

AHS Reflects On COVID-Anniversary

By Philippa Konow
STAFF WRITER

March 13th, 2021, will officially mark the one-year anniversary of Andover Public Schools shutting down as a result of COVID-19 in the U.S. This last year has caused a lot of sadness and loss of hope for many, but some positives have come out of this roller coaster as well.

People have tackled this year in many different ways. Some have been taking this time to do a lot of self-care to better themselves. Others have taken on new hobbies or made new friends online. There are so many possibilities for what everyone can do to make this time a bit more enjoyable and this article could help inspire others who are stuck for what to do or just want to try something new.

Some have learned more about themselves, changed their perspective on life, started new hobbies they have fallen in love with, or grown attachments to people. "Personally for me, it has allowed my family to get a lot closer. I feel like it has definitely made our connection and our bond stronger," said junior Mishaal Khan. Family bonding is a great idea during this long period of quarantine.

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Andover Strives for Continued Diversity

By Camille Storch
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

"I think this is something we really need to be tackling head on, at all levels, and outside of the schools to make strides in having students of color feeling seen and valued, I don't know if we always do a good job of that here, and that's something that we should be bothered by."

The quote above comes directly from AHS English teacher Caitlin Mitchell, who not only educates her students on the importance of literature, but is also the club advisor to the Gender-Sexuality-Alliance (GSA), and is an active member of the school's C3 (cultural climate) committee. You may be wondering, what is the something that Mitchell is referring to above? What is its significance in correlation with the palpable sense that this is an issue that needs to be addressed immediately?

The something that Mitchell is referring to is racism, an issue in our nation and across the world since our country was created. We need to be able to find the ability to celebrate diversity in our world, in our country, in our community, and at Andover High School.

Google's definition of diversity is the "practice or quality of including or involving people from a range of different social and ethnic backgrounds and of different genders, sexual orientations, etc."

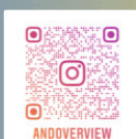
So let's all take a step backwards and widen our perspective on Google's definition. Diversity involves all members of a community, and how that specific community is able to celebrate, and most importantly, acknowledge all of its members. This is done in a way to make all members feel comfortable, safe, and able to express themselves in any way that they want to.

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Senior captain Paige Gillette prepares to shoot during their game against Chelmsford High School on January 29th.

STAFF PHOTO / Erin Li

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Snow Day Petition Makes the Rounds

By Jacqueline Zhu
STAFF WRITER

Remote learning may have killed snow days this year, but AHS students are trying to resurrect them in the name of mental health.

Students have been unhappy with the change, citing stress, anxiety, and lack of rest as their reasons why. Now a petition urging administrators to make the next snow day a "mental health day" is circulating on Change.org.

The petition for a snow day was started by senior Zack Nepomnayshy. It states, "As students, we understand wholeheartedly the importance of getting a holistic education[.] [H]owever, the stress of hybrid learning, the current pandemic, and other private issues [are] causing increased rates of depression and anxiety."

Currently, the petition has almost 400 out of the 500 votes needed. Many students and parents voiced their reasons for signing in the comments, often expressing a desire for a break from school.

"I definitely prefer having snow days because they give us a break from the normal, hectic routine of school and a chance to get outside for once," said senior Katherine Song.

Sophomore Dhriti Motwani said snow days are also an opportunity to take some time on her own to relax: "Having snow days [is] great because you don't have to wake up so early in the morning like usual. We can go play in the snow or take pictures of the snow."

"Having no snow days impacts my mental health quite negatively," said senior David Irza. "I now have to burden the fact my customers in the snow removal business I run may be upset with their driveway being covered all day. This causes me to have anxiety and stress...over the loss of business."

Sophomore Vivian Tang said not having any more snow days has had a considerable impact on her overall mood. "The daily Google Meets

and Schoology conferences usually take up most of my time and energy, leaving me feeling lethargic and exhausted at the end of the day," she said.

Students hope that administrators will consider their thoughts when deciding whether or not they will have snow days. Tang stated schools should listen to students' opinions since it would greatly impact their performance in school.

"I think we should have our voices heard in these situations, as our conduct in school depends on it," Irza said. "I think we are oppressed by school [administrators], and they do not care [about] what we say. It is time that changes."

Interim Superintendent Dr. Claudia Bach stated the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) sent out a notice this school year that said unless the district had power outages, school districts could all go remote when there was a snowstorm instead of canceling school.

"I think DESE thought a remote day was preferable to a cancellation day, but I have heard students might prefer having a snow day," Bach said. "I'd be interested in hearing student opinions."



STAFF PHOTO / Olivia Janasik
A snowman in the yard of an Andover home.

EDITORIAL

Lessons, Tips for Motivation

In a recent issue of Education Week, two teachers discussed remote and in-person learning in relation to time management and motivation-- two skills that often get lumped into the pile of “You either got them or you don’t.”

Students often bear the blame for their lack of time management and motivation. You don’t turn in an assignment and you get a zero. You could have too much home-work, or you’re working two jobs plus going to school, or maybe your motivation is low because you’re depressed. It’s not like time management and motivation are academic skills that are taught in the classroom, though maybe now is the time to consider doing just that.

One year has passed since the pandemic was declared. This is a school year most students cannot wait to be done with, as it has required exceptional flexibility and perseverance. Those are tough skills to manage without time and motivation.

So how can you manage your time better and stay motivated this semester? Here are some ideas from our staff:

- Study with friends (Masked and social distanced, of course.)
- Take a 5-10 minute break every hour. Short and frequent breaks are shown to improve focus and productivity. Plan on a little fun!
- Write detailed class notes. Get out those colored pens and get creative.
- Write EVERYTHING in a planner. Yes, really.
- Train yourself to associate places with a function. Try to avoid working from your bed or in front of the TV.
- Do something to relax in your downtime. Take a walk, watch a show, hit a baseball.
- To do lists. Break large tasks into smaller pieces. Make early deadlines.

The pandemic has shined a light on gaping holes in the school support structure we’ve become accustomed to. Students, teachers, staff, administrators: we see you all doing the best you can. Let’s take all of these lessons we’ve learned this year and build a better system to make sure we’re all more motivated for our future.

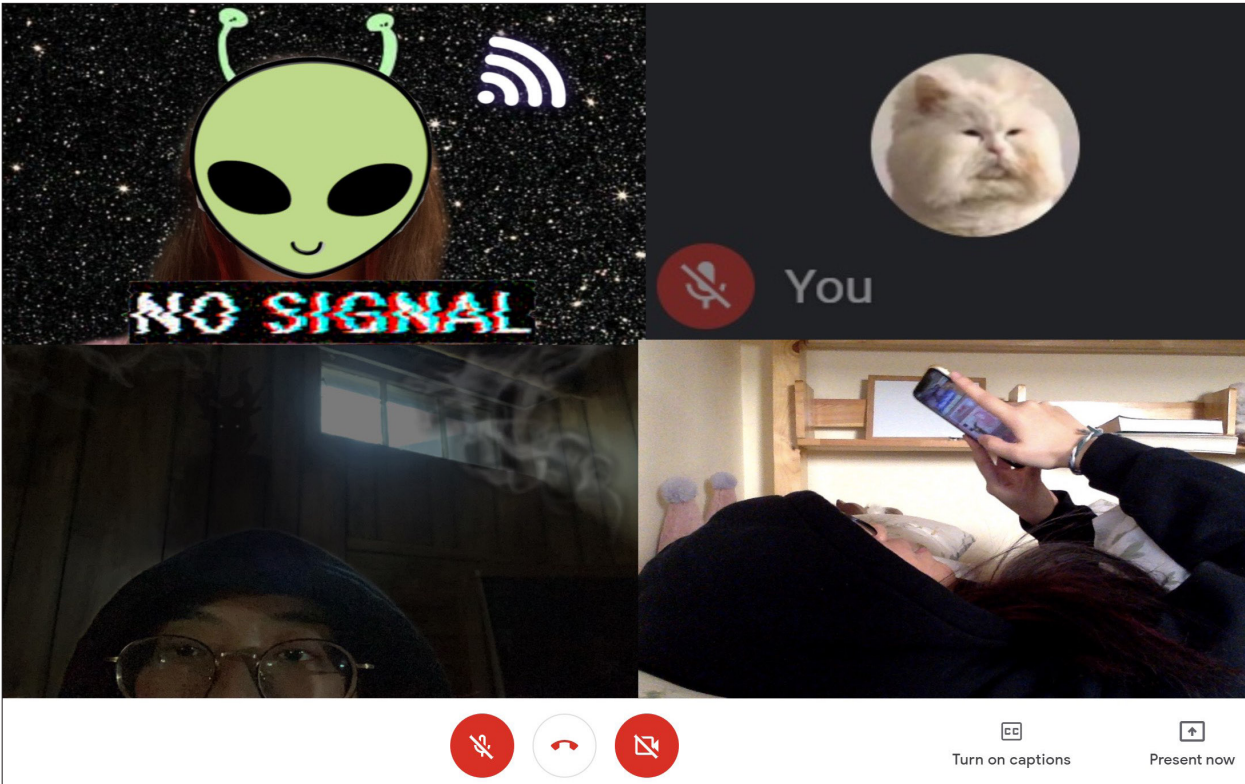


PHOTO ILLUSTRATION / Erin Li

7 Types of People in Remote Classes

By Katie Budinger
EDITOR IN CHIEF

Whether you are fully virtual or hybrid, we have all done battle with various virtual meeting platforms. Some students triumph and pass the period attentive, with crystal-clear sound and consistent video. However, the rest of us mortals are not nearly so lucky and find ourselves fighting both the technology and the curriculum; others decide to engage with neither. This form of ‘modern learning’ is far from perfect, but there are certain types of people that we have all encountered during one class or another...

The Alien Communicator

Whenever this person is called upon, either by the teacher or through their own will to speak their mind, their microphone forbids such action. We pity them greatly, and yet our ears cannot be spared the accidental torture as their words are overshadowed by static and inhumane screeches. If they took initiative and broadcasted that static into outer space, they would probably get a very intelligent and just as undecipherable reply from some aliens who are very curious to know why you “had a question about number seven on the test.”

Dark Shadows

This person gets bonus points for having their camera on 95% of the time, but their willingness to appear on screen reveals a deeper mystery: what is behind them. Whether it is phantom motion or strange objects, the room they are in has unknown properties just offscreen, hidden in the shadows. You have been in class with them for months, and yet you still cannot figure out what is hanging on their wall or who is moving around behind them. Are they aware of this motion? It’s impossible to say, but they have yet to answer for what lurks in the background of their little virtual square of existence. In fact, you are not even certain from where they are calling.

A Little Too Comfortable...

The rest of us hauled ourselves out of our warm beds and faced

the cold, cold morning, but this person grabbed their phone off their nightstand and rolled back over. Their hoodie usually disguises the fact that their hair is a mess, and their attendance responses are grumbled and barely coherent. The whole class now might as well have slept over, since everyone knows the color of this person’s sheets and exactly how many pillows they have on their bed. In some cases, you want to reach through the computer and pull them out into the frigid morning by their sweat-shirt, because the rest of us have to suffer and there should be no exceptions. Napoleon’s soldiers didn’t get nice warm comforters, so neither should we.

OPINION COLUMN

“I thought I was muted”

They have ignored the strange looks from their teacher (they were distracted, anyway). They did not check their phone to see the awkward texts from their classmates. They did not know they were unmuted. Listening to this happen is like watching someone walk away from the bathroom with toilet paper on their shoe. You would never want it to be you, and yet you are powerless to stop it. This person unmuted themselves, probably for attendance, then didn’t quite hit that mute button; now the whole class knows that their cat threw up on the carpet.

The Ghost

This person logs into class on time, chipperly responds to attendance and maybe even chats with the teacher. However, this ploy of presence is short-lived; once the class really begins, they float away, their on-screen icon the only indication that they ever truly appeared in the first place. The teacher calls on them, and it becomes clear that they have vanished like a specter at the top of a haunted staircase in a horror film. The class tries to investigate

what is on the other side of the screen, but there is nothing there. It makes you wonder if they were ever really there in the first place or did you imagine the whole thing? Are you living out your own paranormal story online? We may never know (but if anyone asks, the Zoom call is coming from inside the house).

The Watcher

Did you see them laughing during the class discussion of Oedipus? Did they suddenly gasp when the teacher introduced the function of mitochondria? Either way, the powerhouse of this person’s cell is clearly whatever they are watching just above their computer screen. Perhaps you can see the ghostly flashes in their glasses or on the wall behind them, but whatever is on the TV is clearly much more engaging compared to what is happening in class. The real question, which truly engages your critical thinking skills, is whether or not you can figure out what they are watching solely based on their reactions.

Echo Test

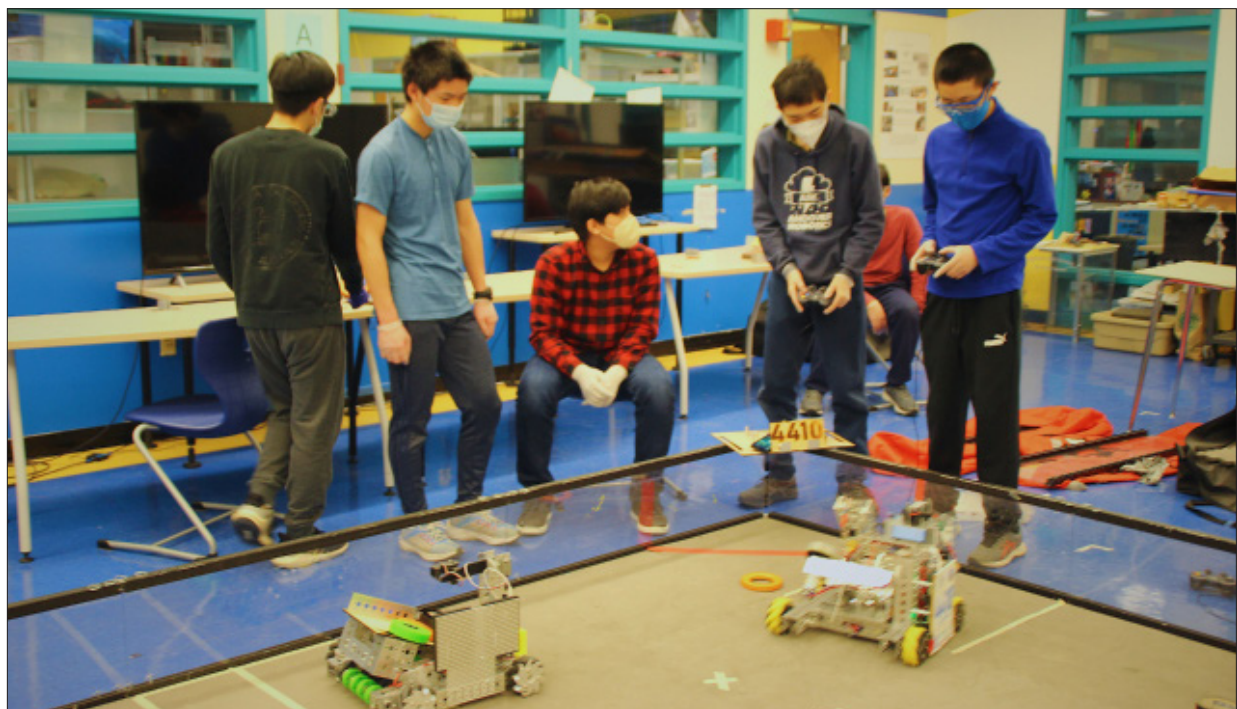
The seemingly sudden switch to Schoology has presented a whole new array of problems in Remote-land, but it has also come with some additional features, one being the ‘echo test.’ No one is quite sure why this extra step of logging on exists, but nevertheless we find ourselves faced with clicking through yet another screen before we can hear what our teacher has to say. There are certainly some people out there who just click right on through, but others sit and contemplate what exactly to say in order to test for that echo. You start to speak, you hear your words thrown back at you through the speakers, and you click that thumbs up and get thrown into class... unmuted. What the rest of the class hears is anything from garbled sentences to shuffling to the end of your Shakespeare recitation. Either way, it captures everyone’s attention as your little icon lights up and alerts the entire conference as to who had to read for Romeo during English 9.

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Robotics Club Ventures Into New, Exciting 2020 Competition Season



STAFF PHOTO / Erin Li
Teams Lightning and Thunder doing their last-minute adjustments and testing before the scrimmage. Left to right - Anderson Hsiao, Jeremy Liao, Samuel Chou, Michael Peng, Alex Tong.

By Madeline Shin
STAFF WRITER

Competitions for the AHS Robotics Club have taken on a life of their own this year during the pandemic.

The club is made up of three teams, and they each build and program robots. These robots are made to perform at certain competitions, and the Robotics Club prepare their robots specifically for the FIRST Tech Challenge, or FTC. Team Lightning was expected to compete starting March 6, while team Hailstorm and Thunder are to start March 13. Unfortunately, the pandemic has caused the Robotics Club to go virtual and change the traditional formats of the FTC competition this year.

“Our competitions are now remote, which means that there is no such thing like piling on a bus and going to a different school,” said Abigail Chou, president of the Robotics Club. “We have to run our own matches.”

An important part of the FTC competitions were alliances, which required teams to partner up with another team by random selection. This pair would have to work together to score as many points as possible with their robots. Now, alliances are no longer part of the competition, so each team must use only one robot to score as many points as they can in a smaller playing field.

“Because of the pandemic, each team will be scor-

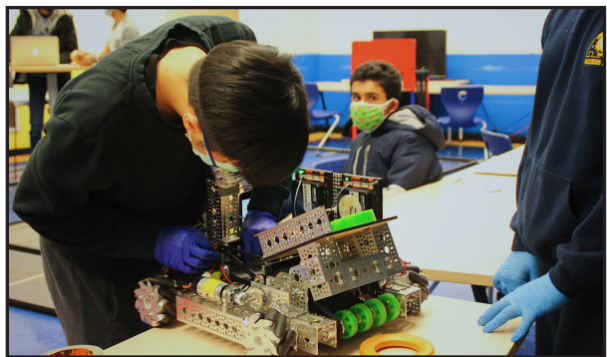
ing themselves this year, meaning everything will be by the honors system,” said Helina Dicoivitsky, a senior and leader of team Hailstorm. “We will still have to present our documentation to a panel of judges, but it will be over a Zoom meeting. Scores must be submitted in the designated time period in order to count.”

The teams are judged on their documentation process, how they built their robot, their robot design, factors such as community outreach and their robot’s performance. The judges are volunteers who have expertise in science and engineering, and they will look over the documentation to see how it compares to other teams and score from there.

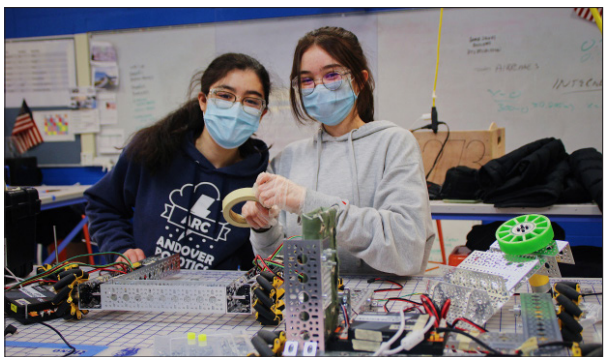
Moreover, having meetings virtually has affected the progress of building the robot to every member in the Robotics Club.

Angela Ngo, a senior and the co-vice president of Robotics Club, told ANDOVERVIEW that “it’s better when it’s in person, so that way I can be there to test the code as well on the robot. It’s also better because you get to interact with other people and actually understand what they’re trying to show and do rather than just having to struggle to show people what you’re working on through a screen.”

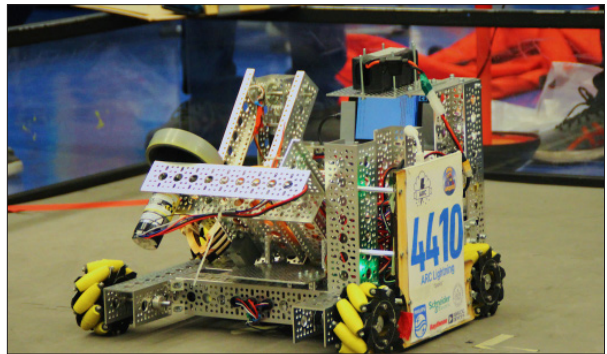
If one of the three teams of the Robotics Club gets through the FTC qualifying competition, they will make it into the Massachusetts State championships. After states, they may be able to proceed to one of the two world competitions in Texas or Michigan.



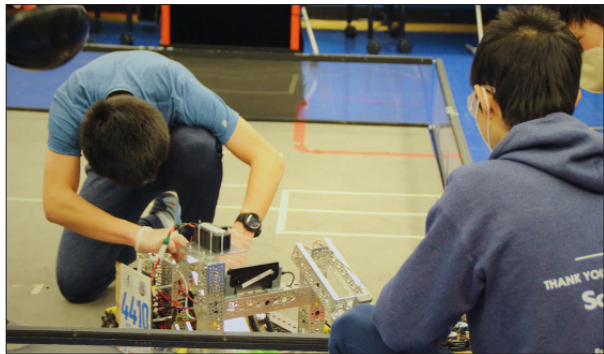
STAFF PHOTO / Erin Li
Anderson Hsiao, a senior and co-team leader of team Thunder adjusting their robot before the scrimmage.



STAFF PHOTO / Erin Li
Sophomore Sasha Dicoivitsky, right, and senior Lina Dicoivitsky, left, working on Hailstorm’s robot..



STAFF PHOTO / Erin Li
Team Lightning’s robot designed for this year’s Ultimate Goal challenge running on the field before the scrimmage on Friday, Feb. 5, 2021.



STAFF PHOTO / Erin Li
Freshman Jeremy Liao fixing Lightning’s robot while senior and team leader Michael Peng is testing it with a controller.

AHS Reflects on 2020 Experiences

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Many have also started preparing for college and the up and coming sports season. Senior Matthew Rigazio has been focusing on these specific topics, reflecting that he “got physically stronger, was named a captain for the Andover football team, and was accepted into some of [his] top schools for college.”

During this past year, many have been taking part in the act of self-reflection. This can be done by looking back at how you have behaved, what you have achieved, or how you have changed so far in your life. Some simple questions to activate self-reflection might include:

- 1) How has my personality changed?
- 2) What are some of my new strengths?
- 3) What have I learned about myself?
- 4) How has my behavior towards others grown?

Sophomore Avanthika Suryadevara has looked through the lens of self-reflection a lot this year.

“I’ve definitely learned a lot about myself, like that I’m not as much of an introvert as I thought,” she said. “I really do miss interacting with friends and classmates.”

This period is a great time to learn more about yourself and who you really are. Rigazio stated that his self-reflection “was really just focusing on minding [his] own business more and to think how [he] can help [his] community during these tough months.”

Self-improvement is another great thing to do during this time. This can be anything from working out to allowing yourself more free time for self-care and relaxation. Annika Christensen, a freshman, has valued this extra time.

“I get 30 minutes back in my day when I don’t have to take the bus to and from school,” she said, adding that “I’m able to free up my weekends and take time to even plan ahead and look at myself in a better light. I feel much happier now than before quarantine.”

Taking on new activities are great ways of getting through this time as well. It can help you distract yourself from the chaos outside and to actually enjoy this time we have at home. Christensen is in show choir, a cappella, and takes piano lessons from Mondays to Thursdays. These are great activities to take part in as music can be very calming and opening to many different kinds of people. It can bring a sense of community in this time of social distancing.

“Some activities I have done to keep me occupied are working out and watching a lot of TV with my mom,” Suryadevara said. These are both great because working out is great for your health, and TV with family is great for bonding. Khan has also taken part in music, much like Christensen. “I’ve been learning to play the keyboard and I can honestly say it has turned into something I do every day!” Khan told ANDOVERVIEW.

Now that we are at one year of quarantine and have many vaccines being distributed each day, the light at the end of this tunnel is coming into view. Even though it will take time and safety is still at top priority, many have started to hope for a bright conclusion to this school year. Many are imagining what it will be like to come out of this pandemic with new eyes. “I am looking forward to walking the hallways of the school with my friends, with no masks,” Suryadevara said.

The Class of 2021 is beginning to get excited for the conclusions of the year activities.

“I’m most looking forward to senior activities at the end of the year,” Rigazio said. “If the vaccine is distributed to the general public by then, I hope the school can put together a true, one last ‘hoorah’ for the class of 21’ that has already gone through so much.”

Writers note: I know this year has been difficult for many. People have lost loved ones, jobs, and multiple other important things. This year has been a roller coaster of emotions. Mental health has gone down. Stress has gone up. Hope has dwindled. This country has suffered a lot of tragedy, but a reminder; the light is at the end of the tunnel, and it is coming. If you are struggling, find someone to talk to. If you know someone who is struggling, remind them that you are there for them. It may not seem like it now, and I know personally this year is a huge challenge, but it will get better. Just reach out and someone will grab your hand and pull you to safety. We can get through this, and we will all get through this.

ARTS

A magical trip to Almost, Maine: Drama Guild Manages Show *Almost* Like Usual

By Alana MacKay-Kao
ARTS EDITOR

On a clear Friday evening, my mom and I sit down to appreciate the work of the Drama Guild in their latest production, *Almost, Maine*, a series of vignettes about love. I have just frantically grabbed an HDMI cable to plug my laptop into the TV, and my mom is carrying over some precariously balanced plates of homemade Indian food. I've just managed to turn the volume up as Susan Choquette's

principal actors only have one role but I have two. I also don't get to be on stage much if at all during rehearsal."

Junior Tessa Barcelo, who serves as one of the vice presidents of the Drama Guild along with junior Julia Kole, described rehearsals in more detail: "We started out doing a readthrough on Zoom with everyone, and then we started blocking rehearsals in person...The actors also did a lot of our own online rehearsing in between scheduled ones just to practice lines."

flying in from above the stage and smoothly fitting into the rest of the set like the last piece of a puzzle.

Organizing the tech crew was somewhat of a puzzle itself. "Crew was split down the middle into Cohorts, so Cohorts A and B didn't really see each other much until the first day of tech week," Lonie said. "It was a little harder to coordinate and the stage crew of [this] show is a little more chaotic than other shows."

Their hard work paid off though, and the Moose Paddy becomes the perfect place for an extremely awkward interaction between Sandrine and Jimmy (Zoe Saum and Ethan Pelt), exes who haven't talked to each other for quite some time. After the waitress (Kelsey Dennehy) mistakes them for a couple several times, they sit down and try to talk.

The awkwardness of that encounter is swiftly whisked away to make way for another scene, this time set inside a laundromat. Here we meet Steve (Anthony Merenda), who can't feel pain, and Marvalyn (Ava Vassilopoulos), who's stuck in an abusive relationship. As the characters talk, I realize that I haven't stopped to really admire the set itself.

The town of Almost has been brought to life by DiNino and fellow set designer, sophomore Abby Clement. From the washing machines behind Steve and Marvalyn

abelle Galgano) compare terrible date-night stories and lament feeling the need to date at all. Over at Echo Pond, a married couple, Phil (Gio Coppola) and Marci (Katie Budinger), have just finished skating. They grow increasingly frustrated with one another and hash out a fight that has clearly been building for a long time. Still later, a well-dressed woman named Hope (Aislinn Cantin) knocks on a small house's door, looking for somebody named Daniel so that she can answer a question he asked her years ago. The man who answers the door is played by Jack Gately. Dave (also played by Murray) and Rhonda (Caroline Pritchard) come into Rhonda's house from snowmobiling, and Dave gives her a painting that she tries to see the meaning of. We finally return to the bench we started at, with Pete and Ginette. Each of these pairs' stories play out one at a time, some ending tragically, some ending hilariously, some really just beginning.

As some of these adventures begin, the show comes to a close and the actors take their bows. I can't help but think back to something that Barcelo said when asked what her favorite part of preparing a show was. "I think it's probably the final dress rehearsal with all the lights and the sets and the costumes and the knowledge that to-



STAFF PHOTO / Erin Li

Ethan Pelt (left) playing Jimmy and Zoe Saum (right) playing Sandrine, exes who run into each other in the Moose Paddy.

voice floats through the speakers, welcoming us to the show. She tells us what we're about to see is live, not recorded, and explains the show is a story about our connections with other people--something we'll never take for granted again.

As the first scene opens, I recognize Cole Gervais, who plays Pete, and Abinaya Ganesh, who plays Ginette. Masks and all. They immediately rope us into their characters' story, one of a couple in a long-distance relationship who have just met up in person. Ginette happily talks about how they're as close as they possibly could be (ironic considering the actors are still socially distancing, sitting on the ends of a very long bench).

Pete tells her that they're also as far as they could possibly be since, on their other side, the entire circumference of the Earth is between them. Ginette gets upset and walks away, and the camera pans out, leaving Pete in the middle of an enormous stage, overwhelmingly alone. The scene is beautiful, but as I take my first bite of dinner, I can't help but think of the many understudies who, even though they worked so hard, are also sitting alone in the Collins Center seats, out of the spotlight.

They have had to memorize their scenes in the event that one of the principal actors is quarantined. Junior Anya Lazar, the understudy for both Pete and Steve, described some of the challenges that come with being an understudy: "Most

Barcelo is also the principal actor for Glory, who is standing in the middle of the stage as the lights come up for the start of scene two. She is a hiker on a quest to see the northern lights who's found the perfect field, time of year, and latitude for it. Soon enough, another character named East, played by senior Connor Murray, comes out of a house sitting off to the side. It turns out that the wonderful open field Glory is standing in happens to be East's yard.

While the actors on stage discuss whether or not Glory should be allowed to stay in East's yard and why she wants to see the lights in the first place, members of the stage crew have been preparing for the next scene change. The stage manager, senior Sarah Oltman, oversees the whole show from the booth and calls cues to Kai Lonie, senior and head of stage left, and Grayson DiNino, junior and head of stage right. They let their crew know when exactly to place and strike (take down) set pieces as scenes change. Their seamless cooperation and constant communication is the whole reason the audience can stay immersed in the small fictional town of Almost, Maine, and the stories of the people there.

As Glory and East's scene comes to an end, we're almost immediately pulled into the local hangout, the Moose Paddy, with the sign that marks the building



STAFF PHOTO / Erin Li

Steve (left, played by Anthony Merenda) showing his list of things to be afraid of to Marvalyn (right, played by Ava Vassilopoulos).

to the curtain of glowing stars that serves as the backdrop, all of the scenes together are cohesive, definitely feeling like they take place in the same town. But none of the settings are repetitive--each clearly accompanies its own unique love story.

We are then brought into the living room of Lendall (also played by Pelt), where Gayle (Julia Kole) bursts into his house and demands that he return all of the love she gave him. Later, outside, Deena (Sophia Yannalfo) and Shelly (Is-

morrow night, there will be people there," she had said.

Although the pandemic has taken the roaring crowds out of the Collins Center and deposited us on our couches, I hope that all of the people involved in making this show can feel the cheering from us through the screen as my mom and I jump up and scream, applauding thunderously. Despite the circumstances, the Drama Guild has done it again, they've created magic. And it's *Almost* like we were in the room to experience it.

SPORTS

Student-Athletes Make Big College Commitments



STAFF PHOTO / Erin Li
Captain Kayla DiBenedetto warms up before track practice. DiBenedetto has committed to Brandeis for the fall.

OTHER STUDENT ATHLETES WHO HAVE COMMITTED

AJ Heidtke
Sport: Football
Committed to: Brown University

Ashley Smith
Sport: Soccer
Committed to: Assumption University

Ben Entner
Sport: Football
Committed to: Colby College

Anthony Teberio
Sport: Baseball
Committed to: Wheaton College

Ryan Grecco
Sport: Baseball
Committed to: Colby College

By Camille Storch
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

At Andover High School, we have a strong athletic program that has been formatted for each athlete to learn, practice, and play hard, under the coaching of former elite athletes themselves. With around 10 Division 1 sports offered, students have the ability to grow as athletes, while also developing long-lasting friendships and team building skills along the way. According to an NCAA study, only a little more than 6 percent of athletes who played a sport in high school go on to play in college. For this select group of athletes below, college commitments are a big step and the time to celebrate and be recognized is now.

Paige Gillette
Field Hockey
Committed to: Assumption University

Since freshman year, Gillette has played sports for each season: Field hockey in the fall, basketball in the winter, and softball in the spring. Her favorite part about her field hockey experience at AHS was “winning the North title, junior year, with [her] teammates.” Gillette played goalkeeper, helping lead the team to the Division 1 North final in the 2019-20 season, as well as being on the varsity girls basketball team that went to the State Finals last March at TD Garden. Gillette is most looking forward to a “high level of competition and continuing to be on a team.” In addition to being recognized by AHS as a top performing goalkeeper and leader, Gillette has been chosen two years in a row as both a Boston Herald All-Scholastic and Boston Globe All-Scholastic, an impressive accomplishment that few reach in their high school athletic career.

Amanda Smith
Sport: Soccer
Committed to: Suffolk University

Smith has been playing soccer in Andover for more than 12 years and has met her best friends through the sport, gaining powerful soccer skills along the way. Smith is most looking forward to “a more intense atmosphere and more knowledge of the game.” As a college athlete, Smith is excited for the opportunity to travel to other schools and visit new areas outside of New England. She is also enthusiastic at the prospect of playing under Ashley Van Vechten, her new coach, who was one

of the most decorated players in Division III women’s soccer. Throughout her high school soccer career, Smith’s motto throughout her high school soccer career has been “hard work pays off in the long run.”

Kayla DiBenedetto
Sport: Track
Committed to: Brandeis University

DiBenedetto has been on the track and field team for the past four years at AHS. Even though track is an individual sport, her favorite aspect of the program has been the family dynamic, as each teammate supports one another and encourages each other as a group. For DiBenedetto, team traditions will also be a missed moment, especially the “pasta dinners and chicken and waffles in Boston post MVC’s in the winter.” During freshman year, she played basketball, but struggled with a knee injury that continued to worsen throughout the season. The following spring, however, she was able to run track and that didn’t bother her injury as much. From this experience, the ultimate decision was made to stick with track, being the best for her body and health. At the collegiate level, DiBenedetto is excited to continue with that team dynamic that was ever so present at AHS. “Since my track experience was cut short here as a result of the virus, I am excited to still have a lot of time to improve and compete,” she said. For the 800 meter race, DiBenedetto ran a 2:25, along with running a 3:11 in the 1000 meter race, both notable times.

Tatum Shaw
Sport: Basketball
Committed to: Southern New Hampshire University

Throughout her four years of playing for the Andover Lady Warriors, Shaw has broken school records at AHS, including most recently joining the small group of athletes to score more than 1,000 points. While Shaw has been a star player since freshman year, she has been putting up hoops for the past ten years, starting out at Our Lady of Good Counsel in Methuen at age 7, and now going on to play at a Division II university. In addition to reaching 1,000 points this past season, Shaw put up a record high of 38 points in one game, a lofty accomplishment. Volleyball was another sport pursued by Shaw, but she referred to it as a “just for fun” sport,

not as serious as basketball. Some of her best friends have been made from these teams, and she added that “there is no other feeling than the Jungle coming to your games and cheering you on.” The competition and schedule are equally exciting for Shaw looking forward to the future, as she concluded that she can’t wait to play “and make memories almost year round with people who are equally committed to the sport.”

Aidan Ritter
Sport: Baseball
Committed to: Endicott College

Since kindergarten, Ritter has enjoyed and thrived in his experience with baseball along with building up a tremendous amount of skill with the sport over the past 13 years to be able to play next year at the collegiate level. Ritter loved meeting and spending time with his teammates throughout the season along with learning valuable lessons from his coaches. Although Ritter has played football throughout high school, “baseball seemed like a safer sport and is [his] main sport.” In addition to playing at AHS, Ritter has played club baseball through Show New England for many years, serving as additional practice and competition. Ritter is most looking forward to travelling and getting better at baseball, along with simply learning new things at Endicott, located conveniently in Beverly, Massachusetts.

Ashley Kendrigan
Sport: Soccer
Committed to: Stonehill College

Kendrigan has played soccer for the past 13 years and was a leading force of the 2019 MVC Championship team, along with playing in the MIAA North Division 1 Finals. Running varsity in both winter and spring, Kendrigan has also been a powerful force on the AHS track and field team. Yet, Kendrigan has “played soccer every year since kindergarten, and [she] also plays club soccer, so playing in college has always been a goal.” Along with playing for four years at AHS, Kendrigan has played on the New England Football Club’s DPL team, a selective club team consisting of top players from all over New England. When asked what she is most looking forward to, Kendrigan concluded with “working with college-level teammates and coaches to learn and improve my game, and help contribute to my team’s success.”

MVC Championship Recap: From Final Win to Plot Twist Season End

By Camille Storch
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Over February vacation, five AHS varsity sports competed for the Merrimack Valley Championship in a hard fought battle to defend previous titles and achieve new ones.

Gymnastics (Won, 141.25-137.75)

The AHS gymnastics team won against North Andover 141.35-137.75, led by freshman duo Gabby Bresnick and Molly Foster. Foster placed highest in the beam, scoring a 9.2, while Bresnick placed second in vault and bars, 9.35 and 9.05 respectively. North Andover has a powerful All-Star athlete, Kasey Burke, who won the all around, vault, bars, and floor, yet Andover was able to work together as a team to finish on top.

Boys Basketball (Lost, 39-37)

The Warriors faced off against rival Central Catholic in a highly competitive and anticipated game that ended in a two-point deficit. The game remained close

throughout the first three quarters and was tied 36-36 with two minutes to go. From here, Central just barely escaped with the win, allowing them to receive their first MVC Division 1 Cup. The Warriors ended their season 11-1, led by longtime coach Dave Fazio.

Girls Basketball (Lost, 36-33 OT)

The Lady Warriors also faced longtime rival Central Catholic for the second time this season. The Warriors had a successful season, winning nine games and only losing three, including this championship game. Last season, the Warriors trekked their way through the playoffs all the way to the state championship game, played at local arenas such as the Tsongas Center and TD Garden, and made a statement by making it to the MVC championship game yet again. The Raiders were led by breakout star freshman Ashley Dinges, who scored the final three points resulting in their win. The Warriors were led by senior guard Tatum Shaw, and sophomores Amelia Hanscom and Anna Foley.

Boys Hockey (Lost, 3-2)

The Warriors took the lead in an intense game against Chelmsford, with senior Ryan O’Sullivan making a goal in the first period to get Andover off on a good foot. Chelmsford made a statement in return, with the Lions scoring three consecutive goals from senior players. Andover made an attempt to close it out, with senior Steve Ingram making it 3-2, but they were unable to overcome Chelmsford, ending their season 2-5-1.

Girls Hockey (Lost, 3-2)

The girls varsity hockey team lost in a hard-fought battle against Billerica/Chelmsford, ending their season 8-4-1. The team got the opportunity to play at the Tsongas Center on February 21, and scored within the first four minutes, junior Jaqui Haney putting the first point on the board. Billerica/Chelmsford immediately struck back and the game took off from there, a back and forth exchange that lasted until the very end. Senior Kalli Archambault scored within the last three minutes, but the team was not able to score again to overcome Chelmsford.

Creation of C3 Committee Helps Educate AHS

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In this case, the “community” is our school, AHS, and the members are all of the students, teachers, and staff who are consistently in the school environment. It is not only the role of the administration and faculty to make AHS a comfortable place for students to feel safe and acknowledged, but it is also a responsibility of a student, as the term diversity applies to the entire community.

As a nation, we have suffered, and are still suffering, with discrimination against specific races, people who choose to express themselves through a different gender, and more.

On February 23, 2020, Ahmaud Arbery, was jogging in his neighborhood in Georgia, when he was followed by three white residents who then proceeded to confront and fatally shoot Arbery.

On March 13, 2020, Breonna Taylor was shot in her own Kentucky home after police forced entry into her home as part of a drug-investigation search, firing 32 shots, six which proved to be fatal for Taylor.

On May 25, 2020 in Minnesota, George Floyd was brutally murdered by a police officer, after the officer knelt on Floyd’s neck for approximately 8 minutes and 26 seconds after arresting him, even despite attempts from Floyd to tell the officer that he could not breathe.

There are so many other innocent lives that were taken from their families due to racist ideologies that stem from Christopher Columbus and the discovery of America. Each year, the United States makes progress in addressing such a crucial issue of basic morality and equality, an issue that was part of the foundation of the creation of the USA itself.

Quotes such as “We can’t move forward without recognizing the past” and “Acknowledge your past to establish a starting point” can be leading mottos to keep in mind as we, our community at AHS, continue to make sure that we are creating a safe and accepting environment at our school, for all members of our community.

Dr. Jorge Allen is the advisor to the diversity club, “an issue driven club, not based on any group, ethnicity, or race.” He said, “It is a group of students that are equally interested in advocating and doing the work for diversity and inclusion at the high school.” At AHS, there are various affinity clubs, such as Amigos Unidos and the Asian American club, where students of similar ethnic backgrounds can come together after school and get to connect with those who might be experiencing similar situations.

While Allen is proud of the progress that Andover, as a town, has made with cultural diversity and overall inclusion/acknowledgement, he knows there is still a lot of headway that must be made.

“As a community, we have to find ways to have students that are not the majority to feel safe to express themselves as who they are,” Allen said. “We [also] need the students of the majority to make sure that they don’t send messages intentionally or unintentionally that make other groups feel excluded.” He added that he also believes students who feel they are underrepresented need to be able to look and seek out ways they are represented at AHS.

Andover junior Abby Buckley echoed this statement, adding that “every student is responsible to make everyone feel heard and welcome because if everyone were the same, we would live in an extremely boring world, so instead, we must embrace our differences.” She continued with stressing the

importance of not excluding someone because of their differences but rather accept them for that and celebrate them for that.

“How can we ensure that we are representing in a fair way the different

Brown told ANDOVERVIEW. “I think I love that there are a lot of students with different backgrounds and different cultures working together for some common good, and you can see that a lot in clubs, sports—everyone is working



STAFF PHOTO/ Erin Li

“Every student is responsible to make everyone feel heard and welcome because if everyone were the same, we would live in an extremely boring world, so instead, we must embrace our differences.”

- Abby Buckley, junior

views and experiences of our members of the community and that we are not only showcasing just a majority perspective?” Allen asked, and used himself as an example: “If I see myself honored or acknowledged, [then] I feel like I belong in the school, [yet] if I see that my school doesn’t even mention my identity, then I become invisible in performance, celebrations, then I feel like I don’t belong.”

“The question of how a high school approaches diversity and wrapping their arms around it is a question I’ve been asking myself as assistant principal and principal,” stated new Principal Caitlin Brown. “What are areas in which we can support and recognize, help students get involved? It’s not just what I think it should look like, it’s more

together.”

In the 2018-2019 school year, Andover High partnered with a local group called VISIONS, who

helped facilitate a round-table survey of how students of different backgrounds, sexual orientations, and gender identities felt about how they were represented, acknowledged, and treated at AHS.

Based on the results of this survey, the administrators saw that there was a true problem, one that needed to be addressed immediately. The results of the survey were put into professional development for teachers, in hopes that being able to further educate teachers, the teachers could extend this education to their students and be more aware of



STAFF PHOTO/ Erin Li

“My first year I think we had three kids in the club, and they were all allies, who were there to support a friend, who wasn’t even coming consistently. Now nine years later, on an average week, pre-pandemic, when we were physically gathering still, we had between 25 and 30 kids per week,”

- Caitlin Mitchell, Co-advisor of GSA

reflective of our student body and our community.”

Brown is proud of the progress that Andover has made, and she wants to be able to find ways to celebrate diversity and our student body, even in the times of COVID. “One of the things I love about Andover is its diversity,”

how to ensure a safe environment for all.

An additional step was taken by the administration following the results of the survey. This step was the creation of the C3 committee. The C3 was first created at an administrative level, with Dr. Allen and several faculty members

from the high school, including Mitchell, Adrienne Bach, Caitlin Brown, and Aixa de Kelley. Allen and Bach were placed in the social emotional group, and decided to continue the discussion of that initiative and create a committee to speak on issues of race and cultural differences in the community. It began in the Central Office, and has now developed into programs at each individual school.

The committee size and work varies school to school, but they all share the commonality of working for their respective principal, helping to guide administration on racial inclusion by giving recommendations based on research, holding cultural events, hosting speakers, and more.

Andrea Famiglietti, an ESL teacher at Bancroft Elementary School, learned about the committee through an email sent out from the district, asking for teacher volunteers to help get the initiative started at the individual schools.

“The main goal is to address issues around the C3 areas such as looking at increased hiring of people with different backgrounds, looking at curriculum assessment, and more,” Famiglietti said. “[The committee] just wants to be supportive when issues due come up around diversity and inclusion in general.”

“For elementary school, we plan a lot of activities and events to build awareness around different cultures and people of different backgrounds,” she said. The principal at Bancroft recently put together a holiday celebration for which students used Flipgrid, an online interactive video service. Rather than focusing specifically on Christmas, the students were able to record a video, with or without other family members, to share their December holiday traditions. Anyone who wanted to share and participate could share.

“We’ve done things around Chinese New Year, with students making red envelopes as a class activity and then sharing with a buddy-classroom,” Famiglietti told ANDOVERVIEW. “Our C3, in January, we will be doing a day of service, where our students do some sort of volunteer project on Martin Luther King day. They can write letters to the Atria Marland Place [assisted living home], do some sort of donation somewhere, artwork—we are really trying to get the kids more involved in building community with each other.”

Bancroft also holds a Heritage Night, where kids have an opportunity to share where they are from, have a presentation board, and showcase some of their cultural foods, games, traditions, clothing, and anything else they want to add.

Having these various events to allow students to express themselves and get to talk openly about their heritage or even just important people in their lives who have influenced them is important. Again, it all revolves around acknowledgment.

This acknowledgement is an important piece in solving this puzzle. In order to even start finding materials to educate others and starting discussions in classrooms, everyone has to be able to acknowledge that there is a problem. If you cannot acknowledge that your room is messy and filled with junk, it will just continue to pile up and become even harder to pull back together. Whereas if you are able to notice and acknowledge the mess, you are able to organize and clean your room in a much more efficient fashion. If people across the world aren’t able to acknowledge diversity and recognize their peers and total strangers as all equal human

Senioritis Silently Sabotages School Year

By Olivia Janasik
STAFF WRITER

Without social interaction and face to face contact with their peers and teachers, seniors at AHS feel as though their mental health has declined as the unusual switch from in-person school to remote learning becomes the “new normal.”

According to a survey, taken by over 300 AHS seniors, the average answer for a student’s motivation on a scale from one to ten was at a two, due to their lack of social interaction and in-school experience. Many feel as though their mental health has lost priority, and without being able to spend time with friends, they find it harder to relax.

Senior Ben Entner said, “This school year has definitely been one of the hardest in my life in terms of getting motivation; every day feels longer than the last and I’m never certain if I’m going to be remote or hybrid the next day.”

Another senior, Mila Mejia agrees. “I’ve recently just been so unmotivated and remote learning makes it so much easier to slack off,” said Mejia.

So how do these seniors get up in the morning? With nothing to look forward to, uncertainty regarding prom and graduation, and none of the usual fun senior activities, “senioritis” has become a much bigger issue in these students’ lives. Both seniors Cale Flatley and Emma Wiltshire agree that the only things getting them out of bed in the morning are “keeping good grades for colleges” and their fear of failure.

“My alarm clock gets me out of bed in the morning” said Lizzie Jones, “without it I don’t think I’d ever make it to class on time.” The lack of motivation is clear throughout most students. While they still continue to strive for good grades, staying motivated is hard without anything to look forward to.

Along with their lack of motivation,

seniors agree that their mental health has been negatively affected throughout this school year. “My mental health has definitely lost priority, unfortunately. With online school and struggling to keep motivated, it’s difficult to find time

as often as we did before to distract and distance ourselves from school. Not seeing anyone in person and lacking social interaction has also negatively impacted my mental health and having to spend so much time with my family has been

friends and socialize is a big issue and I think many others can relate.”

“I was looking forward to a senior year, all the activities and fun memories I’d be making, but now it just seems like I’m dreading every day more than the last,” said Lizzie Jones. “I’m just looking forward to graduation and college next year.”

Wiltshire agrees adding that, “People have always said junior year is the hardest and senior year is fun, but to me they’ve been pretty much the same because we can’t do anything”.

Guidance counselor, Edward Abbott empathizes with them. “I feel for the seniors this year. Going into high school, they couldn’t have imagined a pandemic happening in a few years, and how it would affect them-- their classes, senior activities, post-high school planning, social connections and personally. While they’re trying to maintain their connections to school, extracurriculars and with others, it’s obviously not the same and it’s emotionally challenging. I also believe that they will get through it all, and take something meaningful from this entire experience.”

Although this situation is hard enough, and students are constantly dealing with uncertainty and Covid-19 through it all, it’s important for us to keep our heads up and face the future. “If there is any advice I would give to the rest of the students at Andover High, it would be to think ahead. Your future self will thank you for doing your work,” said Grenon. “It’s easier to get it over with than to wait until it all piles up. I know it can be hard to start but find someone who will hold you accountable for doing your work and stay on track as best you can.”

“We are halfway through with this school year, end it on a good note and hopefully it’ll be a better one next year!” added Wiltshire.

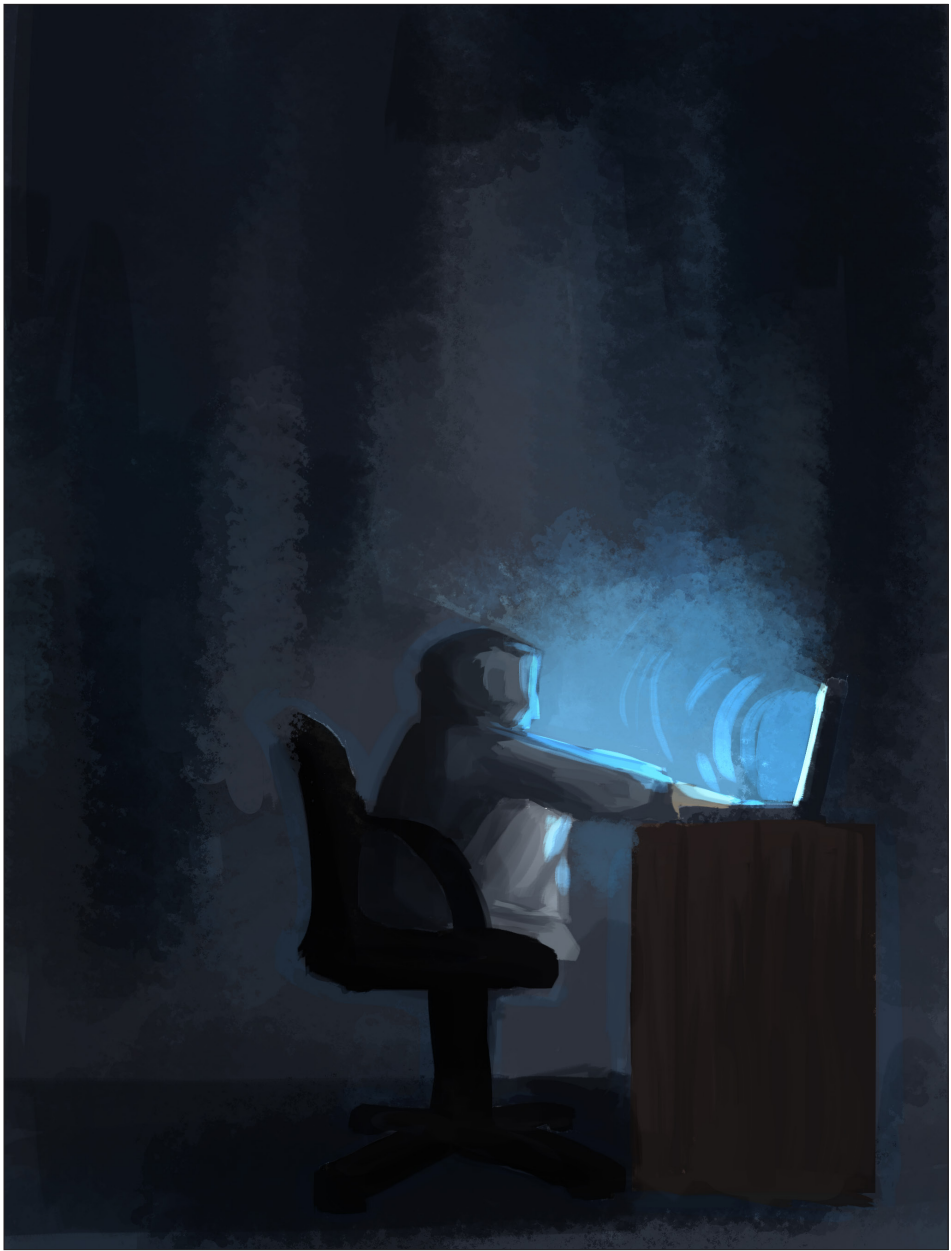


ILLUSTRATION / Alana MacKay-Kao

for myself outside of vacations. I feel a lot more stressed even on weekends, especially since we don’t have sports

difficult,” said senior, Alex Grenon. Wiltshire agreed, adding, “For me personally, not being able to see my

Former Andover Student Shares Experience With Racism

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beings, the issue will continue to pile up and become even harder to detangle.

When asked for an overall impression of diversity at AHS, members of the community had differing opinions along with various interpretations of the term diversity.

“Andover as a whole is not that diverse of a place, if you’re talking racially,” said junior Courtney Duffy. “At the high school, though, you can see that our student body is definitely really diverse in terms of socially, there are so many different kinds of people, people with different interests...our amount of clubs and extracurricular programs, there is definitely social diversity, but in the traditional sense, Andover is a predominately white town, and that is noticed at the high school level.”

Mitchell spoke to the advancement in acknowledgment of the LBGTQ+ community, with her perspective as the faculty advisor of the GSA. “My first year I think we had three kids in the club, and they were all allies, who were there to support a friend, who wasn’t even coming consistently. Now nine years later, on an average week, pre-pandemic, when we were physically gathering still, we had between 25 and 30 kids per week,” recalled Mitchell. She believes that great strides have been taken in terms of gender and sexual orientation, but there is still a lot of work to be done with making sure students of color feel there are valued members of our community.

Holly Ross, a current senior at Greater Lawrence Technical High School, has had a tough experience with Andover Public Schools; a biracial student, she experienced discrimination as early as elementary school. “After middle school, I went to Greater Lawrence so that I could be around people [from whom] I didn’t feel like I had to hide my true self,” reflected

Ross. She believes that there needs to be change within not just the students, but the adults and members of the community. She acknowledged that this discrimination was definitely not from all of the students and staff, but it was prominent enough to consistently feel uncomfortable when going to school.

“When I was little, I used to wear braids for protective hair style,” recalled Ross. “My dad would braid my hair, and classmates were always constantly coming up, touching my hair, touching the beads in my hair, and it was just annoying, and I eventually stopped wearing them because it was too much attention for something that was part of who I was.” Ross said this was confusing to her younger self, as another girl would wear fishtail braids, but no one would be going up and grabbing at her braids.

Ross said she believes that before the killing of George Floyd, people in this area really were not educated on what privilege is. Now, she asserted, people know what privilege is, and are able to recognize and acknowledge it.

Student Abby Buckley reaffirmed this statement, adding, “I think people really need to do a better job of addressing that a lot of people in our town have privilege and people need to acknowledge that in order to make a change.”

“I think talking about [racism] a lot more, instead of ignoring the whole fact, talking about it needs to be done,” stated Ross. “White washing history, in general, does not help. People say, well, that was 400 years ago, just because it was 400 years ago doesn’t mean that it’s any better.”

Ross’s experience in elementary and middle school was filled with positive memories, but unfortunately, the negative memories overpowered. When the topic of slavery was first introduced in history class, everyone’s head would swivel and looked directly at Ross

and the one other girl of color in the classroom. Every-time slavery was brought up, the teacher would look directly at these two girls, expectantly, as just because of the color of their skin, they would have the answer to his questions on slavery. “It was normalized,” said Ross. “I knew it was wrong, but me and the other girl we talked about it a lot.... It’s definitely normalized and it shouldn’t be.”

In seventh grade, Ross was in science class at West Middle, going through a textbook, when a classmate pointed at an image of cotton in the book and said, “Holly, go pick that cotton.”

“I wasn’t even fazed by it,” reflected Ross. “It happened so often, that I just ignored him, which led to him to bully other people of color in my class, as he was so intent on getting a reaction out of one of us.”

Ross hopes that her younger sister, who is currently in middle school in Andover, will have a different experience. In the first grade, her younger sister was repeatedly teased and bullied for the color of her skin, leading the sister to kick the boy who taunted her. In the end, the sister was the one deemed “in trouble” by the teacher and principal, with no repercussions for the boy.

“Voices are being dulled and nobody can get their voice out,” concluded Ross. “We need to educate ourselves and make a change now.”

Junior Courtney Duffy contributed a solid point that you never truly know what’s going on with someone at home, or what they face in everyday life. “I think that all students should work on educating themselves, and just becoming aware that for minorities in this country, little things add up over time,” Duffy said. b

Buckley believes that “we shouldn’t exclude someone because of their differences but rather accept them for that and celebrate them for that.”