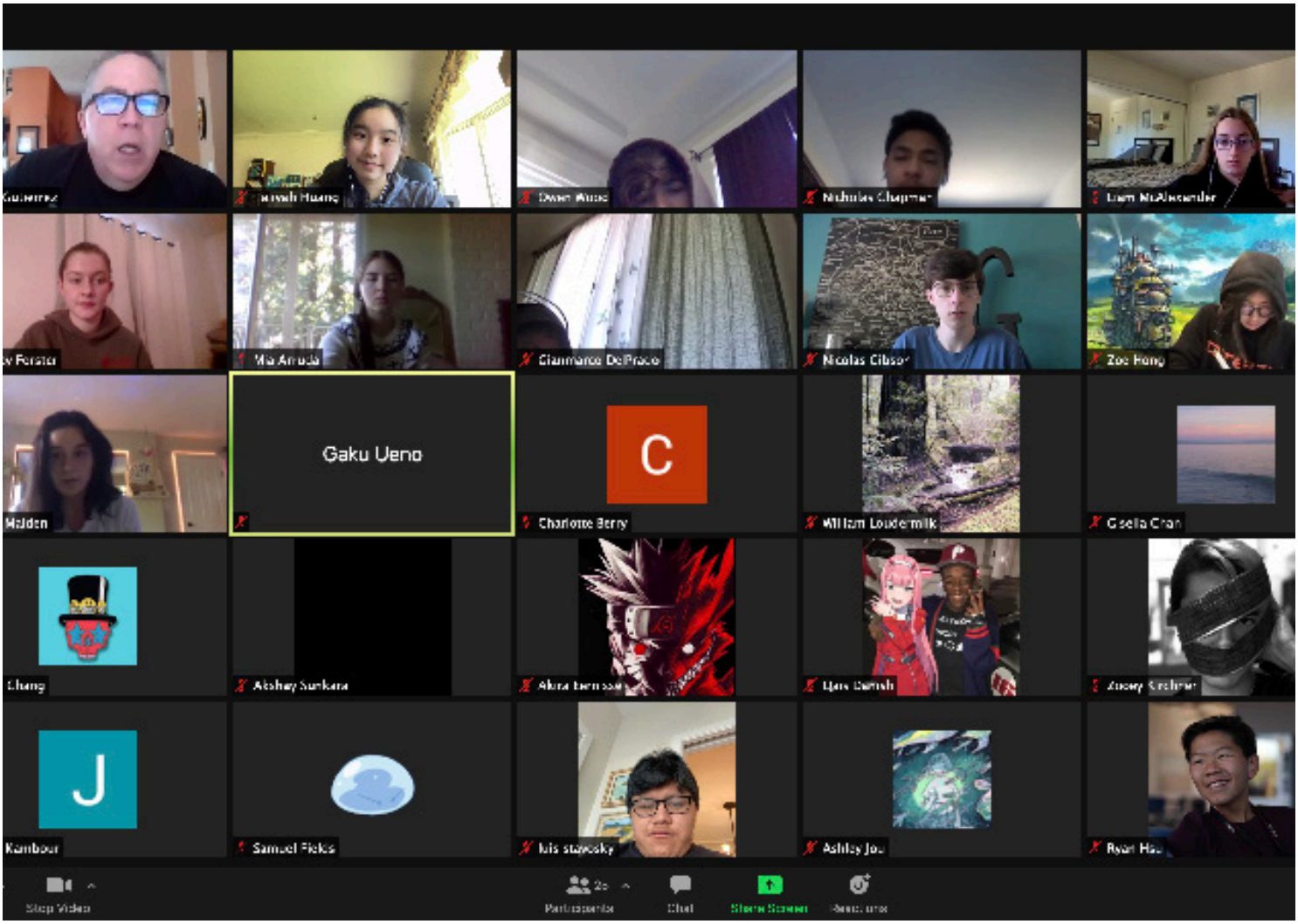
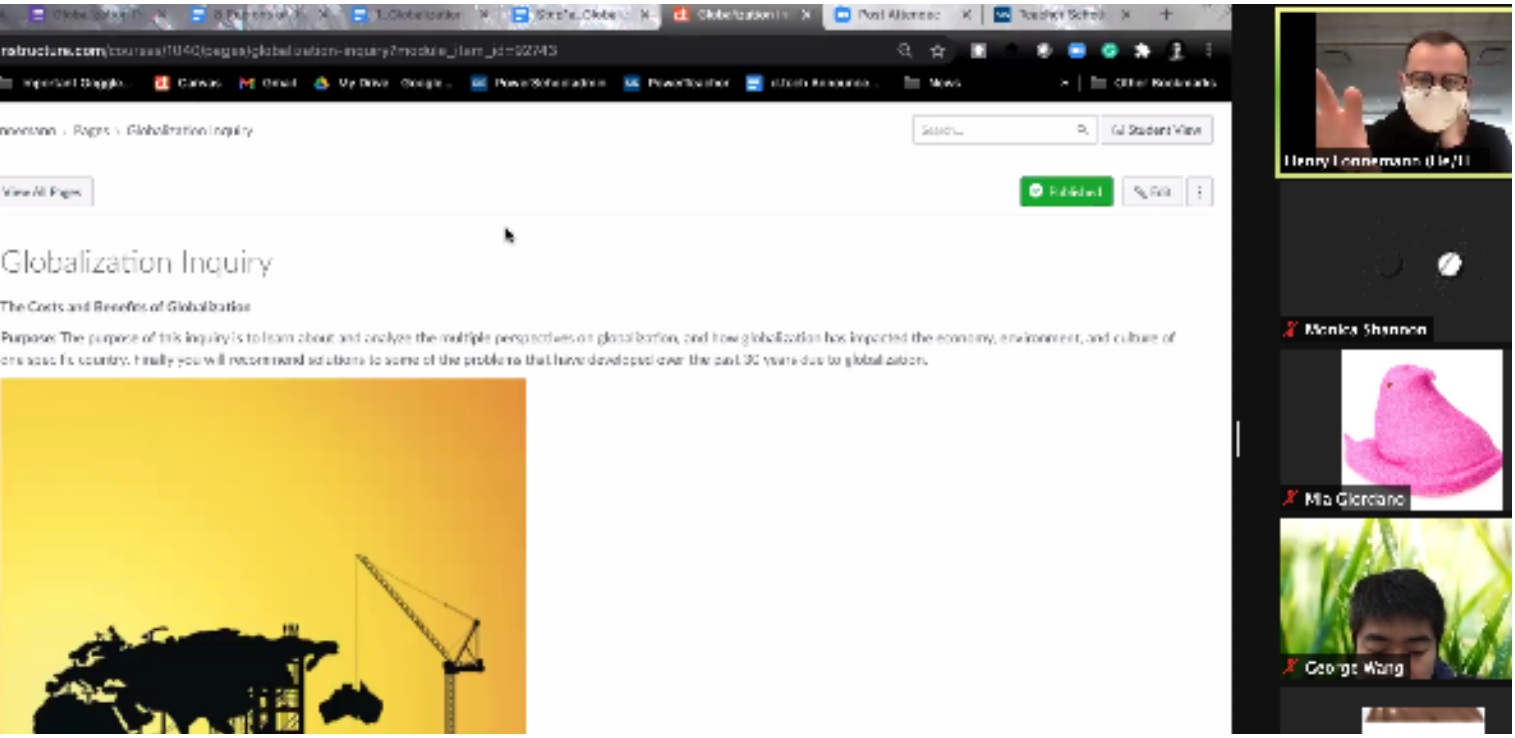
SOCIAL STUDIES

Systems of both past and present





The social studies path a d.tech student typically takes starts in 10th grade with World History, goes through US History in 11th grade, and ends in 12th grade with Government and Economics.

In World History taught by Ms. Kam O'Horo, the topics of the Columbian Exchange and the history of the idea of race, Imperialism, Colonialism, and Globalization were explored. Students explored these topics by watching crash course videos, practicing in online discussions, and collaborating on projects. Nate Posner ('23) said he enjoyed World History as he had the opportunity to dive deep into World Wars.

US History, taught by Mr. Michael Gutierrez, was a unique history class in that it covered topics including Women's History, an issue not generally focused on in high school US History classes. In this course exclusively taken by juniors, students had the opportunity to dive deep not only into US History topics, but also into the question "why do we study history?" Students found answers to this question by completing the 'History is Me' project, where they dove into their family's history and discovered how history has contributed to who they are today. Razi Motalib ('22) said, "I liked that in US History, I was introduced to new important topics that weren't covered in previous history classes."

This year, students took Government for one semester and Economics for the other semester, both taught by Mr. Henry Lonnemann. With the fall 2020 presidential elections, students had the opportunity to see physical applications of what they were learning in Government. As the majority of students taking Government and Economics were Seniors, many of them were old enough to vote during the fall 2020 elections——so students could apply what they learned in their Government class to the real world. Dahlia Levy ('21) said she liked the class as she was able to learn "about government during one of the most divisive elections in American history." Government students took on a project called 'Know Your Rights,' where they had the opportunity to dive deep into the question "how do we balance individual freedom with the collective good of society?" by creating either a video, podcast, or essay. In the second semester, when students took Economics, students were assigned a project to use the "7 Economic Principles" to plan their economic plan for their future.

Spanish | Electives | d.lab

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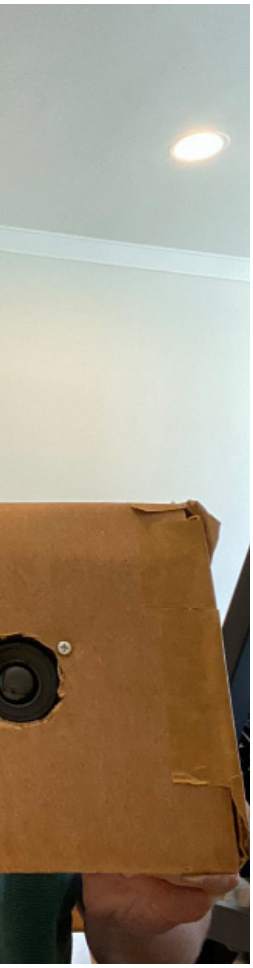
ELECTIVES

Engineering and Sustainability



Some of d.tech's most hands-on classes are the Engineering and Sustainability electives. In both Engineering and Sustainability, students had the opportunity to work on a project that challenged them to think creatively and quantitatively.

Engineering is "really fun because we get to learn about physics and 3D drawing techniques," said Tayliah Huang ('22). Mr. Wayne Brock's Engineering started off the year building and testing paper towel structures. Students used simulation tools to calculate loads and deflections of beams. In the spring semester, students independently proposed, planned, and prototyped designs of their choice. Huang said, "my project was an invention to help my buddy with cerebral palsy I've been working on since winter break." In engineering, students are actively learning and positively impacting those around them. Dahlia Levy ('21) said she learned that "it is hard to be an engineer from home," but she liked the freedom she and her peers got to take their semester project in whatever direction they chose.

In the Sustainability class taught by Ms. Fannie Hsieh, the focus was Conundrums and Environmental Justice. Sustainability students were tasked with choosing a project to pursue within the class. The project options were 'The Engineering Challenge', 'Community Impact Project', or 'There is Hope.' With 'The Engineering Challenge,' teams designed a structural solution that required an application of design thinking. The 'Community Impact Project' was a design challenge where teams designed a community impact project that sought to create change in their communities. Finally, the 'There is Hope' challenge was an academic design challenge focused on the process needed for moving society forward into a more sustainable paradigm shift. Emilie Tung (23') said, "I liked the class a lot as it introduced topics that I didn't usually do, forcing me to learn new subjects and get a more diverse perspective on sustainability."

Spanish | Electives | d.lab

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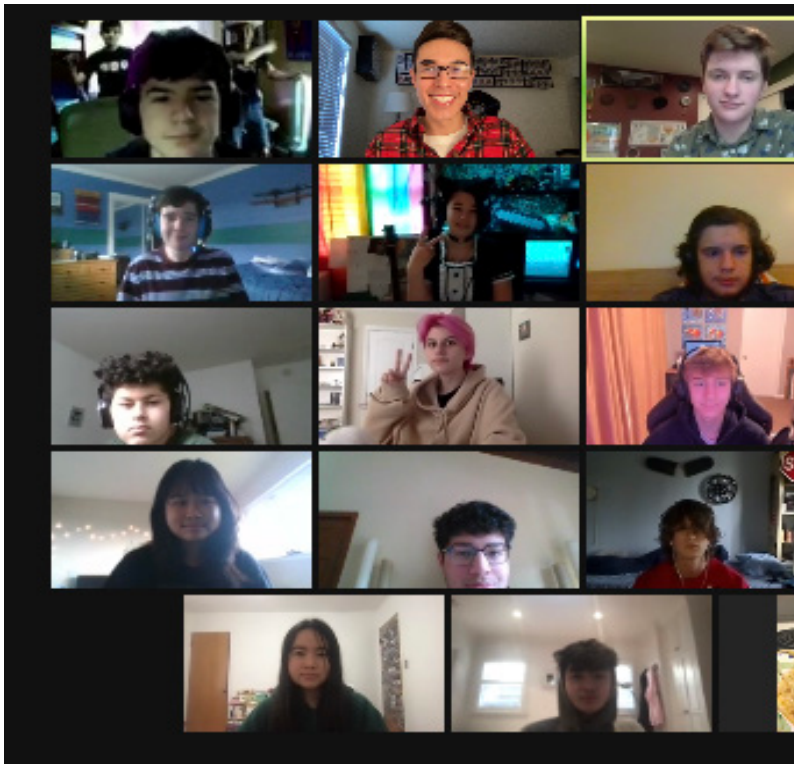
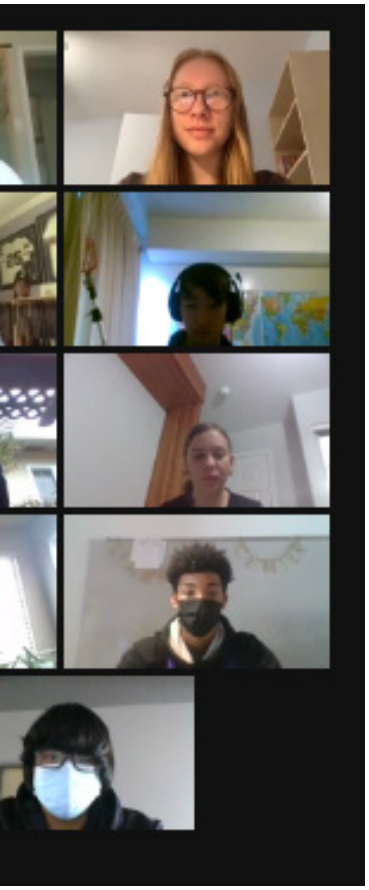
SPANISH

Distance learning proved to be a bigger challenge in Spanish than most other classes. Students took three Spanish classes throughout the year at d.tech: Spanish 1, taught by Ms. Carolina Moroder, Spanish 2, with Mr. Eric Vences, and Spanish 3, with Ms. Mariela Gonzalez-Orta.

Spanish 1

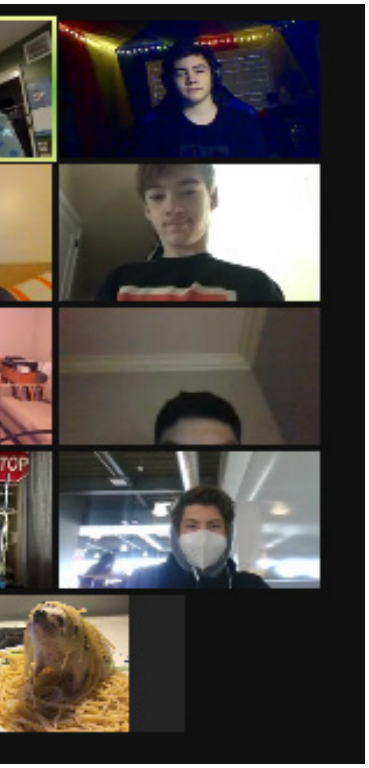
There was previously a certain atmosphere in Ms. Moroder's Spanish 1 classroom which didn't really carry over to Zoom. Ms. Moroder explained that with distance learning, "The hardest part was to not have you guys in class. It was hard to know what was going on with everybody." Ms. Moroder added that the cycles were challenging because "you had to summarize so much in so little time." This made it difficult to retain information, especially with a three week break in between cycles. Due to distance learning, students' weekly schedules were heavily altered, allowing only three days for regular classes and two days for dlab. Ms. Moroder admitted she "had to take out some of the fun" activities in Spanish, like a cooking class where students brought in ingredients and made something. Derek Desuasido ('24) thought that learning Spanish 1 online made it "hard to stay focused" and "more difficult to learn." He observed, "It wasn't that interactive."





Spanish 2

There was previously a certain atmosphere in Ms. Moroder's Spanish 1 classroom which didn't really carry over to Zoom. Ms. Moroder explained that with distance learning, "The hardest part was to not have you guys in class. It was hard to know what was going on with everybody." Ms. Moroder added that the cycles were challenging because "you had to summarize so much in so little time." This made it difficult to retain information, especially with a three week break in between cycles. Due to distance learning, students' weekly schedules were heavily altered, allowing only three days for regular classes and two days for dlab. Ms. Moroder admitted she "had to take out some of the fun" activities in Spanish, like a cooking class where students brought in ingredients and made something. Derek Desuasido ('24) thought that learning Spanish 1 online made it "hard to stay focused" and "more difficult to learn." He observed, "It wasn't that interactive."



Spanish 2

In Spanish 3, Ms. Gonzalez thought that giving enough opportunities to students to practice speaking Spanish was the most challenging aspect of teaching her class online. Since the class only lasted an hour, she "couldn't open the breakout rooms for [students] to talk to each other" very often. Another drawback Ms. Gonzalez mentioned was that it's harder to check in with students and see how they're learning, while in person, she could "see who was talking and who was not, and see who needed extra help." However, a positive aspect of distance learning was "the resources were very diverse, and [the students] had access to those resources immediately" on the internet. As for the curriculum, Ms. Gonzalez said "pretty much everything had been modified" based on her students' interests, likes, and dislikes. This year, she "made an extra effort to do that, because online learning hasn't been as engaging." Savannah Meadow ('22) said it was "a lot easier for me [to learn Spanish] over zoom." Even though pronunciation was "a little harder to do," Meadow enjoyed "being able to ask the teacher to repeat things" and "being able to use Spanish dictionaries to check words I don't know."

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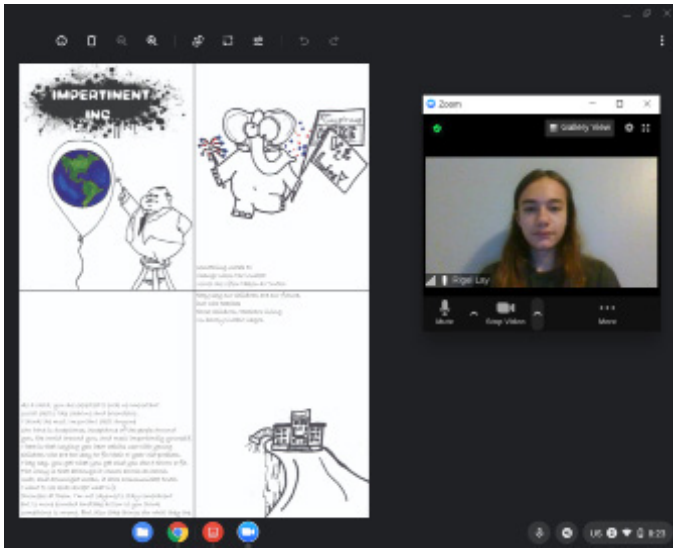
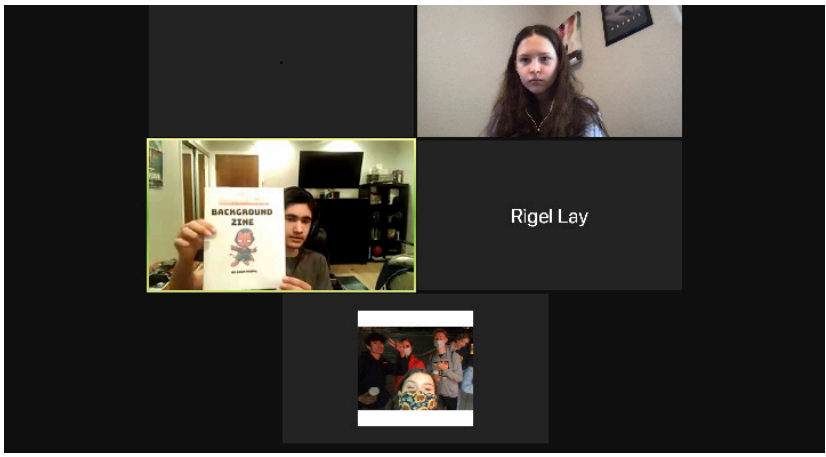
STUDENT-LED D.LABS





Student-led d.lab

Student-led d.lab, also known as 'community d.lab classes,' was taught exclusively by d.tech upperclassmen to 9th grade students. Types of classes ranged from architecture and female empowerment to 3D design. These community d.lab classes were unique as they were taught only by students, and were not graded for the 9th grade students taking the class.

Kasvi Singh ('22) and Miriam Brody ('22) taught a student-led d.lab class called STEM Lab. "Our students researched either oil spills, plastic pollution, droughts & wildfires, or ocean acidification, then programmed a website with information on their topic, and then engineered a prototype that worked to solve the topic they chose," said Singh. Another student-led d.lab, NEXTinArchitecture, was taught by Maxwell Kwan ('22) and Thomas Saito ('22). The class invited guest speakers and hosted a field trip to dive deep into architecture.

Taline Kevranian, a d.tech alumni, joined the d.tech student-led d.lab team to teach her class, Signs of Pseudoscience. In order to demonstrate the concepts, Kevranian attempted to guess her students' Zodiac signs from their personalities, and surprisingly got all of them right.

The community d.lab classes were successful among 9th grade students; students were able to learn and explore a topic they were interested in without the pressure of maintaining their GPA.

Intersession: VAPA | Intersession | Interships

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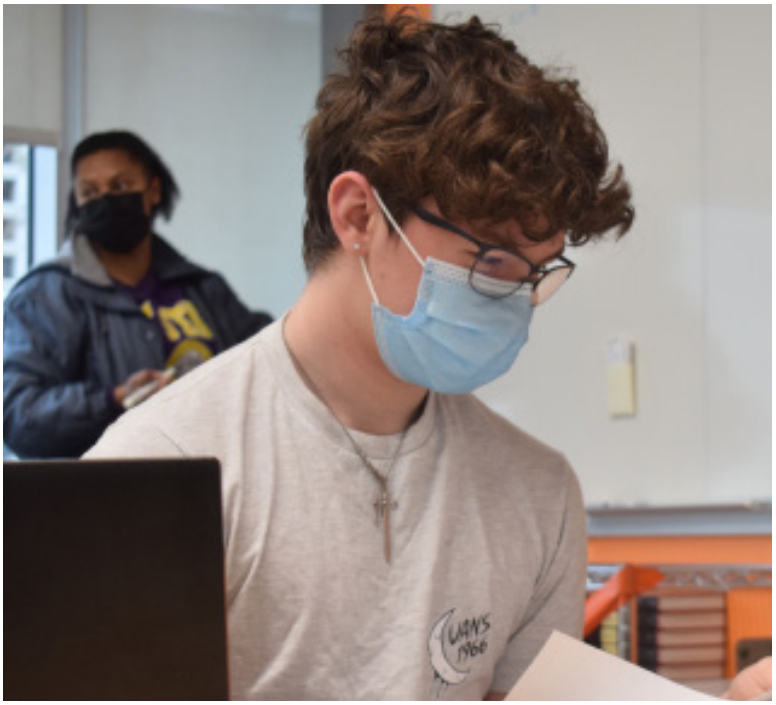
CORONA EFFECTS



Online Learning: A Coronavirus School Experience

March 2020, Friday the 13th. What's your most vivid memory? Perhaps it's of a teacher announcing school would shut down until spring break, coupled with an impromptu celebration for the two extra weeks off. Then, you found out that you'd still be in school — just online. Zoom became the new classroom. You enjoyed sleeping late and arriving in class with the click of a button. But was online learning really better?

Distance learning has many advantages, with one of the most obvious being its convenience. With the elimination of commute time, Michika Yamamoto ('21) said, "It's nice to stay home and not worry about waking up early." Learning online also meant submitting assignments was easier. Derek Desuasido ('24) noted that "all you have to do is click a button." This didn't mean that students slacked off, though. Ryan Quisol ('22) stated that the extra convenience actually boosted his independence as it "forces you to go out and seek more material." Many others have also utilized the extra time for their rigorous course loads. Jared Chou ('21), who took Calc 1 and Calc 2 this year, said, "Academically, I feel like I've been pretty productive." Clearly, productivity does not only exist with in-person classes.

As for its downsides, the main difficulties were technology glitches and a lack of personal connection. Students like Desuasido felt "it's easier to learn things in person," while Savannah Meadow ('22) was bummed she missed out on annually anticipated grade-wide activities like the junior ropes course. "Even though junior year is stressful with SATs and everything, you usually get to stress with your grade together." That sense of community seemed harder to come by on Zoom, especially for freshmen, many of whom have never met their classmates or teachers in person. Additionally, when people had their cameras off, there was no way of knowing whether people were actually paying attention to what you were saying. As Kira Balcon ('24) noted, it's just "awkward when I come unmuted." Balcon, like many others, also struggled with her internet connection, which had the tendency to malfunction during class, resulting in frozen video, paused audio, or even an ejecto seato from the meeting. Finally, distractions and the lack of motivation were big obstacles as well. Chou acknowledged that there were definitely more distractions while learning at home. After all, it is difficult to focus with your phone on your desk and a warm bed in such close proximity. Yamamoto agreed that she was less motivated to get work done with "so many distractions."

Online learning has been a unique experience with its ups and downs. Despite its many challenges, students at d.tech have persevered through and continued to excel in their studies.

Dtech Clubs

http://designtechhighschool.org/clubs-d-j

CLUBS

The ASL Club

The ASL club works to teach American Sign Language to anyone who is interested in learning through games, lessons, and discussions. The club plans to host an ASL song flash mob during lunch once in-person school starts again.

The Dot Advocacy

The Dot Advocacy's purpose is to inform and educate students on period poverty. The club also hopes to host fundraisers to provide local women's shelters with feminine hygiene products.

Team 5940 BREAD

Team 5940 BREAD (Breakthrough Robotics Engineering And Design) is an FRC robotics team at d.tech. It consists of more than 60 members and has been active for almost six years. Team 5940 works to develop confident, professional, growth-oriented, and innovative leaders who can utilize creative thinking to overcome challenges. The team also strives to cultivate an engaging, student-operated environment where everyone can collaborate effectively, have their opinions valued, and embrace the ideals of FIRST. Let's get this BREAD!

TEDxDesignTechHS

TEDxDesignTechHS was founded on drive, interconnectedness, flexibility, and accountability. It is a student-run, student-led TED event built by students here at d.tech. Last year, their theme was Deep Dive. However, some things happened that prevented them from hosting that show, so their theme is Deep Dive this year once again. They will be diving deep into everything from mental health to the future of technology.

Dtech Clubs

http://designtechhighschool.org/clubs-p-r

CLUBS

Philanthropy Club

Philanthropy Club's mission is to give members the opportunity to learn about current issues in the world and to be able to make a difference through fundraising, volunteering, and helping to educate others. During distance learning, while Philanthropy Club faced limitations, members were still able to participate in beach cleanups, help distribute food to those in need, receive training for an online emotional support website (7 Cups of Tea), give microloans to people across the world (Kiva), and much more.

Pride Club

The Pride Club offers a safe and open place for all of the LGBT+ students at d.tech. The club's activities range from talking about life at d.tech to having serious discussions on LGBT+ rights and homophobia around the world. The creators of the Pride Club wanted to provide a space where the LGBT+ students at d.tech could feel safe and welcomed. It is important to have a community that is well educated on LGBT+ history and issues, as well as a community to fall back on; the Pride Club is focused on being exactly that.

Riot Games Club

The Riot Games Club was founded in 2018 with the goal of developing a passionate community at d.tech around several games such as Valorant, League of Legends, and more. The club hopes to foster a supportive and exciting environment for people to be themselves and share their passion for gaming. They have competed in tournaments with other high school teams in the High School Esports League (HSEL), and are looking forward to competing in more HSEL splits in the future.

REACH Club

The REACH Club's objective is to make a positive impact on surrounding communities through various service projects including trash pickups, food bank trips, homeless and fire relief drives, as well as Operation Christmas Child (OCC). OCC is an annual project that involves sending toiletries, toys, and school supplies to children in third world countries.

Dtech Clubs

http://designtechhighschool.org/clubs-s-t

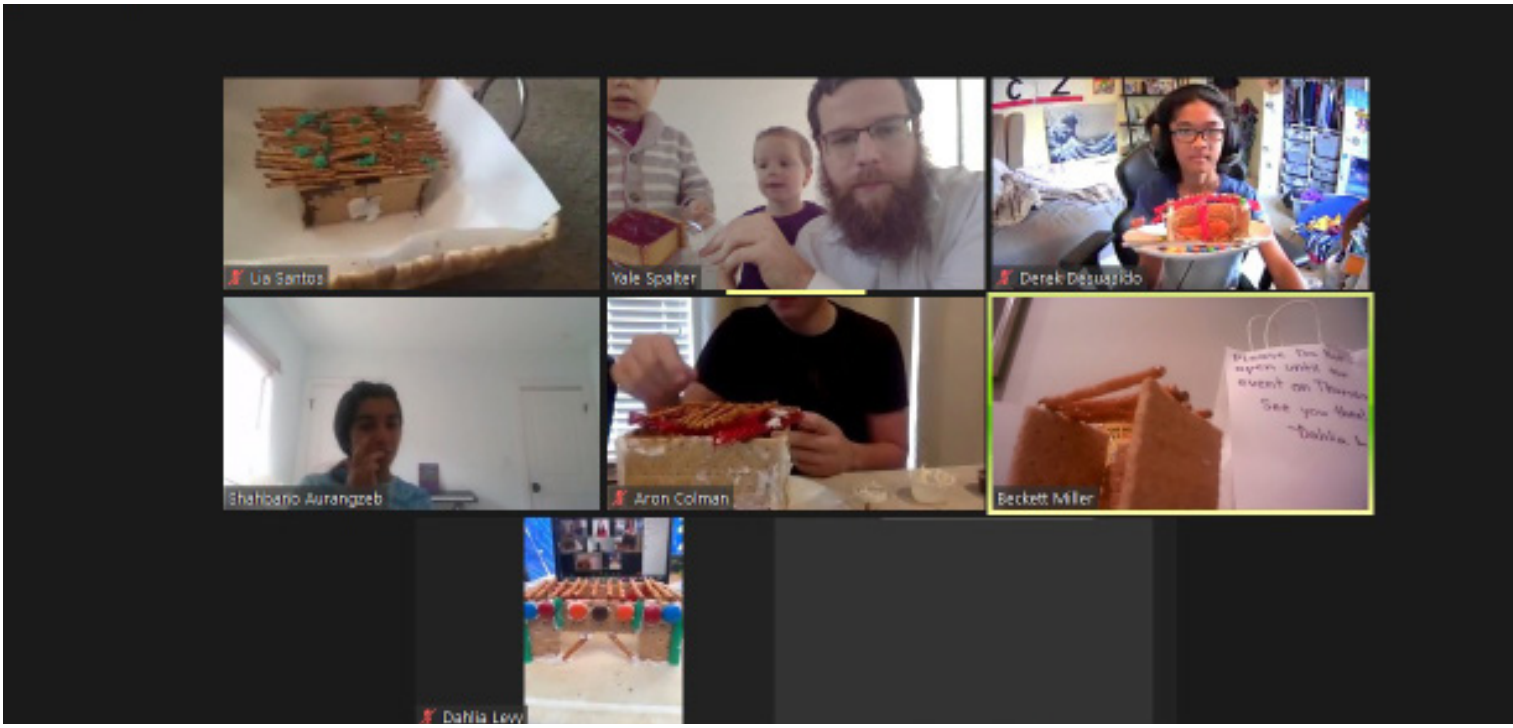
CLUBS

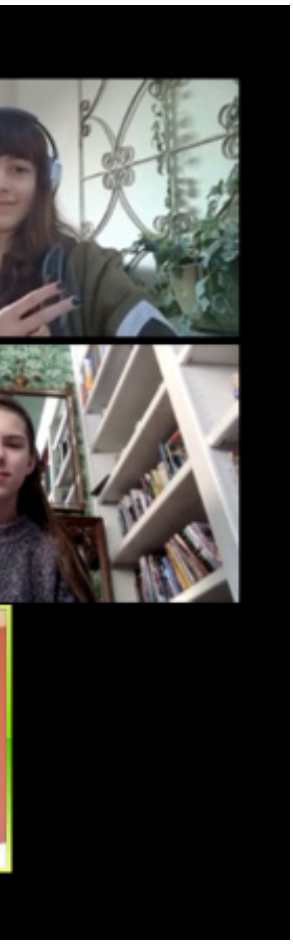
Drawing Club

The goal of the Drawing Club is to provide a friendly space for students to enjoy drawing without judgement. During meetings, members can draw, seek art advice, take part in fun activities, or just chat about life. The club hopes to create a wonderful community of artists at d.tech.

Jew Crew

As d.tech's Jewish community, Jew Crew strives to teach students about Jewish culture in a fun and interactive way. The club holds bi-weekly meetings with a rabbi to talk about different holidays and laws of Judaism. Occassionally, there are even fun activities such as games, cooking, or Q&A.





Game/Animation Making Club

The Game and Animation Making Club is, as the name suggests, a place where people can come together to create games and animations. Some choose to work as teams or individuals on a project of their choice, while others focus on developing the skills necessary to do so. There are also times when the entire club works together to develop a single game.

Era Club

At most Era Club meetings, you will find students working on the next episode of their 1930s black-and-white comedy series called Mary-Anne. From writing the script and practicing their lines to contacting filming sites, their productions are entirely student-run. The club has had the opportunity to film at a private farm in Healdsburg, Sonoma County and involved the local community both at home and in Healdsburg for the episode. When they aren't working on Mary-Anne, students enjoy dressing up in time-appropriate clothing, watching old Hollywood films, or making short skits.