

THE COMMUNICATOR MAGAZINE

VOL. 46 EDITION 5, JUNE 2020



Senior Edition



About the Cover

COVER BY ATTICUS DEWEY

Featured on the cover is the class of 2020: funny, kind, dedicated and strong. While we normally capture the photos of seniors doing wild poses in a makeshift photo studio located somewhere in the school, this year's COVID-19 restrictions obviously prevented us from doing this. That being said, we still wanted to feature all the seniors showcasing their distinct personalities somewhere on our cover, so we partnered with the yearbook in order to collect all the Student ID photos taken at the beginning of the year. We hope this edition honors the senior class of 2020 with the joy, excitement and respect they have given this school the past four years.

THE COMMUNICATOR MAGAZINE

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Letter from the Editors

Dear Readers,

(We apologize in advance for this) Despite our 2020 vision, we did not see this one coming. (Alright, we're done and you can't say we didn't warn you.)

On a much more serious note, although we would have liked to say that our final production of The Communicator was filled with '80s music, Tracy's magical cookies — even though she claims it's a back-of-the-bag recipe — and staying at Community High School late through the night into the next morning, this simply wasn't the case. Instead we had countless Zoom calls and our significantly worse cookies that were actually the back-of-the-bag recipes. We don't need to tell you how earth-shattering COVID-19 is or how it has turned our world on its head. The virus has taken so much away from us: prom, forum day, field day and graduation. And we know those aren't the true losses of COVID-19 but that doesn't mean they don't hurt.

We had a meeting soon after school was officially cancelled for the year to answer one question: what's next? We felt like we had to do something. For ourselves, for the school, but especially for the seniors. We recognize that this senior edition of The Communicator cannot make up for those lost memories, but we hope it can be something special. In the past the senior edition of The Communicator would highlight some seniors but also other things going on, there would be a handful of profiles and the iconic senior map. We know, we know, don't try to fix what's not broken, and after last year's senior edition won awards at the national convention, it was quite the opposite of broken. But our world was broken. Our hearts are shattered that we didn't have a proper senior send-off, so we had to change something. The number of non-senior focused articles was reduced to a quarter of what it was. We increased the senior profiles by 700% and don't have a single regret about it. As you go through the edition, it may seem a bit repetitive with over 56 profiles but we encourage you to look past the consistencies and see the differences. Because behind every one of those senior profiles, there is a senior who never got to walk in their graduation, say goodbye to their friends or hug their teachers.

The end of high school should be magical and celebrated, and though the world right now and the end of our high school looks far from ordinary, we hope this edition can provide a bit of that magic and celebration — because class of 2020, you deserve it.

It's been an honor being your Editors-in-Chief. We are leaving you in good hands.

Your senior editors,



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Mission Statement: The Communicator is a student-run publication and an open forum established in 1974 and created by students at Community High School. The staff of The Communicator seeks to recognize individuals, events, and ideas that are relevant to the community. The Communicator journalists are committed to working in a manner that is professional, unbiased, and thorough in order to effectively serve our readers. We strive to report accurately and will correct any significant error. If you believe such an error has been made, please contact us. Letters of any length should be submitted via e-mail or mail. They become the sole property of The Communicator and can be edited for length, clarity, or accuracy. Letters cannot be returned and will be published at The Communicator's discretion. The Communicator also reserves the right to reject advertising due to space limitations or decision of the Editorial Board that content of the advertisement conflicts with the mission of the publication. Opinions expressed in this publication are those of the journalism staff and not of Community High School or the Ann Arbor Public Schools.



Photography By Ebba Gurney

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Playlist | Podcasts | Artist Profiles | & More*

"Play every game like your last"

takes on a new meaning with spring sports sidelined

A mentality preached and practiced by coaches and players alike has novel implications for graduating high school athletes.

BY NOAH BERNSTEIN





On Feb. 22, Shea O'Brien, a CHS senior, shuffled off the ice with his shoulder sagging out of its socket; this was not how he had expected his last home hockey game to end. Two and a half weeks later, Michigan confirmed its first two cases of COVID-19. And two days after the virus had officially arrived in the state, O'Brien learned that his baseball career might end in an even more unpredictable fashion than his hockey career had.

O'Brien, captain of both the baseball and hockey teams for Skyline High School (SHS), has always identified as an athlete; his father played hockey at the University of Notre Dame and his mother played softball. Instead of pressure, his parents extended guidance and freedom as he matured as an athlete.

"My parents were never wicked hard on me," O'Brien said. "They always wanted me to enjoy the game on my own terms. I was always harder on myself than they ever were on me."

That driven mentality was sparked, in part, by his grandfather.

"When I was in third or fourth grade, I would sit in the car on the way to my hockey tournaments, and my grandpa would lean over and say to me, 'Shea, you've only got so many so many games left,'" O'Brien said. "The average nine year old would have

"My grandpa leaned over and said ''Shea, you've only got so many games left.' The average nine-year-old would have shrugged it off. But I remember totally taking that to heart."

shrugged it off. But I remember totally taking that to heart."

After he dislocated his right shoulder during his hockey team's senior night, O'Brien was told he could finish the season with one contingency: he risked never being able to throw a baseball again.

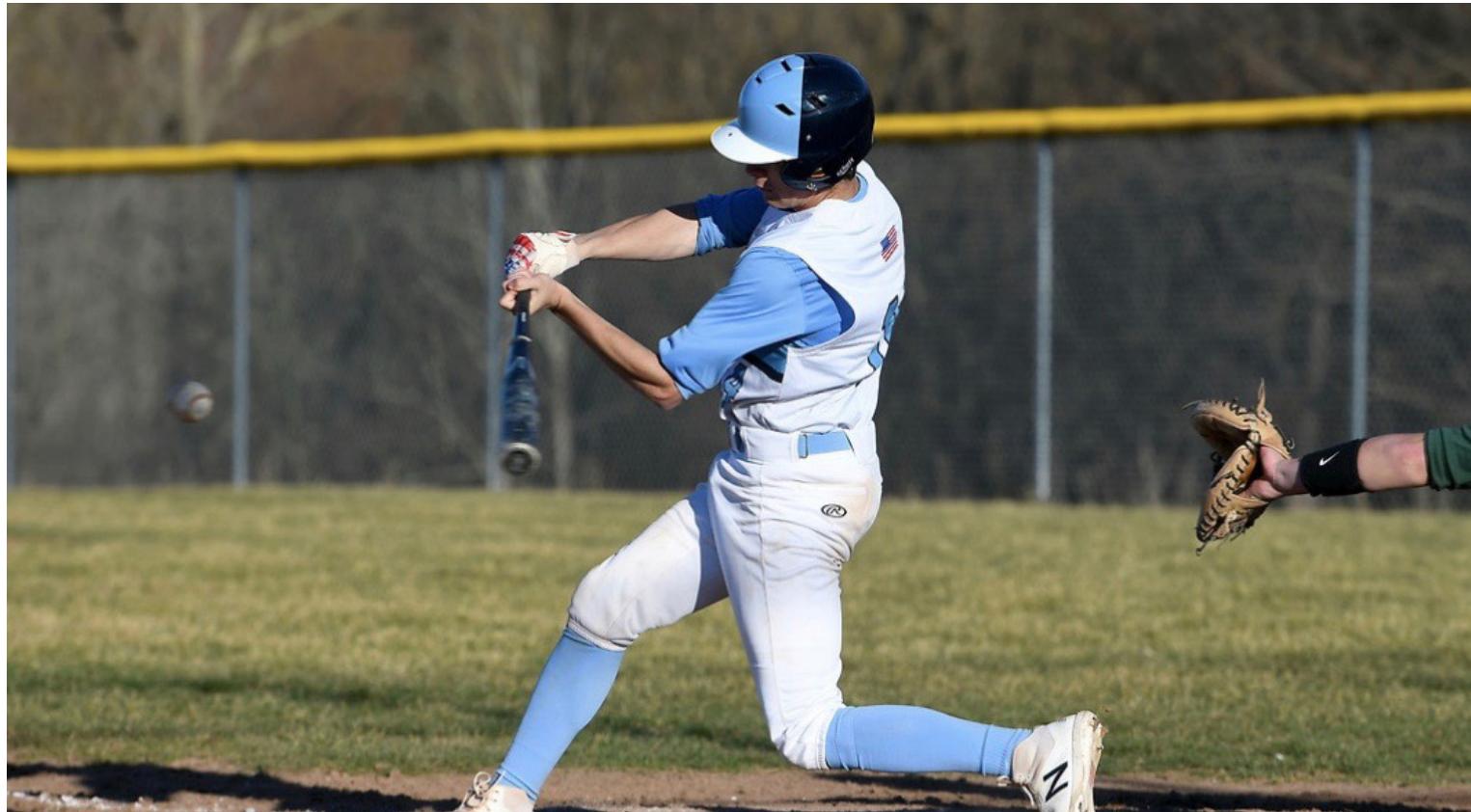
"I am a huge baseball guy," O'Brien said. "I was honestly a much better baseball player than I was a hockey player."

In the first round of the state playoffs, O'Brien and the Skyline Eagles faced Trenton High School, the eventual division two state champions.

"At the end of the day, I told [the doctor] to wrap me up with a million pounds of the tape and a bunch of other stuff, and toss me onto the ice," O'Brien said as he smiled, showing off his missing front tooth.

Skyline played Trenton close the entire game, eventually losing three to one. But at least O'Brien felt a sense of relief that he had done everything in his power to lead his team to a victory.

"If it ended with me in the stands, or on the bench, or me not wearing my jersey, and then COVID-19 later took my baseball season, I would not have been able to live with myself," O'Brien said. "I actually still can't throw, but I don't regret it. I totally made the right decision."



Leading up to his baseball tryouts, cancelling the season because of COVID-19 was a joke in the program; nobody thought it would happen. The coaches had just made final cuts the day before the season was initially postponed.

"I was going to have a captain's meeting with the coach the next day to discuss the coach's vision for this season," O'Brien said. "And all of a sudden, it was cancelled."

On March 13, Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer ordered all K-12 schools and their athletic programs to temporarily suspend operations.

"It all happened so quick," O'Brien said. "I was all-conference last year, and I was gunning for all-state this year. I wanted to do big things. We had a good team."

Reminiscing, O'Brien remarked that although he was sad his baseball career is most likely over, it gave him closure that he could not recall a single high school game where he did not leave it all on the field.

Even though the high school spring season is officially cancelled, depending on the circumstances, an intra-city tournament between Pioneer, Skyline, Huron and Greenhills is in the works for late July or August.

"I know the entire class of 2020 deserves a graduation, a prom and all those senior send-off moments," O'Brien said. "To me,

and a lot of other athletes, your senior baseball season, your senior night and your final playoff game means far more than those school events. I really hope a tournament this summer could capture some of that magic."

With hopes that the tournament does take place, O'Brien is making sure he will be ready to go. He has been making do with dumbbells, a pull up bar, pushups and running. However, he admits he has been slackening on his shoulder rehab.

As the entire athletic community is infected with uncertainty, youth sports — an estimated \$19 billion industry — stands shuttered and on the sidelines. Many high school seniors had their last season taken from them before it even started. Coaches are holding virtual practices, and athletes are training with only one thing they can unconditionally rely upon: the next time they compete, it will not be the same.

"Our senior class is devastated to lose the opportunity to play ball this season," O'Brien said. "To say we are chomping at the bit to get it back is an understatement. Even if we can't finish our season, I know that the underclassmen are going to come out with a refreshed meaning of what it means to compete."

"Playing behind the dish and controlling the game is a high for me," O'Brien said.

"Every pitch I call, every runner I throw out, coming up to bat with the game on the line or blocking a curveball in the dirt to stop the winning runner — it's all magical. Those big moments are why I play the game. In hockey, everything moves so fast, and there are 11 other guys out there. Where in baseball, it all slows down, and it's all about whether one guy can make the play. I'm going to miss those moments." ☀

"To me and a lot of other athletes, your senior season, your senior night, your final playoff game means far more than those school events."

Photos courtesy of Shea O'Brien | Shea O'Brien, a senior at CHS, is planning to attend the University of Southern California next semester. He dislocated his right shoulder during senior night for Skyline hockey; two years ago, he dislocated his left shoulder playing football.



COLLEGE ATHLETES

Three Community High School college athlete's talk about their passion for their sport and what they hope to accomplish in college.

BY MIA GOLDSTEIN

OWEN KELLEY

Owen Kelley has played tennis most of his life. As a graduating senior from CHS, it was only expected that he would continue his athletic career through college. In the fall of 2020, Kelley will attend Pitzer College and play for the Pomona-Pitzer tennis team.

From the age of five, instead of hiring a babysitter, Kelley and his older brother would accompany their mom while she played at a local tennis center. He picked up the game at the age of eight and began competing at 10 years old. Kelley has competed in many national United States Tennis Association (USTA) tournaments and has played for Huron High School for four years.

Kelley is a fierce competitor who has an adaptable game and strong athletic abilities.

"I like to think I'm good at defense," Kelley said. "When someone is being really aggressive, I'm good at getting a lot of balls back in the court. I am a counter-puncher."

Kelley loves the accountability and self-reliance of being a singles player. "If you lose, it's because you lost," Kelley said.

"If you win, it's because you won. You don't have a team to rely on."

On the other hand, Kelley is a major team player. He enjoyed competing for Huron High School and is looking forward to an even more team-based experience in college.

"I'm excited to get to know the guys on the team," Kelley said. "Tennis isn't really a team sport, and I'm looking forward to competing at a high level."

Along with playing tennis, Kelley also ran track as a junior. However his most notable athletic memories are found on the tennis court when he was part of Huron High School's state championship team both his freshman and senior year.

Kelley is still trying to navigate what life is going to be like as a student-athlete in college. Balancing school and athletics poses an inviting challenge for him.

Overall, Kelley is beyond ecstatic to play tennis for Pomona-Pitzer next year. "I've always played tennis, and it just seems like the right thing for me to do," Kelley said.



Photos courtesy of Nancy Kelley

LUCY SCOTT

Lucy Scott's field hockey career started at the age of eight when she joined an Ann Arbor Rec and Ed field hockey team with her best friend. What started as a recreational hobby soon flourished into a love for the sport. Scott, a senior at CHS, plans on attending and playing field hockey for Kenyon College next year.

Sports have always come naturally to Scott; she grew up playing soccer and softball. She has continued to play softball and field hockey all throughout high school and was crowned captain of Pioneer High School's softball team this spring season. Since sixth grade, Scott has played for Pinnacle Field Hockey, a local travel team.

When considering to pursue field hockey or softball in college, it came down to one thing.

"Field hockey has always been a much more fluid feeling to me," Scott said. "In softball, everybody has a set role. But with field hockey, you're flowing in and out of each other's positions to have your teammate's backs."

Both field hockey and softball have a strong team aspect, which is something Scott has always valued. Over the past four years, Scott has become extremely close to her field hockey and softball teammates on and off the field.

One of her most prominent memories is winning

the state semifinals in overtime in the fall of 2019. It was the first time Pioneer Field hockey had gone to the state championship in years.

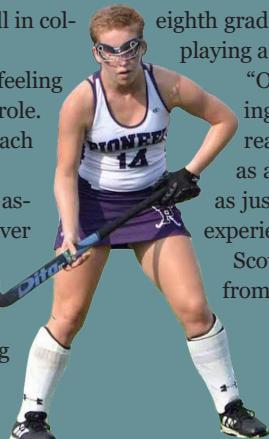
Despite having many notable achievements, Scott cherishes the small moments even more.

"Some of my most important memories are the moments after a goal would be scored and running back to give a chest bump to the goalie," Scott said. "Or during high school season, we would all get announced [onto the field], and we would run out. Everybody's hands would be at different levels for what grade you're in, and we'd high five everyone."

Scott's recruiting process started early. When she was in eighth grade, she began contacting college coaches, and playing a college sport has always been on her radar.

"Obviously you have to want to continue playing, so I was trying to find places where I could really picture myself getting to play and grow as an athlete and a person," Scott said. "As well as just, of course, continuing to have the amazing experience of being on a team in general."

Scott is most excited to be playing with people from all over the country next year.



Photos courtesy of Pioneerathletics.net

JENNA WRIGHT

CHS senior Jenna Wright has only been playing lacrosse for three years. After quitting cheer, she felt the need to pick up a new sport and started playing lacrosse for Skyline High School her sophomore year. The summer after her junior year, she decided to play for the travel team Triumph.

Wright will play for Lawrence Technological University starting next fall.

Playing a sport in college had not always been a priority for Wright, but after seeing how much fun her brother had while playing lacrosse for Lawrence Tech, she decided it was the right thing to pursue. This sudden interest attracted college coaches and she was soon recruited.

"My favorite thing about lacrosse is definitely just

playing the game," Wright said. "It's fun to stay active and to get your aggression out on the field."

Wright primarily plays defense, and one of her best memories was when she was put on attack and scored a goal.

A leading concern Wright had to consider when deciding if she wanted to play a college sport was time management.

Wright plans on studying nursing, and she will undoubtedly spend a lot of time working hard in the classroom.

"You have to remember that when you're playing a college sport, you have to prioritize your time and take care of your health," Wright said.

Wright is most excited to meet new people, play the sport she loves and travel with her team.



Photos courtesy of Nicole Wright

Not Your Average Prom Night

BY CHAVA MAKMAN-LEVINSON AND EBBA GURNEY

On May 8, Sophia Scarneccchia's prom dress hung quietly in her closet. It was the night that CHS' prom was originally scheduled for before the event was cancelled due to COVID-19. However, Scarneccchia did not want to let her deep blue gown go to waste. Inspired by John Krasinski's YouTube account, "Some Good News," she decided to host a virtual prom. Around 20 friends and classmates joined her on Zoom for the evening; the group made a collaborative playlist and seized the opportunity to dress up. Some students' parents even decorated backdrops that resembled cheesy prom photo booths for them.

"One of my friend's dad and brothers dressed up in tuxedos, and I played a slow song for them to dance to," Scarneccchia said. "Her brother had no idea how to dip her."

Like all high school seniors across the US, Scarneccchia is faced with the loss of the ending of high school, a time typically packed with in-person goodbyes and beloved school-wide traditions. Prom is known as a classic high school event that has been around for nearly two hundred years. At many schools, the tradition is for seniors only. But CHS' prom is for juniors and seniors, meaning seniors were still able to experience the staple high school event the previous year. For senior Loey Jones-Perpich, the experience was a meaningful one.

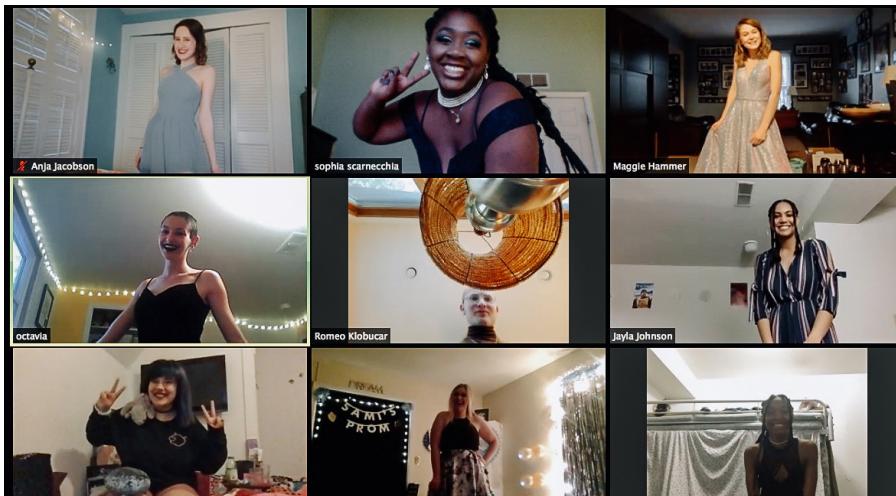
"The connections you make with teachers at Community translate into prom," Jones-Perpich said. "There is a picture of me and Courtney Kiley, [my science teacher and forum leader], on my wall from prom last year. You get to dance with your friends, but also with your teachers, and that is something I will miss."

Despite feeling a strong appreciation for the efforts made to carry on with traditional events by holding them virtually, Jones-Perpich recognizes the discomfort she and many others are feeling at this time about losing such events in-person.

"Losing prom is sad, but what I am really upset about is graduation," Jones-Perpich said. "I think it marks a turning point. You graduate high school, you have a great summer and you move on. And to not have that closure — it's hard."

For Scarneccchia, losing graduation was hard as well.

"I'm really trying to wrap my head around how we're not even going to see each other for graduation," Scarneccchia said. "Prom is one thing, but an event marking your going out into the world that you, your parents and maybe your grandparents were going to attend is tough. But you have to look at it in a positive light. Yeah, we don't get prom or graduation, but how many people in this world will get to say, 'That was taken away from me because of a global pandemic?'" ☀



Photos courtesy of Sophia Scarneccchia

LEFT: A screenshot from the virtual prom held via Zoom on May 8. From left to right starting top to bottom: Anja Jacobson, Sophia Scarneccchia, Maggie Hammer, Octavia Anderson, Romeo Klobucar, Jayla Johnson, Kacy DuMouchel, Sam Major and Toya Pace.

RIGHT: Sophia Scarneccchia stands outside near her house, posing for her mother. "My mom has been super on me about wearing a mask outside," Scarneccchia said. "And I respect that and the safety of others, so I decorated a face mask I had with glitter."







LEFT: Photo courtesy of Mazey Perry

Mazey Perry poses for Angelina Smith atop an Ann Arbor parking structure. The two decided to take photos while social distancing, in order to not let their dresses go to waste. "I have looked forward to prom all year," Perry said. "I have gotten two before this year, so I definitely consider myself lucky. That being said, I am so sad to not get the opportunity to have one last celebration with our whole class."

I've had this dress since March. I borrowed it from a friend, and I was so excited to wear it. I'm not one to let a dress go to waste, so I decided to get ready for my own prom and take pictures with my friend from six feet away. That way we could at least remember our senior prom plan."

MIDDLE: Photo courtesy of Angelina Smith

Angelina Smith poses for Mazey Perry. "Ever since I was little, I've been super excited for prom. In every classic teen movie, they make a huge deal about how prom is the most special night of your high school career," Smith said. "The pretty decorations, the fancy dresses and everything else. Since Community doesn't have many dances, prom is one of the few times we get to see our classmates out of learning mode and have a great night together, wrapping up the last four years we've spent in the classroom."

RIGHT: Photography by Ebba Gurney

Loey Jones-Perpich sits on the front steps of her house wearing the prom dress she picked out a couple months prior. "Prom season starts so early in the year; you're buying your outfit two months in advance," Perpich said. "To have it cancelled is a bummer for those people who can't return their stuff or if you already made exciting plans, it's hard to let go of."



ZEBROBOTICS: DRIVING FORWARD

CHS' robotics team and its seniors reflect on their time as members, the cancellation of their season and the skills they have gained.

BY MORI ONO

At midnight on March 9, after hours and hours of painstaking repairs to the robot, Zebrobotics had finished their final preparations for the competition in Belleville, Mich. that weekend. For the first time, CHS' FIRST Robotics Competition (FRC) team was done with repairs before their initial competition.

The following day, a State of Emergency was declared in Michigan as its first COVID-19 cases were reported. On March 11, all FRC events in Michigan were cancelled, and the entire season was suspended the following day.

It was an abrupt end to months of work. "It was just like having an adrenaline rush

and then nothing happens," said Zebrobotics team captain Elijah Nation. "It was very disappointing."

Nation had hoped that the team would advance to the state tournament for the first time to cap off four years as part of the team. He had known about FRC events even before high school: in 2010, he went to competi-



Photo courtesy of Mark Mercier and FRC 5708 |
Zebrotics team members watch their robot from the stands at the Kettering University pre-season competition in Flint, Mich. Each FRC team is designated by a number. For Zebrotics, they are referred to as team 5708.

tions with his friend's family and was eager to get involved in Zebrotics when he came to CHS.

The team has become larger and more structured since Nation joined the team, yet Zebrotics has preserved its focus on students making decisions and getting everyone involved in brainstorming robot designs at the beginning, no matter the feasibility.

"We spitball all kinds of crazy concepts," Nation said. "The 'McShootie Tube, now featuring the Shifty-Lifty' is something that came out of our initial design process. Most teams say, 'We have our robot design people, and they're gonna design the robot.' When we're done with [sorting ideas], people are more specialized, but the first week or so it's everyone who's involved."

Senior Andrew Plotner initially did not plan on joining the team, but now he is currently one of the controls leads, which means he is responsible for managing the electrical system and programming of the robot. Plotner's interest in programming started when he was seven years old, when he spent three hours figuring out how to change his computer background five times a second. However, Zebrotics allowed him to program and have an effect outside of the computer screen, while at the same time learning the differences that come with working in a team.

"When programming in a team, you have to be conscious of, 'Is your code understandable by other people?'" Plotner said. "If you're doing this as a team, you have to be careful about the code you're writing, how it interacts with other people and how other people interact with your code."

Until the cancellation, Zebrotics was having a particularly active season. The team cruised to victory in their first time at the off-season Washtenaw Area Pickup Robotics (WAPUR) competition in December with a simple, makeshift robot. In addition, they also participated in their first pre-season competition at Kettering University in late February. While the team uncovered problems with the robot, Nation believes its modular design made it the best the team has ever constructed.

"We could change out one part without having to redo everything," Nation said. "We have this box of rails around the outside that allows us to stick stuff on where we need it. Usually, our robots look a little messy. But this [robot], it looks good, it looks tidy, it's functional."

The programming on the robot also made advancements. To assist the robot driver, a camera is typically attached to the robot. By

default, the resolution and frame rate of the camera is 480p and 10 frames per second — akin to an old TV playing a rapid slideshow rather than a smooth livestream. With the other controls lead, Max Mueggler, Plotner was able to run four cameras at twice the frame rate, with extra redundancy programmed in. Not only that, they made sure the code looked nicer.

"[There's] less spaghetti of code in this section touching stuff all the way over here and interacting with that, making it nicely formatted, organized, clear to follow," Plotner said.

On the business end of the team, Zebrotics navigated bureaucracy to become a 501(c)(3) organization. The team's costs run into the thousands of dollars due to the cost of robot equipment and registration fees. Its new status allows donations to be tax deductible, giving more of an incentive for companies to sponsor them.

Following the cancellation of the competitions, student leadership has continued to meet virtually, creating documents to formalize structure and process in the team. The team plans to hold virtual training sessions to build experience, though no such plans have been finalized yet.

"One thing that's really unfortunate is that the newer members did not get the experience of competition. I think this is especially important for programming or electronics — just having random stuff breaking and having to fix it," Plotner said. "I think it's a really valuable learning tool."

The team is hopeful that they can start their plans for improved preseason training in the fall. Next year, the theme of the competition will remain the same with different rules.

For the seniors, they are departing the team with experiences directly relevant to their future. Nation credits landing an internship this summer — though it was ultimately cancelled — to the skills he gained through Zebrotics. He chose to study computer engineering, a midpoint between computer science and electrical engineering, because of the enjoyment he got from working with controllers and sensors on the team.

Plotner will be studying computer engineering at the University of Michigan.

"I went from a middling C++ [the programming language used by the team] programmer to a pretty darn good one," Plotner said. "If someone's interested in programming, they should join the team, even if they're not very good at it. Give it a shot. If you have dedication, that matters more than experience." ☀

The Ultimate People Person: Robbie Stapleton Says Goodbye

During her thirty years of teaching, Robbie Stapleton inspired and guided her students. Now, she is retiring.

BY ROXIE RICHNER

Robbie Stapleton was hiking through the winding trails of the Grand Canyon when she felt it. Inexplicable but undeniable, it was finally time to retire. She turned to her husband Bill and declared it: "I think I'm done. I think I'm ready." And in that moment, the weight of fear was lifted from her chest. After over thirty years at CHS, it was time to let go.

Although her passion for education would lead one to believe otherwise, Stapleton never planned on becoming a teacher; the original plan was to go to law school. But, on a whim, persuaded by her parents in their depression-era wisdom, she got her teaching certificate "just in case." Stapleton's first teaching job in California was supposed to fill her time between the completion of her undergraduate degree and law school, but it was a great fit.

Now, Stapleton is one of the most beloved educators in Ann Arbor. Stapleton's talent for compassionately connecting with people, coupled with her love and passion for the subjects she teaches, make her a one-of-a-kind teacher.

"She's the ultimate people person," CHS senior Shea O'Brien said. "She has a gift in that she can connect with

just about anyone, which is not only an underrated quality, but an essential one to be a successful educator."

The love between students and Stapleton goes both ways.

"I love spending time with young people and hearing what they have to say," Stapleton said. "The kids I run into at CHS are already reading stuff I wouldn't have touched until college or grad school on their own. They're true intellectuals."

Gretchen Eby, counseling secretary and Stapleton's best friend of forty years, has watched as Stapleton's office transformed into a sort of secondary counseling office over the years.

"People don't realize how many students looked to her for guidance," Eby said. "They depended on her. It was a comfort to everyone to know that she was always there."

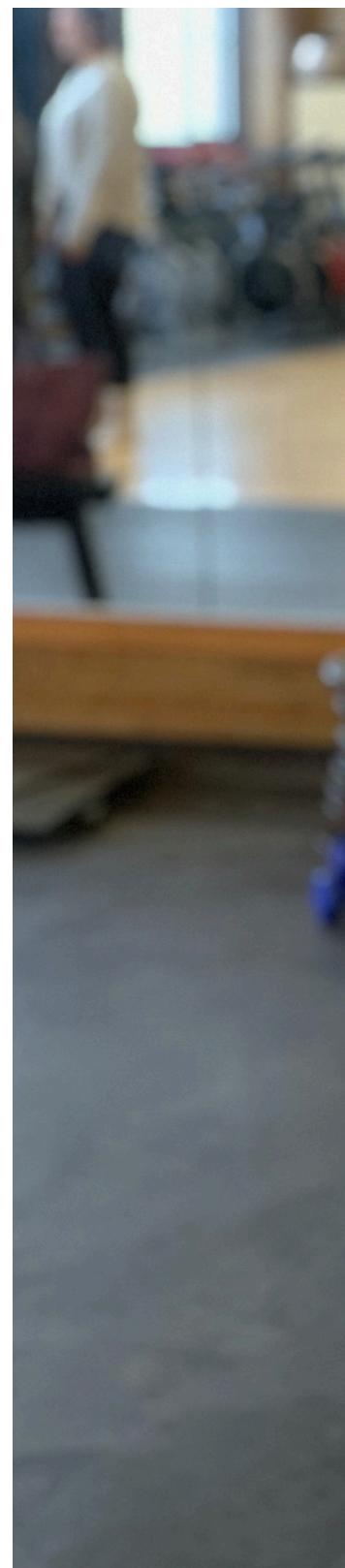
Particularly close to Stapleton's heart are her forum kids. Some of her most treasured memories have been bonding with her forum during forum trips. Years ago, the Stapleton forum drove down to Pennsylvania to go white-water rafting — Stapleton's first time, and probably her last. Other forum adventures have included "the haunted Christian camp," and an island lodge only accessible by boat.

Stapleton makes it a priority to stay in touch with her forum kids; they have their own Facebook group that graduating seniors are added to. When she made the decision to retire, she made sure to tell her forum first.

"Robbie is like another mom to me," Stapleton forum senior Robbie White said. "She's always looking out for her students, always willing to stop in the middle of the hall for a quick hug."

During her time at CHS, Stapleton has been a jack-of-all-trades. When she first began teaching, she taught civics. In 1988, she was able to take her civics class to see eight out of ten of the Democratic presidential candidates speak — one of her students even met Bill Clinton.

She found ways to make every class she taught engaging, whether that meant doing yoga at Argo Cascades with her Personal Fitness class or going on walks with Advanced Health. Under her guidance, the CHS health







program became what it is today; from developing the model and curriculum for Advanced Health, to spearheading programs like Depression Awareness Group, Stapleton leaves an incredible legacy.

One program Stapleton was particularly proud of was her student-centered theater group, Tune In. Every Saturday, Stapleton welcomed the group into her home to rehearse. Students wrote and put on educational theater performances surrounding health, wellness and social justice issues that were manifesting organically at CHS.

As CHS and Stapleton alike have evolved, some things have remained the same.

"CHS has morphed over time," Stapleton said. "But I think at root, the thing about CHS that hasn't changed is this notion that if you assume that kids are doing the right thing, they usually are. This idea that you can be student-centered in education and it works."

Stapleton's approach to education works. Students not expecting to find health interesting find themselves becoming passionate about new topics that she helps them discover. But, beyond encouraging her students to be inquisitive and thoughtful, she's able to connect with them and get to know them as human beings. She's even inspired some of her students to pursue teaching.

"She's the best role model ever," said Oliver Lete-Straka, sophomore and Stapleton forumette. "I've been thinking about teaching as my profession, and she is the perfect person to look up to."

As Stapleton leaves her teaching career behind, she is concerned for the future of education. She believes district and state mandated curriculums limit the ability of teachers to develop meaningful content.

"CHS let me create my own classes and curriculum," Stapleton said. "But the farther we get away from that, the worse education will be. The districts want to have control over what you teach in your classroom, but that means we lose the professionalism and creativity of the teachers."

After a long time of being at odds with the idea of retirement — fearing how she'd fill her time, who she'd be and how much she'd miss everyone at CHS — it's finally time for Stapleton to say goodbye. The COVID crisis has absolved her fear of not knowing how to fill her time because she has found plenty of ways to stay busy in these past months at home.

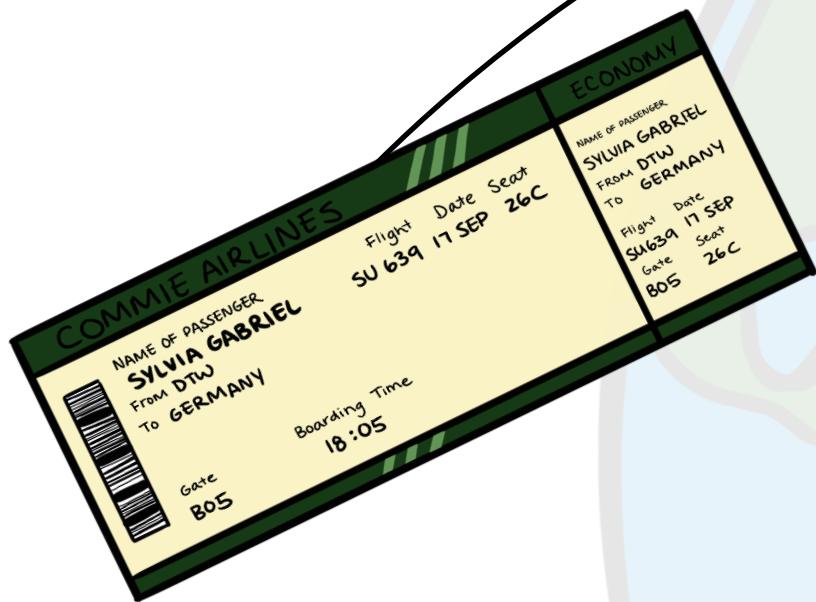
It will be difficult for Stapleton to leave CHS, not least of all because she will lose her prized parking spot —she will no longer be able to park there for her weekly weekend runs with friends. But with a newborn grandchild and twenty National Parks left to visit, Stapleton will have plenty of ways to fill her time in the years to come. She hopes to bring the lessons she learned from CHS into her life moving forward and stay connected with young people. Knowing Stapleton, she will make it happen. She always does. ©



GAP YEAR

Four CHS seniors discuss their plans for their time away from school starting next fall.

BY MIA GOLDSTEIN



Arlo Durgy plans on spending his gap year in the Pacific Islands with the program Adventures Cross-Country (ARCC). He will be visiting Bali, Fiji and Sumatra during his semester overseas. The program involves homestays with local families in Fiji, trekking deep into the Sumatran rainforest to study orangutans and restoring age-old Batak houses in a rural Sumatran village.

Durgy was inspired to take part in this program because his older sister who took a gap year had an amazing experience.

"When she came back, her perspective was totally changed, and she just saw the world in a different way," Durgy said. "And I guess I sort of am seeking the same experience: to see how completely different my life here is from someone across the world."

Durgy also wants to take a gap year because to get a break from the rigorous academic schedule.

"I've been in school for so long," Durgy said. "A big part of it is just to get out of the normality of going to school every fall until spring and just to mix it up. I want to see what my options are."

Sylvia Gabriel plans on spending her gap year in Germany and Bangladesh before she attends Stanford University in the fall of 2021.

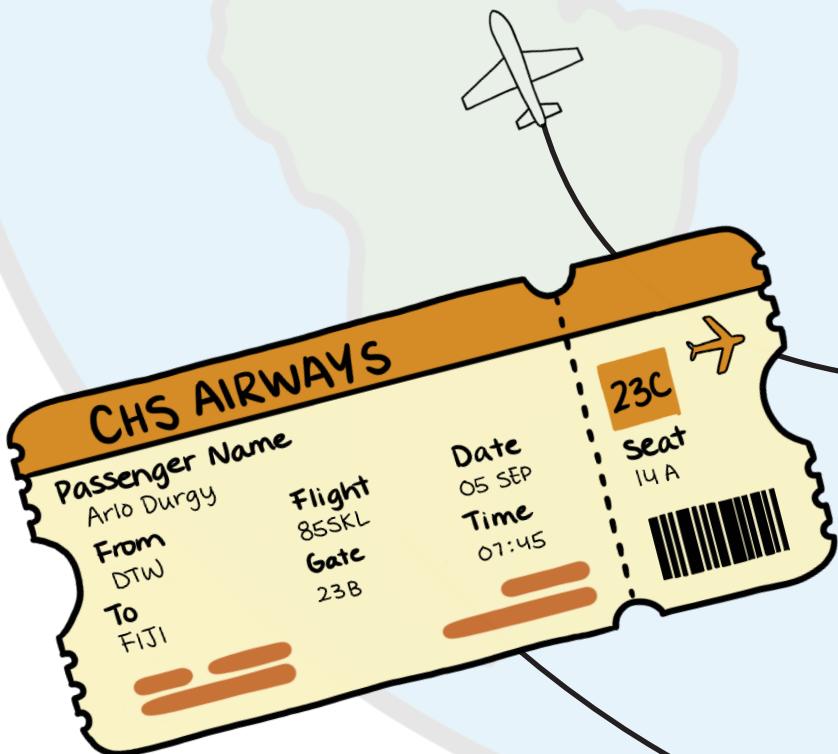
Gabriel expects to spend the majority of her time abroad in Germany and a month in Bangladesh, where she will stay with her exchange sister. Gabriel chose to defer from college for a year so she could finally become fluent in German — one of the five languages she speaks. She has dedicated much of her time in high school to studying linguistics and teaching others English.

"I have my whole life in front of me," Gabriel said. "If I take a year between high school and college, there's not a lot of pressure on me to be starting the next thing. I just feel like it's like a really good opportunity."

Starting school at Stanford in the fall is not enough time for Gabriel to regroup, and she wants to restore her educational mindset before going to school for another four years.

"I'm excited to be in a new place and be surrounded by a different language that I'm trying to learn," Gabriel said. "And I just get the opportunity to like speak with everyone around me. Like that actually makes me super happy."

Gabriel hopes to return with more of a global mindset and new connections to people from around the world.



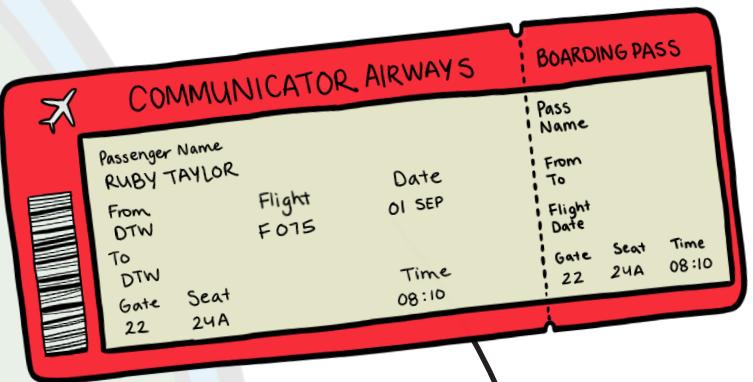
SENIORS

Ruby Taylor will be attending Middlebury College starting in February. Taylor plans to spend the first half of her year working at Argus Farms in Ann Arbor to earn money, as well as taking some well deserved time to regroup and recharge.

Taylor had some exciting plans lined up during her time off, but due to the current COVID-19 circumstances, her plans have been subsequently cancelled. Taylor was looking forward to possibly working on a campaign for the upcoming election, going backpacking or traveling to Utah to do land restoration work for the National Park Service. She also had arranged to work at a summer camp, too.

Despite many of her plans being postponed, there are definitely still many benefits of taking a break before college for Taylor.

"I think that by having more of a substantial break between high school and college, I'll be more productive and refreshed," Taylor said.



Jesse Rosenberg plans on taking a gap semester in the Centro-Caribbean with the gap year program, Adventures Cross Country (ARCC). ARCC is an organization that offers educational and immersive gap semester and gap year programs around the world. Rosenberg plans on traveling between Panama, Costa Rica, Belize and Cuba during his time in the Centro-Caribbean.

Rosenberg will be diving into all sorts of new experiences and cultures. He will be shadowing doctors in Panama, working alongside local biologists on Costa Rica's Pacific Coast and exploring the Mesoamerican Barrier Reef of Belize.

"I'm probably most excited for teaching the kids and gaining some new perspective from people that I've never met before," Rosenberg said. "I'm kind of just hoping to go to college with more knowledge about myself."

Rosenberg will attend the University of Denver during the fall of 2021 with hopes of being more culturally educated and experienced.

With a Pandemic, Comes Growth

For Maddie Wallace, the COVID-19 pandemic surfaced unanswered questions.

BY LUCY TOBIER AND MIRA SCHWARZ

What are your thoughts about college?

I kind of had a mental breakdown about college, because if you look on the CHS page, everyone is kind of going to Ivy League colleges, or they're going to Michigan State or somewhere out of state, and I was just like, 'Oh my gosh, I don't want to go out of state. This is not what I wanted.' I had this thing in my mind where I had to go out of state, and I have to jump right into life, and I have anxiety. I'm not ready to do that. It was just that Instagram page that honestly made me insecure a little bit because I was like, 'What is this, because literally no one that is going to WCC or Eastern.' I know that other people are feeling that too. I was like, 'Whatever. I'm just going to send in my thing and say that I don't know what I'm doing yet.' So I'm still trying to figure it out a little bit. I'm thinking about going to Eastern because they have the program that I want.

Have you received any judgment for not going immediately into it next year or not knowing?

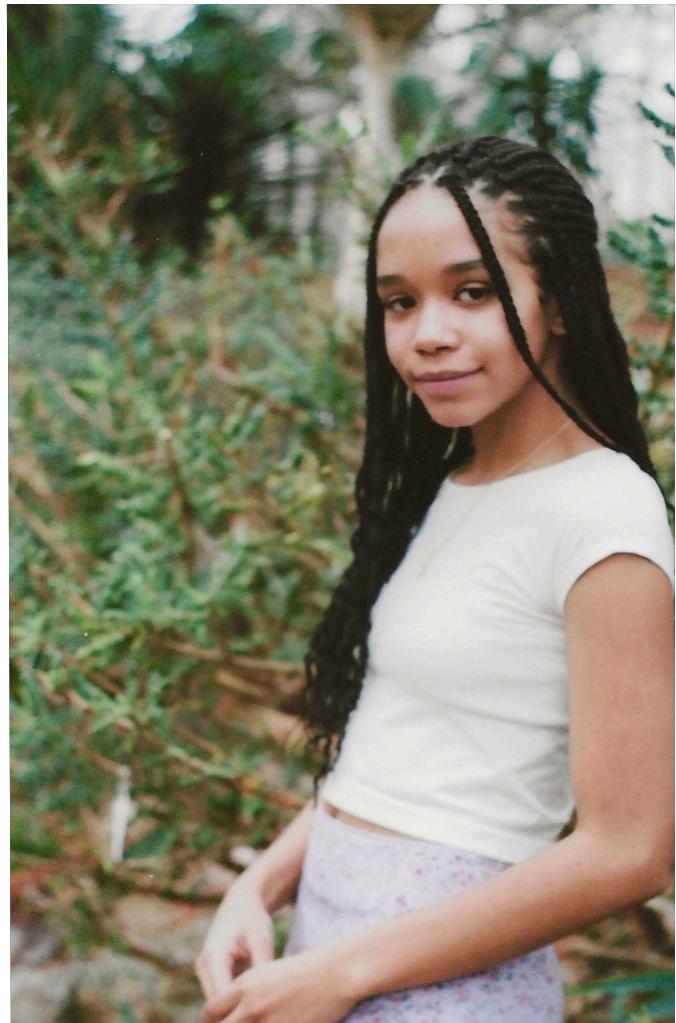
No, I haven't. It's more within myself. I've been having good conversations with the adults in my life, and they've just been telling me, 'No one is going to be tracking you, no one is going to be doing that, everyone's going to be in their own boat.' And the people that are going to these big cities or these out of state colleges, they might get there and not even like it, and they might come back. I think it's just anxiety inducing a lot. And it's not really talked about, like everyone at Community kind of acts like they have everything together. Community is just an interesting school with college. I was looking at Huron's college page, like their seniors page, and Skyline's, and Pioneer's, and they have so many more students on there. And it's kind of embarrassing to see that there's no one going anywhere regular, like community college or anything like that on the Community page.

How did it feel to put it out in the open on social media that you're unsure and you have anxiety about these things?

I was looking at that post a bunch of times, looking at who was liking it, who actually took the time to read it, and just the senior mock awards. I was trying to make it look like I don't really care about this. But I don't like being judged, a lot of people do. I was definitely looking at that post.

If you don't plan on going to Eastern next year, what would you be doing?

I would definitely just work, and I want to get an apartment with my friends. I feel like that would give me a good head start on life. It would be so much better for me to do that with my mental health and with myself in general. I think I haven't been thinking about myself very much in this whole college thing, which is weird, because that's literally all it's about. But there are so many judgments. Everyone is



Photography by Steve Coron |
Madison Wallace, a graduating senior from
Community High School, poses at the
Matthei Botanical Gardens.



so worried about what people think. Just trying to do what's good for me.

Do you think that you would go to college later, or just not in general?

In my sophomore year, I struggled a lot with my mental health, and it put my grades back a lot. I was really upset cause I'm like, 'Oh, I can't go to these really big colleges.' But I would not even be ready to do that at the age I graduate anyway, so taking time to figure something out and then go into a highly accredited school where they don't judge you based off of your high school achievement is so much better. I would definitely like to take Community College classes just to get the head start. I would definitely apply to some highly accredited fashion schools.

Has COVID affected your plans? Have you faced any uncertainty because of it?

Yes. Oh my gosh. I was going to go to Columbia, Chicago, and I was going to visit before all the Corona stuff started happening. Then I couldn't visit. I was like, 'Oh, I'm just gonna go, and if I don't like it, then it is what it is.' But that's such a bad idea. I don't even know why I thought I would do that for a second. And it kind of made me upset a little bit because I told everyone, 'I'm going to Chicago, this is what's happening.' And it's just back to my insecurities. I was just like, 'Wow, everyone's gonna think I'm not well enough to go to a big city,' but it's not that at all. And I have to stay thinking of myself and my family, and with all the Corona stuff going on, that's just the best idea. And honestly, I don't think a lot of people are going to be going out of state that are planning on it. I think Corona actually helped me realize I don't want to go out of state.



Were you able to find enough resources to help you create a plan for next year that didn't include college?

My parents are helping me a lot. But other than that, not really. I've been talking to friends about it that are taking a couple classes at WCC, and then that's it. I'm focusing on this whole distance learning thing.

Do you think this is an Ann Arbor thing, within the district, or do you see it more in society?

I think it might be a Community thing. Because everyone else in all the other schools they're just like, 'Yeah, I'm going to WCC.' Community kids are just weird. I think it's also the people. Everyone's just so worried about everyone's life.

Do you feel judged? Or do you find anxiety from your friends who are going to figure out of state schools?

No, not at all. I don't feel judged at all. It's just anxiety and myself. The Instagram page, I feel like it gives people a whole opportunity to just compare themselves to others. I haven't felt that from my

friends. A lot of my friends, they actually don't know where they're going yet so that kind of makes me feel a little bit better.

How are you coping with the internalized judgment of college?

I talk to everyone I know about it. I'm like, 'Do you think this looks weird that I'm on this page?' Or I'll be like, 'Mom, look at this person is going to USC, that's so crazy.' And she's like, 'Cool, I don't care.' I just like talking to people about it. And they're like, 'Maddie what is wrong with you, it's not that big of a deal.' I know that other people are feeling it too. I feel like there would be more people on the page if other people weren't feeling that way.

What's your ideal learning environment? What school do you think you would thrive in?



Honestly, I have no idea. Once again, Community didn't really help me with that. All the college visits that we had were just public schools. There weren't very many art schools. There was one fashion school that I went to, and I was like, 'Oh, this is cool, but it's so much money. They don't really even give out scholarships.' So I was just like, 'Whatever, that's not for me.' So I honestly have no idea, but I guess Eastern [Michigan University]. They have a program I want, and they are pretty highly accredited. So might as well just see what that's about. And if I don't like it, I can just graduate and go somewhere else.

What would you say to other students who may not want to have college be in their immediate plan or are still questioning it?

I would say just don't even care about what other people think. They have no idea what they want to do either. They're just following along just like you and that's probably why they're going to wherever they're going. So I feel like people should just focus on themselves, what they can afford and what's good for them. Because I know people that are going out of state that just cannot afford that. I cannot afford to go out of state. It's crazy. Don't worry about what others think, and do what's best for you.

How did your perception of yourself and how you carry yourself in the world change through all of these struggles?

I struggled with that a lot in my sophomore, junior and freshman year of high school. Senior year, I was like, 'Oh, I don't care anymore.' And, I'm just myself a lot, but it's so hard to be like that all the time. Everyone has these insecurities. I think me trying to be myself and trying to be cool with everyone does make my internal anxiety, insecurities and everything within myself a little bit worse. I've just been trying to be myself and not really care but it's so hard to do that, but I think I'm doing a pretty good job at it.

Time Cut Short

BY ELLA ROSEWARNE



Photography by Morraina Tuzinsky

Neva Siers never imagined senior year ending the way it did. "My mom said it's pretty cool that Obama spoke at your graduation, but I would have given a hand and a foot for a normal senior year," Siers said.

**"This is exactly why we're here:
to be a part of something great
and be a part of history."**

Neva Siers would have treasured her time more if she had known how high school would end.

The winter of freshman year of high school, Neva Siers drove to Washington D.C.. The week before finals, the Women's March took place all over the world. Siers planned on staying home to study while her mom went to D.C., but she was convinced to go by her mom, and she does not regret it. "I don't even know how to describe it," Siers said. "It was out of this world seeing that many people in one place stand up for what they believe in."

The march took place soon after President Donald Trump was inaugurated, leaving many people in shock. "Trump got elected and we were all angry, but then we all came together for women's rights all around the world," Siers said. "I'll never forget how I felt. It was incredible. It empowered me."

"We took a break, and we got lunch, and we were sitting in this hotel lobby," Siers said. "That was the only place that we could find that was close to us. We were sitting in there, and we kind of forgot about what was happening in the outside world. And as soon as you look out the window, it was like this whole other world. People were constantly walking by, the streets were packed. It was like we were in this bubble, this hotel lobby. You just look out the window and it was like, 'This is exactly why we're here: to be a part of something great and be a part of history.'"

Once Siers returned to Ann Arbor after this memorable march, she had a knew way of looking at things. She had decided to focus more on things that mattered. "At the end of the day, school is not the most important

thing out there," Siers said. "There's so much more going on than we will ever realize."

Siers almost didn't go to the march, and now she is eternally grateful she did because that was when she learned an important lesson. "You can't take time for granted," Siers said.

Siers is grateful that she said yes to attending the Women's March. It was there that she learned how precious time can be. But she never imagined her senior year being cut short due to COVID-19. Looking back, she would have treasured her time in school more if she knew what was coming.

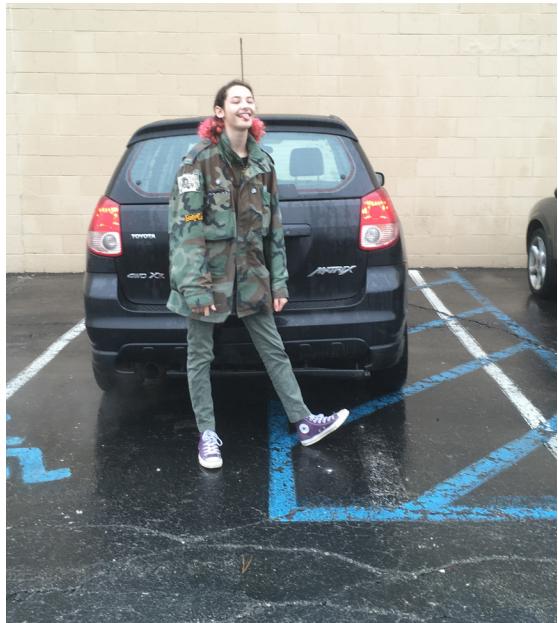
"My senior year got cut short," Siers said. "But if I could do my last week over again, I would not be focusing about schoolwork. I'd be wanting to have the last moments with my teachers and with my friends. Some of the people in my class, I will most likely never see you again. And that's super sad. I just want to give everyone a hug. We can't hug now, but we didn't know that. I just want to thank my teachers and give them a hug and show them that I'm grateful for what they did for me. And the same with my peers." ©

2020

Throwback to Freshman Year

Five seniors take a glimpse back to their freshman year through photos.

BY ELIOT KLUSS AND ELLA ROSEWARNE



In this picture, Octavia Anderson is at the Secretary of State during her freshman year. "I had just parked right after I got my learner's permit. My mom wanted to take a picture and commemorate that I passed driver's ed and was legally allowed to park places," Anderson said. "In hindsight, the parking lines are super weird, and I may have, for 30 seconds, parked halfway in a handicap spot. It just reminded me of who I was as a freshman. It was kind of rainy, but a nice kind of gentle rain. That was how I blocked off most of my day because the secretary of state can take a long time. I ran into a friend of mine from middle school. He was also at the Secretary of State, and it was a fun coincidence because we didn't go to the same high school."

Here is a picture of Eta Smotrich-Barr in Pioneer Theatre Guild's (PTG) "The Wizard of Oz" during his freshman year. "I was Uncle Henry and also one of the guards that shows them around Emerald City," Smotrich-Barr said. "It's the first speaking role I had at PTG and I was super excited about it. Plus the green getup was also very fun. I've never been the best actor. It's less about being another person, although I do find that fun and certainly challenging. I would say, especially in that show, being in such a ridiculous costume for a decent amount of time is something that I was originally not really comfortable with. I was like, 'Wow, I'm really making a fool of myself, look how stupid I look.' And it was one of those things that, as I became more comfortable with the people around me, and also as I became more comfortable with myself and who I was, I was able to be comfortable in all situations, able to make fun of myself and able to not be so preoccupied with how it looked. And you learn that at PTG for sure. You walk around in the hall behind the stage in full makeup, and the whole track team runs by. But I think putting on the costume is something that you have to become comfortable with and something that probably helps you become comfortable with being confident in yourself."



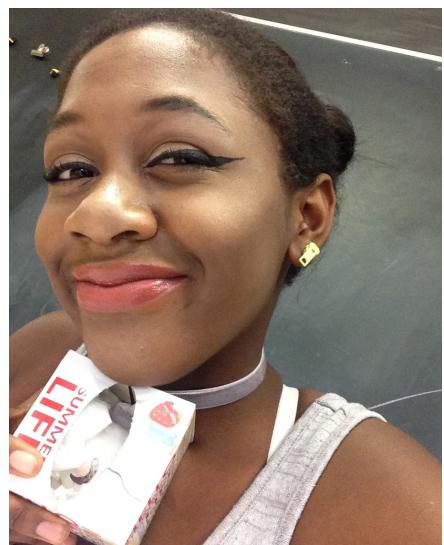
Morraina Tuzinsky with her mom during her freshman year. "That was the Women's March that happened after Trump was elected," Tuzinsky said. "It was that big International Women's March. So I went, and my mom also went, and we met up. We took a picture there, and then all my friends took pictures with their moms too, and it was just kind of cool. I remember there being so many of those pink hats. And it was like a crowd of pink, and it was so cool to see all those people. I just love my mom. She's so awesome. And it's a women's march, and she's a woman, and she's pretty awesome; she runs a school. Power to her. We're both wearing Community High School shirts. That's actually kind of cool. Just showing that women can do anything, and there's two generations of us right there."



Sophie Kriz poses in the Czech Republic during her freshman/senior year. "[It's a] canyon in the Czech Republic called Amerika, but it's spelled with a 'K' instead of a 'C,'" Kriz said. "It's this imitation Grand Canyon that the Czechs made because in the old days, they couldn't travel so easily to America. They made this imitation Grand Canyon to sort of pretend. It still exists there today, so it's a really interesting place. My father is actually from the Czech Republic. He had to immigrate so he could study in America — the real America."

"I would like to be a nature person," Kriz said. "I'm sort of not very good at growing things. Usually they die. But I enjoy nature that can grow on its own, like dandelions."

This is a picture of Sophia Scarneccchia from freshmen year holding an egg in a small box to protect it. "I made a lot of friends really early on [in high school], and a couple of them invited me to a Halloween party," Scarneccchia said. "When my mom found out that I was invited to parties, she was really worried about whether or not they'd have alcohol at this party, or whether or not I would be having sex at this party. And she pretty much told me that I shouldn't go to a party because if I did, I'd get drunk, have sex and get pregnant. I got into an argument with her about whether or not that's right, or whether or not I go or should go to any parties. We made this deal that if I were to get pregnant and become a parent, then I shouldn't go to any parties, which is something on its own. So my mom decided that we should have a test trial. She was like, 'You bring an egg to school, and if the egg cracks, that means that you will not be a responsible parent, and you shouldn't go to any parties and risk becoming a parent. And if it doesn't break, then you'd be a responsible parent, and you would be okay risking getting pregnant.' So pretty much all day, I brought an egg to school and had like a little smiley face drawn on it. And the entire day people were so confused, and my friends were making fun of me. I was really nervous about having that egg all day. I dropped it on the bus, and I remember screaming because I was worried that it would crack to this day. Thankfully the egg didn't crack."



Where the class of 2020 began...



**NOAH
GREENBERG**



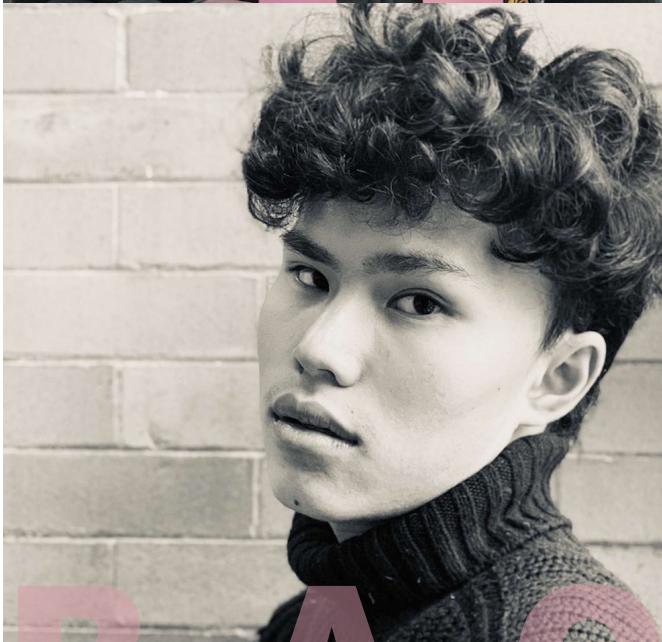
LUCY
SCOTT

SIMONE
MAHLER



CAMMI
TIRICO

KARENNA
COLLINS-THOMAS



B A O R U H I POLKOWSKI K H A N N A



JAYLA
JOHNSON



JACOB
PERLMUTTER



**SYLVIA
GABRIEL**

**ATTICUS
DEWEY**



SHEA OLIVIA
O'BRIEN LYLE



SUNDAY
QUILLEEN

**...to
where
they are
now.**

COLLEGE ESSAYS

Seniors share the essays from their college applications they started in the fall of 2019.

BY SOPHIE KRIZ

Sylvia Gabriel - The Common Application

Discuss an accomplishment, event, or realization that sparked a period of personal growth and a new understanding of yourself or others.

"What do you call someone who speaks two languages? Bilingual. What do you call someone who speaks one language? American." Multilingualism is a global norm, from India to Indonesia to Iceland. So what are we missing out on?

Over the last three years, I have become fascinated by languages and linguistics, and I've put countless hours into learning languages and immersing myself in new cultures. It's through what I have gained from languages that I've started to realize what you miss when you don't have them.

In eighth grade, my Indian friend invited me to a Durga Puja celebration. Even in similarly-colorful clothing, my white skin made it apparent I didn't belong. However, I grew to love this community, culture, and language. Although they spoke perfect English, I knew that if I truly wanted to understand this culture, I had to learn Bangla.

By continuing to go to Bengali events in my community, I've gotten a glimpse into what it feels like to be the only person of your ethnicity in the room, and how uncomfortable that can be. I know that there is no such thing as "I don't see color" because when I am the minority I am constantly aware of it. As part of the majority, but in a space that we don't usually inhabit, I had to acknowledge my whiteness and even laugh at it in order to

create some room for myself.

Through American Sign Language (ASL), I've connected with the Deaf community in the US and abroad. Deaf culture is in fact a culture, rooted in language and traditions just like any other. However, I've heard countless stories about how the hearing

world misunderstands deafness. Hearing people will yell to make themselves heard. They direct their speech at ASL interpreters rather than Deaf people. Deaf children often grow up learning only a spoken language, because hearing adults don't understand the positive impact of a signed one. Most of all, hearing people overestimate the effectiveness of lip-reading and expect Deaf people to accommodate them -- when knowing just a little sign language would go such a long way. I've had the opportunity to connect with Deaf communities while travelling in India and Jordan, even sit in on an Indian Sign Language class, simply because I knew some ASL and took the initiative to understand their culture.

I started to learn Arabic because I teach English to a family of Syrian refugees. Every week they invite me into their home, feed me sweets and ahwe, and share their culture with me -- while I share mine in return. Knowing this family, being a support for them in the strange new American world, has been the most enriching experience of my life. I can't imagine how people would make fun of their English, because I see how much effort they put in. I can't imagine how people would call them terrorists, because they are working harder to support themselves than anyone else I know, and their



deepest wish is to speak fluent English and feel like Americans. I had the opportunity to travel to Jordan to study Arabic last summer. The questions I got made me realize that Americans, even generally open-minded ones, greatly misunderstand women in the Arab world. Arab culture is arguably the least understood among Americans; I feel

lucky to have such a first-hand perspective on it.

Had I not learned Bangla, ASL, and Arabic, I wouldn't have learned what it feels like to be the only white, hearing, or agnostic person in the room. Now I know how to handle myself in uncomfortable situations, whether in the Middle East or the Deaf chat

in my town. I've learned how to question my own world-view because the Western way is not necessarily an end-all-be-all. Most importantly, I know the integral importance of language in our identities, and what a strong gesture learning someone else's can be.

Maggie Hammer - The Common Application

The lessons we take from obstacles we encounter can be fundamental to later success. Recount a time when you faced a challenge, setback, or failure. How did it affect you, and what did you learn from the experience?

I stared up at the nearly 50-foot rock-climbing wall that towered in front of me. Eyes closed, I took a deep breath of the moist, cool air as I stepped forward. The crowd's roar seemed more distant with every breath as I began to focus in on the climb ahead. My legs shaky and arms weak, I pulled myself off the ground at my first lead-climbing World Cup in Villars, Switzerland. The fact that I was even on the wall was miraculous to me because, as you will see, I had a few inner mountains to climb before realizing this dream.

Growing up in a family of rock climbers, my life revolved around the sport. Whether it was after school training sessions or vacations, we were always climbing as a family. My older brother, Max, spent years competing internationally for the USA national team, and my family traveled around the world cheering him on. My love for the sport — with its tight-knit, supportive community — and my dream of competing on the world stage grew with every trip.

It takes a unique mindset to be able to climb thousands of feet in the air with only a thin rope to catch you. As a young climber, my mind didn't comprehend the risk. However, this began to change as I got older. It was at age 12, during my first lead climbing lesson, that I found myself frozen, unable to move, 35 feet up a wall. While lead climbing, a fall results in several seconds of free-fall before the rope catches the climber, and it was in those few moments that I had an unex-

pected realization: I was absolutely terrified of falling. I was completely unprepared for what would become a long and hard mental battle between what I loved and feared most.

For a couple of years, I could avoid the fear by focusing on the other forms of climbing, but at age 14, lead climbing becomes a requirement for competition. So, I found myself at a crossroads. I either had to overcome this mental block or my climbing career, along with my dreams of competing for Team USA, would come to an end.

I pondered giving up, but being the determined, competitive person that I am, I couldn't let my mind win. I found myself at the first competition of the season, sitting in the chair waiting to climb with my heart racing and tears rushing down my face. The atmosphere of the competition made me get on the wall, but I made myself stay on. I climbed my way to first place and through the tears, I began to realize that I had it within me to achieve my dream, I just had to enjoy the process. I sought out a new coach who would be a supportive partner in both my physical and emotional quest. And, together we started on the long and winding road of finding the joy within the fear.

The tears continued through the rest of that season and beyond, but slowly, I was making progress. The tears became less frequent, the falls less terrifying and as you might expect, my climbing began to improve. I started having fun, and my goal of competing for Team USA was back in focus.

As I was lowered to the ground after my climb in Villars, I thought back to that 12-year-old girl, frozen on the wall, absolutely petrified, and smiled. I have since represented the United States at nine international competitions, and while my fear may be gone, the journey it has taken me to get there will stay with me forever. While a metaphor for others, for climbers, it rings especially true that what matters is not how many times you fall, but how you fall and how you pick yourself up to get back on the wall.



Isabel Perry - The Common Application

On the way to the bus stop every morning, I saw crows. At least one or two, perched on the surrounding trees whose branches sliced glacially through the sky, or on the windows of apartments. Sometimes it was more, a whole roost of them perched and watching. A while ago I read an article about how corvids can recognize human faces and remember them. I wondered if the crows would remember me.

On an especially cold dawn, when frost coated the ground, I saw a dark shape on the sidewalk. At first I thought it was an aban-

doned shoe. However, as I neared, I noticed the wings spread out against the asphalt. One of the crows had died. Upon inspection, I didn't see any obvious cause of death. The bird was whole, lacking only a cold, electric eye.

It didn't feel right to leave her there, so completely skyless. So the whole day, I read about crows. I learned that if I touched the body, I could be seen as a threat by the rest of them because of the fact that they'd remember my face. I learned too, that crows and ravens commonly hold funerals for their

dead. I didn't want to deprive them of that. I wanted to be part of it.

When I got home that day I put on a long brown wool coat and covered my face with a turtleneck so the birds wouldn't be able to see my face. I went out to my garage and picked up a snow shovel, with which to carry the body. Now prepared, I walked to the bus stop where the crow lay.

I stood there with one foot in the road, shrouded head to toe in dark wool, and prodded the corpse with my shovel. The weight of it was a harsh awakening, and I almost

sobbed as the reality of its life hit me. But I couldn't give up now. I had started attracting stares from crows and people alike. I hoped none of them recognized me through my turtleneck. A passing car honked as I tried to free the black feathers from frost. They stuck and ripped as if in an ugly imitation of flight.

Eventually, I managed to balance the bird on my shovel and carried her over to the abandoned lot next to my house. I then realized that burying her was out of the question. The ground was frozen solid. Furthermore, it didn't seem kind. Wings don't belong in the ground. So I left her next to a stand of broken branches and said some pretty words—I can't remember what they were now. Maybe I'm not meant to.

What was life trying to tell me by giving

me an omen to bury? One isn't supposed to pity a crow. They are known as "murder" as "trickster," as "familiar." It fascinates me that such wicked creatures, whose death feels so occult, could stir so much love in me. Humans have a tendency to love anything they can in an effort to feel less alone. I suppose that includes villain-coded birds. Then again, everything becomes dear in death. What I like about love and being alive is the sheer surprise of it—the experience of loving a crow, or loving a sky, or loving a person. Love is chaotic. You have to be willing to love suddenly. To love the wrong things sometimes. That is why one must walk toward life with a heart like an open window. There is only ever love and now.



Elijah Nation - The Common Application

The sun shone down, bouncing off the small April snow patches, as I made my way into the gym of a high school I'd never attended. I put my safety glasses on, each scratch on the clear plastic a story in and of itself, and opened the door. My ears were all at once met with the roar of hundreds of teenagers talking, the whines of power tools, the rolling of cart wheels on the tarp-covered floor, and the intermittent yelling of "Robot!" as teams moved their contraptions of all different shapes of steel, aluminum, and composites around. This was competition—the culmination of the past 6 weeks of blood, sweat, tears, and toil from every member of our team. This is FIRST Robotics.

I would not be where I am without FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology), an international organization dedicated to promoting STEM education around the world. Their high school robotics league, known as the FIRST Robotics Competition (FRC), has continuously pushed me to learn new things, has given me experiences and skills that apply to more than just robotics, and has introduced me to great friends and a wonderful community of support and love.

I've long had a passion for computers and for many years thought myself quite adept, in the way that young children often think they're the best in the world at everything. I got to high school, however, and found out how wrong my middle-school self had been. Looking at the robot code my freshman year, I had to admit to our lead programmer that I didn't know what was happening on the screen in front of me. In my heart grew a determination to fix that, and I set about teaching myself the basics of coding in addition to one or two programming languages.

Fast-forward to 2019, I'm learning to build mobile applications in an independent study with my computer science teacher and looking at colleges for computer science and engineering. The glimpse of a future that I've gotten from FRC has motivated me as well; freshman and sophomore year I slacked off, didn't do my work, and my grades reflected that. Junior year, I actually got excited for college and beyond because of robotics. I now knew what I wanted to do, but realized I was on a destructive path—that my chances of having that future were drifting away from my grasp. I got my act together, and I've worked to maintain much better grades since. FRC put me on a career path that I am passionate about and I'm not sure I would've discovered without—much less given up the lazy and relaxed lifestyle I was living in order to work for that dream.

FRC has given me some amazing experi-



ences I would not have gotten elsewhere. When my team found ourselves at an unofficial competition with a skeleton crew of five, needing a new feature in a part of the code I had never touched, and with none of our MIT-bound main programmers in attendance, I sat down in my folding camp chair in our pit, pulled the code from our repository, opened the documentation, and got to work. Soon, I had successfully implemented this new feature in our robot code. Having never worked with that part of our robot code before, I was able to figure it out, even while under the pressure of competition. Nothing else has given me the kind of real-world, time-critical experience that FRC has, and I will forever be grateful for it.

FRC has bestowed me with leadership experience too. My time in robotics has seen me rise from a novice electrical team member to the control systems lead, and this year to team captain. FRC has prepared me for more than just the world of robotics; I have developed and continue to further my skills in leadership, communication, time management, problem solving, and more. I've built better working relationships using some of my knowledge about communication and negotiation from FRC; I've used my abilities to quickly problem solve in order to, among other things, repair a catapult for my physics class in only a few minutes. Unlike being able to wire an FRC robot to spec, these skills extend far beyond the scope of robotics; they are life skills, necessary to navigate the ins and outs of the working and social worlds around us, and they are a gift that keeps on giving back to me.

However, FRC is not strictly business. There's a whole community of wonderful people that comes along with it. I've often

struggled to find friend groups. I'm an introvert who'd rather spend my Friday nights sitting in my room working on a computer program than go to a party. It can be hard to make friends this way. Despite this, I've found great friends through FRC: not just the people on my own team, but those on teams I've competed alongside or against, or people I've met whilst volunteering at an offseason competition. I've enjoyed robotics

memes with total strangers on Reddit—for a fleeting moment connected only to one another by our mutual understanding of a robotics joke, until we scroll away. Maybe we'll "see" each other again, maybe we won't. But the FRC community has taken me in just the way I am, not making me feel like I needed to change anything to fit in; all that's required for entry is an enthusiasm for robotics.

My life has forever been changed by FRC

and the people involved: students and volunteers alike. It has set me on a college path, prepared me for beyond, and introduced me to friends I will never forget. I am very grateful to have been a part of this wonderful world of learning and fun, and I want to eventually be able to give back to the wonderful program that I have been so lucky to participate in.

Molly Maloy - The Common Application

At the start of practice each day we circle around our coach so he can announce who goes in which seat in which boat. During the second week of practice my sophomore year, his announcement made my stomach plummet. I was in stroke seat, the lead rower, in a boat with six seniors and two juniors. Being in stroke seat usually implies that you are the best rower in the boat, that you can set the rhythm for everyone else. In this case, my coach likely just wanted me to have the



experience of being the lead rower. I knew that wasn't how the upperclassmen would interpret it. Jealous of my seat, angry I was only fourteen, they would punish me somehow.

"Wait, who's stroke seat?" One of the senior captains, with six feet of muscle and gorgeous long hair, asked.

"Me!" I raised a hand. Carolina pretended to gag.

I ignored her and took a shaky breath, picturing myself watching Netflix at home after practice. Only have to make it through two hours.

The row ended up being worse than I feared. Gliding down the river, the upperclassmen berated me the entire time for minor mistakes. This is against basic rowing etiquette; only the coxswain speaks while in the boat. A senior, vindictive, and good friends with Carolina, this coxswain was not about to call them out.

My legs were shaking by the time I hoisted myself onto the crowded dock. Eight pairs of feet climbed out of the boat with me, their owners deadly silent. Frustration, anger, and some amount of guilt settled deep into my stomach, and that was before I heard them talking.

"That was the worst row of my life. She should not be in stroke seat." Carolina hissed to the girl in front of her. Her words burned

tears into my eyes. I held it together until I got into the carpool to head home, where I promptly burst into tears. My friend Jack and his mom were silent for a long minute, tension bubbling up in the old Audi.

"Molly? What's up?" Nervousness tinged his voice. I took a deep before I spoke, rushing the words out of my mouth.

"I was stroke and the seniors yelled at me for rushing the entire practice. And I tried so hard not to but I couldn't." I told him.

"Well, do you usually rush a lot?" He was calmer than I imagine most high school boys are when they have a girl crying in the back of their car.

"No, not really." I sniffled.

"Well, it was probably their fault then." He said matter-of-factly. "If you don't normally rush, the only reason you would is because they were rushing you." After a few more deep breaths, his words rang true in my head.

Working hard all fall, I permanently replaced Carolina in the First Four, the best boat on the team. More importantly, my confidence grew when I stopped letting other people's opinions of me affect my opinion of myself. I made the decision that I would never be someone who puts down the competition to elevate themselves. To always be Jack, and never Carolina. I would encourage others in the boat and in life.

Loey Jones-Perpich - Bard College

Why Bard College?

What anchors our memories? Why do we retain certain moments while others fade?

In the memory ward at Glacier Hills senior home, I sat at a rickety upright piano, looking at the faces around me. A few seemed curious, but most looked half asleep. I heard a faint snore. Taking a deep breath, I jumped into Chopin's Prelude No. 21, fumbling on the unfamiliar instrument, not playing what I'd call my best. But when I struck the final chord, the audience's reaction took me by surprise. People were sitting straighter; they seemed awake, and one lady exclaimed, "Keep playing!"

This was the scene of my first piano concert.

Although I had studied the instrument for ten years, I had never played a concert, and I was nervous. What if my fingers forgot the notes? My fingers were poised to begin the next piece, when a man's chair was wheeled up close behind me. "This is Carlos," the aide said. "He plays piano too."

"Chopin, right? Your rendition was wonderful," Carlos said.

Carlos hummed along as I played. He remembered each note with clarity until the final cadence, and the familiarity of the piece

seemed to bring him joy. He was eager to play for me himself, so I moved aside, unsure of what to expect.

If he had lost his memory, how could he play a piece with no music in front of him?

When I heard the sweet, clear melody of Bach's Invention in C—a piece I had learned years ago—I was again surprised: he knew the piece by heart and didn't fumble once. The invention brought back memories of my own: eighth grade me, playing on another unfamiliar upright, in an unfamiliar house the spring we moved three times in as many months. It brought to

gether the stream of his past and mine.

Months after playing that first concert, I read about recent research demonstrating music's therapeutic effect on dementia patients: the repetitions and broader patterns encoded in music unlock the past for people suffering from memory loss. But what I've seen is that music can unlock the past for us all. And music not only opens a portal to the past; it also creates bridges between people.

When I returned to the memory ward, Carlos was again wheeled up to me.

"Chopin, right? Your rendition was wonderful," he said.

Our conversation played out just as before; again, he played for me. Did this repetition indicate an absence of meaning? I believe that in life, as in music, repetitive patterns can create meaning.

Oliver Sacks wrote that memory "arises not only from direct experience but from the intercourse of many minds." Try to recall the most important moments in your life. Most involve the presence of others. Mem-

ory comes from interwoven, intersubjective experiences.

When I return next month, will Carlos remember me? Will you, a month from now, remember these words? I would argue that for the two minutes it takes me to play the prelude, for the brief time it takes you to read these words, meaning emerges.

As someone who values human connection, I seek ways to foster the creation of common memories. I plan nightly Bananagrams competitions with my brothers to ensure that I hear about their days. In Calculus, I insist on "class bonding" time, claiming that if we connect we'll learn more effectively. Playing with Carlos exemplifies what I strive to do with my music and in my life. At another unfamiliar upright in a communal space at college, I will again try to create shared experiences and form bonds that secure memory.

We all suffer from memory loss. We all have imperfect memory systems. But with each forged connection, with each repeti-

tion--in music or in the patterns of our lives--our memories are woven together with the memories of others, becoming brighter and infused with feeling.



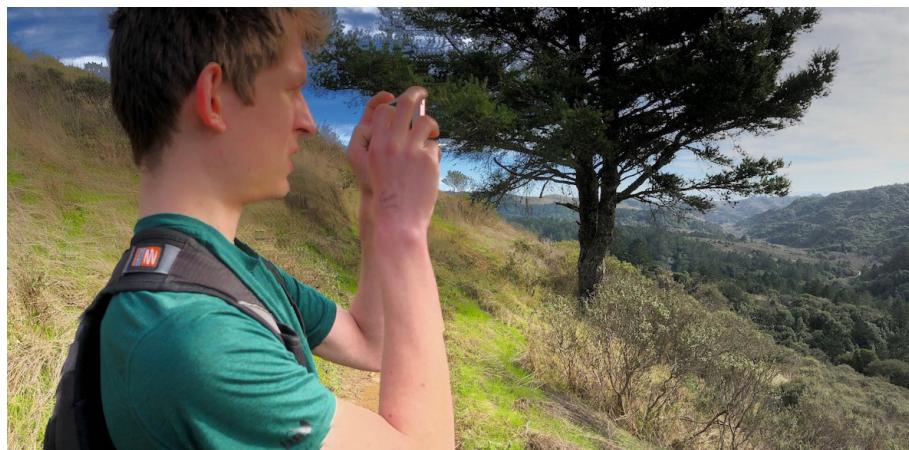
Andrew Plonter - The Common Application

Describe a topic, idea, or concept you find so engaging that it makes you lose all track of time. Why does it captivate you? What or who do you turn to when you want to learn more?

I have always enjoyed tinkering around with computers. When I was young, I would come up with things I wanted my computer to do, and would Google my questions and bodge code together until it was working. Most of the things I made were not exactly *useful* (I once spent an entire afternoon making a program that switched my desktop background to a random image several times per second), but I certainly had fun making them. I loved the fact that it was always possible to accomplish my goals; I just had to gain enough knowledge to do so. I love the puzzle in figuring out how to approach any given problem as well as the things you can do with the results. Both the act of programming itself and the stuff done

with it afterwards are incredibly interesting to me, which is why I'm planning on studying Computer Engineering. As a sophomore, I joined my school's robotics team as a programmer. Our team is a member of FIRST Robotics, wherein many high school teams plan, design, build, and program robots to achieve various tasks on a playing field. The thing I enjoy about programming a robot is that I can directly control something in front of me with the code that I get to write. There's something tangibly different in feeling between merely moving 1s and 0s around to make things happen on a computer screen and doing the same to make events occur in real life. On the other side of the spectrum lies another activity I love:

CTF competitions. CTF (Capture the Flag) competitions consist of a series of challenges where you are presented with an intentionally-vulnerable system and tasked with extracting a "flag", or string of characters in a certain format, from it. To beat the challenge requires you to discover and exploit the weakness present. I love CTFs because they perfectly encapsulate the creative aspect of programming. The joy you get from solving puzzles that you have been stuck on for hours is comparable to little else, and having them be within my favorite field only adds to the enjoyment. I love the feeling of dissecting a challenge and coming up with potential approaches to solve it. The exciting thing about CTFs is that the solution is not usually obvious and requires you to try and fail a number of times in order to find it. This type of iterative problem solving is present in all programming and I especially love the emphasis on it here. I have always loved computers. The act of taking in a problem, analyzing it, and designing a solution is at the core of engineering and programming alike. Since I was young, I have always enjoyed this process, whether in the context of computer science, mathematics, or physics. To me, programming is the essence of engineering distilled into its most pure form: computers will do exactly what you tell them to, and programming is the process of determining what instructions to give them.



Simone Mahler - The Common Application

Discuss an accomplishment, event, or realization that sparked a period of personal growth and a new understanding of yourself or others.

Passion, drive, escape, are words I would use to describe dance. Dance is a light that holds clarity and brings joy to my life. Being only 4 when I began dancing means I was kind of all over the place. But dance was always the place where I could have fun but also learn discipline and control. It was the one thing that could get me off technology and into the studio. One word determined my future, and I couldn't have been happier.

In a flash, time shot me to the age of 7 where the news of a chronic knee injury was painted in my future. Year after year I'd end up on crutches because my knees would lock up. No one knew why or how it happened but it did, and concern grew. I didn't think much of it, but my parents, friends and dance teachers were worried about what my future would hold. Luckily, I was determined not to let my pain define me and I would push through until I couldn't anymore. Just as breathing keeps you alive, dance did that for me. It allowed myself to access all the anxiety, glee, and distress built up from inside of me and exhibit them to the universe. But no

longer was that a part of my world.

MRI's, CT scans, x-rays, physical therapy, acupuncture, deep tissue massage, none could explain why my knees would lock up every year. After 7 years, the endless searching for an answer left me with one choice. Dance was no longer going to be the breath that kept me alive. Quitting my one thing left me in pieces. I was lost in a place that seemed to have no way out. No backup plan, no choices to choose from. Everything felt gone. A sophomore in high school with no idea what to do next. I had no idea how to start moving toward something new. I didn't even think I wanted to. But knowing what state I was, I knew for my family, friends and even myself I needed to find something that could feed the hunger of needing an escape from reality. Nothing could beat dance but I knew I could find things that could make me feel the way I felt when I danced. That's when I began my search.

Being in dance all my life never left time to find anything I could be good at outside of dance. Completely starting over meant

discovering more of me. I learned that I love helping people, being around children, and how much I actually value education. With these new things, possibilities rose in terms of what I could do next. The answer I had been looking for had finally come out of the shadows. Once a jumble of words like alphabet soup, now turned into psychology, social work, child therapist and so many more paths. All things I could be just as passionate about as dance made me feel. The options that presented itself made me feel excited to go down a new path. Even though it wasn't the path I anticipated, it was a road that would lead me to success. Dance will always be my number one passion, but finding other drives that push me to be the best me in the end will help me succeed in life. The incentives to make my parents, friends and myself proud almost promised that things would work out. Everything happens for a reason I believe and this journey just proved me right.

Leah Dame - The Common Application

The sticky midnight air twisted our frizzy hair into messy curls and caked our faces in heavy sweat. There was never a cooling breeze or break from the humid summer heat. After messing around on skateboards and razor scooters in an elementary school parking lot, my friends: Alex and Zoe, and I decided it was time to head back to Alex's house to escape the tiring conditions.

Ann Arbor-Saline road was practically empty—the soft lights from the street lamps were the only thing covering the road. We drove up onto the bridge, with the speaker at full volume and laughter bouncing inside Alex's blue Honda. I turned to look out the passenger window: watching the headlights from the stream of cars below us.

Standing out against the black night, a surprising figure snuck into my line of view; a man, dressed in a red Five Guys t-shirt, sat on the concrete ledge of the bridge, feet hanging over I-94.

I still have unanswered questions about that night: What was his name? Did he just get off work? Was he there for adrenaline? But in that moment none of them passed through my mind. After the two second glimpse I got of him, there was only one question I didn't want answered: Was he going to jump? My stomach slid up to the back of my throat as my breath shuddered

with each exhale. No matter his intentions, I wasn't going to wonder later that night how his ended. I unbuckled my seatbelt and spoke to Alex over the rumbling bass: "Stop the car."

Alex made a U-turn and drove on to the



other side of the vacant road. In fear of wasting another second, Zoe, my friend in the backseat, and I propped our doors open before the car came to a stop. I hopped outside the car, ran across the double yellow lines, and called out to him: "Hey, are you okay? Let's talk."

When he saw me, he got startled and hopped down from the ledge. As he speed walked down the side of the road, I tried keeping up with him, still asking the same question over again. He kept his head down, so I couldn't see his face and repeated the same answer over again: "I'm fine."

It wasn't my responsibility to follow him until he made it to the sidewalk or to annoy him into answering me. He was safe and a row of speedy cars was approaching over the bridge, so I hurried back into the car and let him carry on.

The silence on the drive back to Alex's left time for us to reflect on what just happened. I thought about walking into a Five Guys and seeing the same man behind the register. Just from appearance alone, I would have no idea if any dark thoughts or internal struggles were present in his life.

He, just like everyone else in the world blends into a blur of indistinguishable faces we collect in our memories. Everyone of those faces however has a life and soul be

hind all the skin and bones. Humans, every 7.7 billion of them, have an important story to care about, and I feel like I can connect to any of them through that story.

I've always been interested in the lives of the new people I meet and the ones around

the world who have no knowledge of my existence. Their stories matter because an entire world is unveiled when someone shares their story. Even the simplest of stories are powerful and vital when developing an exchange of respect and understanding be-

tween two people.

That's why I needed to stop for that man on the ledge: his story, and what he might have been going through. That night reminds me everyday, that everyone has a story worth telling.

Neva Siers - The Common Application

Discuss an accomplishment, event, or realization that sparked a period of personal growth and a new understanding of yourself or others.

It was the second week of school my sophomore year. I walked into my World Lit class: the desks were in circles, our seating chart was projected on the screen, copies of The Iliad were on every desk. There were two seniors and three sophomores in my group.



The teacher announced, "We are going to go around in your groups and read the story together." My heart raced, my face turned red, and my nervous laugh took over. I immediately told my group, "That's not happening." No one in my group knew that I couldn't

read. But, my group wouldn't let me get out of reading. So, I did. The sophomore boy to my right started laughing by the time I butchered the word "ancient" in the first sentence.

After that class, I went home sobbing into my mom's arms, and I told her something wasn't right - that it had never been right. I knew I needed to get tested for a learning disability. My mom took me to get tested in November. In January, my mom, dad, and I went into the doctor's office to get the results from the test. Dr. Lauer told me over and over again, "You are so smart." He had me repeat it throughout the entire meeting. When he told me that I had dyslexia, my immediate reaction was relief. I was sitting on a giant, brown couch sandwiched between my parents, and I took a deep breath - I finally knew what was wrong with me. I came out of Dr. Lauer's office with a new sense of self-confidence and knowing I was smart, just different.

At school, I was able to become part of the Independent Learning Center, which helped me advocate for myself and use accommodations. From kindergarten until junior year, I worked for hours every night on homework; I worked so hard that no one recognized that I had a disability. None of my teachers - even teachers that I worked closely with during class, lunchtime, and after school - ever suspected that I had dyslex-

ia; I hid it with my hard-work.

The summer between sophomore and junior year I did a six-week reading program for four hours every day. It wasn't what I wanted to be doing, but it was what I had to do. In my brain I was never taught how to read, and reading didn't just happen for me. I went all the way back to sounding out vowels and consonants; at times I felt like I was doing first grade work, but it was work that I needed to do. I used to see pages full of letters, but now I can read the words and picture the content. The summer I was 16, I learned how to read.

Growing up, Dyslexia was my unnamed disability that made me feel embarrassed and dumb. It taught me how to work though - how to put in hours and hours. I am no longer embarrassed about having dyslexia. Naming what I have made all the difference to me, and it gave me the tools that I will use for the rest of my life. My constant struggle of the past is replaced with renewed confidence for the future. The next time I walk into a classroom where we are reading aloud in groups, I will know how to pronounce the word "ancient." Should I come across a word that I struggle with, I will also be strong enough to turn to the boy next to me if he starts laughing and say, "That's my dyslexia acting up, but I will get this."

Jacob Perlmutter - The Common Application

I've had many encounters and experiences that have changed the way I view the world. I've learned lessons that taught me what truly matters. Over the years I've come to realize that some of the most impactful of them were not actually experiences I had directly. I have never been in a relationship that put a temporary block between me and my loved ones. My mother has, and from her experience I gained the ability to know who to keep close. I have never lost either of my parents. My cousins have, and from their experience

I have learned to cherish what I have when I have it. I was born into a family that made my well-being a priority. My friend was not, and from his experience I have learned to appreciate my parents and the sacrifices they make for my happiness.

One experience in particular forever changed not how I look at the world, but how I look at myself. On my sixteenth birthday my father was admitted to the hospital. By this time he had been to the hospital countless times, without a diagnosis for four

years, with persistent high fevers and chills. I wasn't expecting anything other than yet another frustrating and ill-boding "we don't know." I honestly wasn't very nervous. The feeling of not knowing had become normal. Tests revealed my father was in renal failure, with the cause unknown, and left untreated would result in his death. What he endured for years was due to an unusual bacterial infection hidden within his heart that had now entered his blood stream. The complex open heart surgery he needed required transport-

ing him to the Cleveland Clinic in Ohio.

While in recovery from a successful surgery, I was by his side as often as I could be, helping him however I was able. My life, to my knowledge, was unchanged. My health remained great, relationships with friends and family were made stronger, and I was happy that my father's mystery was solved. I thought that chapter of my life was over, that I had dealt with it and could move on. I was wrong.

That same summer, at the Messianic Jewish camp I had been attending for three years, I participated in a healing prayer service. In the past I would go into them with a preconceived notion of what to work through, which had worked for me. Last year I took the same approach with a totally different outcome. My plan was to feel emotions I may have bottled up at the time of my father's near-death experience. In hindsight that is exactly what happened, but instead of the expected emotions I felt joy. I didn't deny



or ignore the joy, I just didn't understand it.

A few days later, I talked to a camp counselor about my experience explaining there was still something I needed to feel in order to be at peace. What he said led me to an epiphany that changed how I approach my life. I realized that small chapter of my life allowed me to open my eyes to new ways of living the rest of it. It helped me to gain the courage to want to go out into the world and find out who I truly am in a way that will bring me closer to God. This has encouraged me to seek opportunities that I can say are my experiences, ones I can learn from for myself. Going to college and all that it offers is something I've looked forward to my entire life. I now see it as an opportunity to take greater control of my life and seek the adventures that will lead to discovering my purpose in this world, one which I will whole-heartedly embrace.

Morraina Tuzinsky - The Common Application

Reflect on a time when you questioned or challenged a belief or idea. What prompted your thinking? What was the outcome?

Standing among four other confirmands under the afternoon light coming in through the church ceiling windows with my grandmother's hand on my shoulder, I didn't know what I was doing. The truth was I did know what I was doing, but I had no clue why. I knew what my family was doing here and what I was doing wearing a dress with my hair done all fancy; I was being confirmed into the Catholic church. But eighth grade me was having trouble knowing what that really meant. Now after about four years of questioning and not knowing the answers to my questions, I understand that I will never know all the answers.

Let's take a trip back to seventh grade. The year before my confirmation, I started thinking about the church and its beliefs. I expressed my displeasure with attending mass to my mom, but she wanted me to go because it was time with our family. At school I talked with my friends about my doubts of the Catholic church. I realize now that I felt religion was looked down upon by kids my age.

By eighth grade, I had made a deal with my mom that I would go through the training and classes for confirmation and then make a decision about being confirmed. I had the idea in my head that I would not be confirmed. However, I was wrong. I ended up getting confirmed because of the obvious disapproval my grandparents had towards me not doing so. I resented the decision for a while, but now I'm happy that I made that

decision. I feel that I would have regretted it if I had not gotten confirmed.

Now, as a senior, I think about the struggles I had with watching as my uncle lost his fight with cancer, losing my grandpa just days after my 16th birthday, losing of a close childhood friend to suicide, and a freshman year filled with numerous teenage deaths before the end of the first semester. And it was after all that, when I was able to say that I consider myself a religious person. Some people may think that a lot of death

turns people away from believing in a higher power. I understand the argument that if there was actually a high power bad things wouldn't happen to good people. But for me I find myself needing to believe that the lives of these good people couldn't just be over and that there is some version of a peaceful safe haven for them.

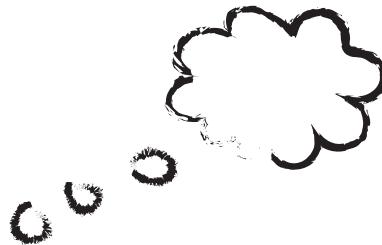
I guess you could say this means I believe in heaven; it just took me some time to find it.



Dear Seniors,

1. Find and pursue your passion(s). Expand your world and embrace it.
2. Nurture true friendship. Spend time with people you admire, who bring out the best in you and with whom you do more than "hang out."
3. Spend time in all six areas of wellness. Round out your wheel.
4. Get some sleep, get some exercise and eat real food.
5. Laugh. In the end, life is absurd. Enjoy it.
6. Express gratitude, be kind, give in.
7. Disconnect. Unplug. Turn Off. Shut Down.
8. Go outside and play. Remember the joy of fresh air.
9. Give back. Honor your community and be a contributing member.
10. Take risks. Fail. Learn. Repeat.

- Robbie



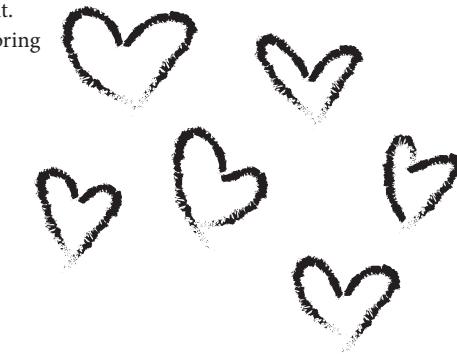
'The best thing for being sad,' replied Merlin, beginning to puff and blow, "to learn something. That's the only thing that never fails. You may grow old and trembling in your anatomies, you may lie awake at night listening to the disorder of your veins, you may miss your only love, you may see the world about you devastated by evil lunatics, or know your honor trampled in the sewers of baser minds. There is only one thing for it then — to learn. Learn why the world wags and what wags it. That is the only thing which the mind can never exhaust, never alienate, never be tortured by, never fear or distrust, and never dream of regretting. Learning is the only thing for you. Look what a lot of things there are to learn.' By T.H. White, The Once and Future King.

- Prof



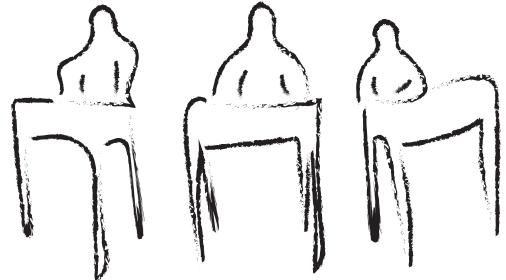
I started this habit back in the early 70's when I was in college. This was the time when the folk revival was in full swing. There was a popular song titled 'Keep on the Sunny Side.' Here are the lyrics to the chorus: 'Keep on the sunny side, always on the sunny side. Keep on the sunny side of life. It will help us every day, it will brighten all the way. If we keep on the sunny side of life.' The habit I developed was that if I was walking down a street, and the sun was shining on the other side of the street, I would cross over and 'walk on the sunny side.' I've been doing it ever since. I always cross to the sunny side. It's a choice, happiness is a choice. You can choose happiness and the sunny side everyday.

- Ed



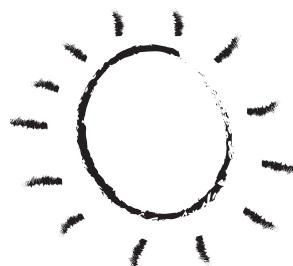
Please remember to bring mass with you whenever you go to a party. Thank you very much for learning with me, I enjoyed learning with you.

- JTP



Remember, life rewards like jazz rewards! It rewards the prepared, those who listen, and those who are ready to improvise! Make your time on this planet one big jam session!

- Jack



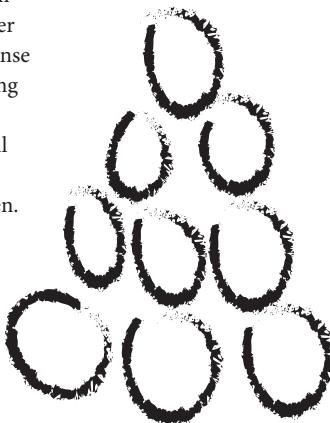
Toutes les grandes personnes ont d'abord été des enfants, mais peu d'entre elles s'en souviennent.
(All grown-ups were once children... but only few of them remember it.)

Voici mon secret. Il est très simple: on ne voit bien qu'avec le cœur. L'essentiel est invisible pour les yeux. (And now here is my secret, a very simple secret: It is only with the heart that one can see rightly; what is essential is invisible to the eye.) From Antoine de Saint-Exupéry in 'Le Petit Prince.'

Remember to hang on tightly to your childhood dreams and curiosities — keep drawing, don't get caught up in numbers and watch out for the baobabs! Above all, remember the fox's wisdom that the most important things in life are the ones that your heart can see. Les pierres du chantier ne sont en vrac qu'en apparence, s'il est, pe du dans le chantier, un homme, serait-il seul, qui pense cathédrale. (A rock pile ceases to be a rock pile the moment a single man contemplates it, bearing within him the image of a cathedral.) From Saint-Exupéry in 'Pilote de Guerre.'

As you graduate from high school and begin your next chapter: will you see rock piles, or will you see cathedrals? Will you find the extraordinary within the ordinary? In order to see the extraordinary, you will have to look for it, and to look for it, you will have to have your eyes open. In truth, you will need to be open. I hope that you believe that within every rock pile there is a cathedral. Be open and find it! Au revoir et bon courage!

- Madame

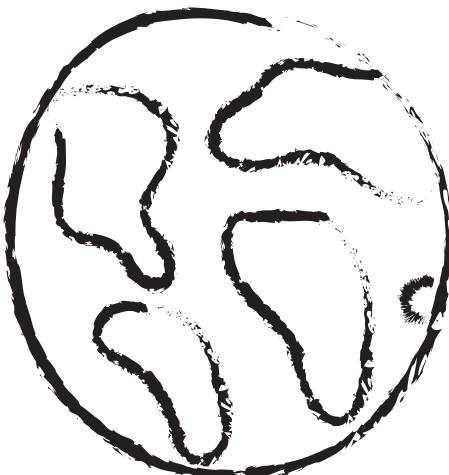


Last night I watched 'Graduate Together: America Honors the High School Class of 2020.' There were so many great messages in it: use what the world puts in front of you; sometimes it won't go your way; accept every challenge; building your community is how you build your world; graduation is your passage into adulthood; don't be afraid; be part of the solution; and set the world on a different path. And, there was one more message that has been said to your graduating class from the moment you walked into high school: We need you.

I agree completely. We do need you. But, you are asked again and again to fix problems – really big problems – that you didn't create. For some perspective, when I was 18, no one looked at me and told me that I needed to fix the biggest problems in our world. So, I want to say that I am sorry for all of the times that you are asked to do this. And, I am sorry about the truth in the demands. We do need you to envision a world that has a different path than the one we are currently on.

As you step into adulthood, I encourage you to decide what is important to you, what makes you feel complete and what values you want to live by. If you do that, I know that you will help our world find a different path. To the Class of 2020, I wish you a full and beautiful life.

- Tracy



*With love,
Your teachers*

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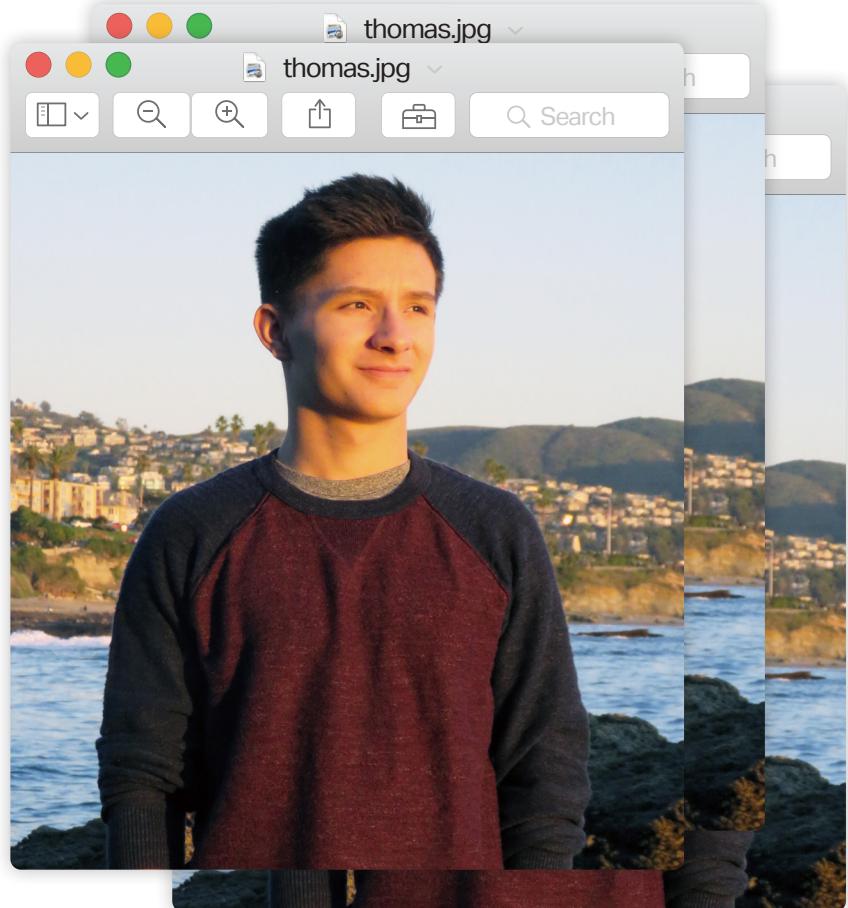
SENIOR PROFILES

Our senior edition this year comes at a strange time for humanity. With a raging global pandemic, political uncertainty and economic instability, the class of 2020 has the added stress of a virtual end to their senior year.

Goodbyes are being cut short, classes are becoming more stressful as they move online and uncertainty about college and the job market is growing. So much has been taken from this graduating class, so we wanted to highlight as many of their stories as possible. The following pages contain the words of much of the class of 2020 about their experience over the past four years: gratitude for teachers, love for friends and memories of high school. We hope you take the time to explore these stories, for they contain much-needed solace and wisdom.

Thomas Duda Cortes

I'm going to miss just going through the halls and seeing new faces literally every day. I'm definitely going to miss all the relationships that I made with teachers. I had my freshman year at Skyline, and it's a completely different vibe with the teachers. I feel that every teacher really loves every student here. Moe has probably made the most impact on me because he just really taught me how to be a leader, but also be friendly and respectful. We always had really great conversations, whether it was about what I was thinking about doing in the future, or how his family was or just what movie I saw last weekend.



Etai Smotrich-Barr

I actually wasn't sure about [CHS] when I came. I was kind of interested; I liked the off-campus thing; I liked the more personal relationships with your teachers. So I applied, and I was like, 'If I get in, I'll think about it.' Then I got it, and my mom was like, 'No actually, you have to go.' Honestly, I kind of panicked about it the first semester. Then I looked up in the Spring of my freshman year, and I realized I was having a great time, and I was having a much better experience than any of my friends at Pioneer as freshman. I kind of realized the community at Community is something incredibly unique and, as a freshman, the relationship with teachers — which you would never get at a bigger school — and being able to go off campus, the independence that it gave, was something really special. It was kind of a slow process, and I wasn't sure about it, but I looked up one day, and I was like, 'Holy cow. I'm so lucky to be here.' It was linked to springtime. Spring at Community is maybe my favorite time ever: it's beautiful out, everyone sits on the back lawn, you get to eat outside with your friends, all the teachers are so chill, you end up doing all these incredible projects, you're running around the school gathering stuff. Everything just becomes so light and fun. Community is just buzzing at that time of year. That's really when the uniqueness of Community comes out and when you get opportunities that you would never have at another school. Spring on Community's campus is one of my favorite things in the world.

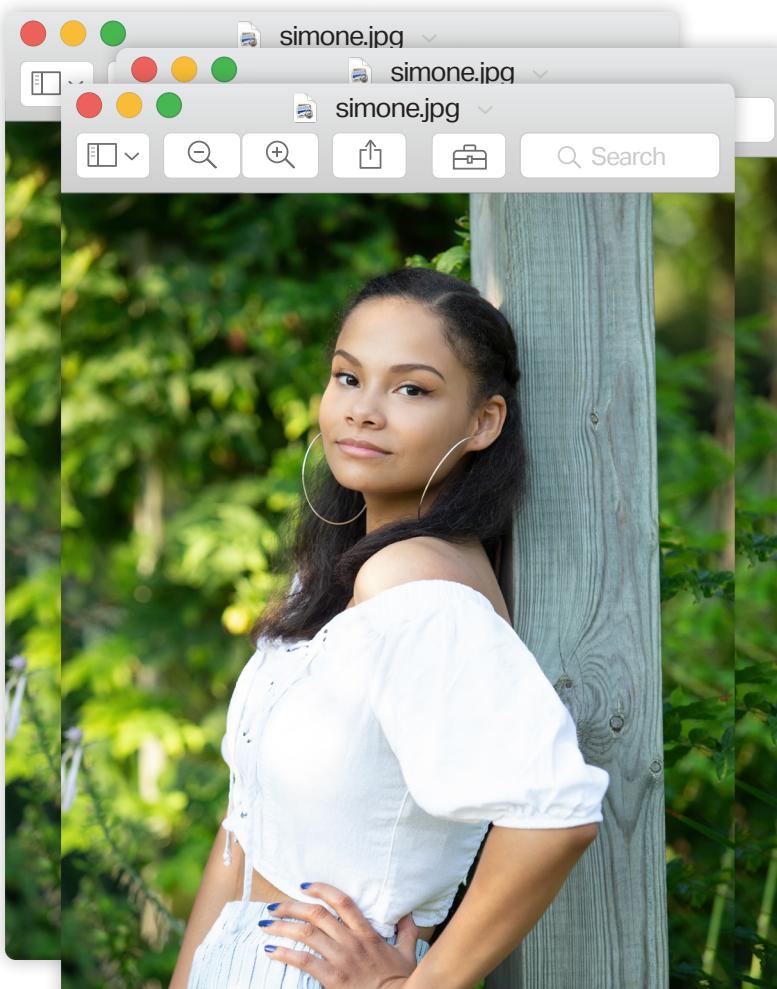
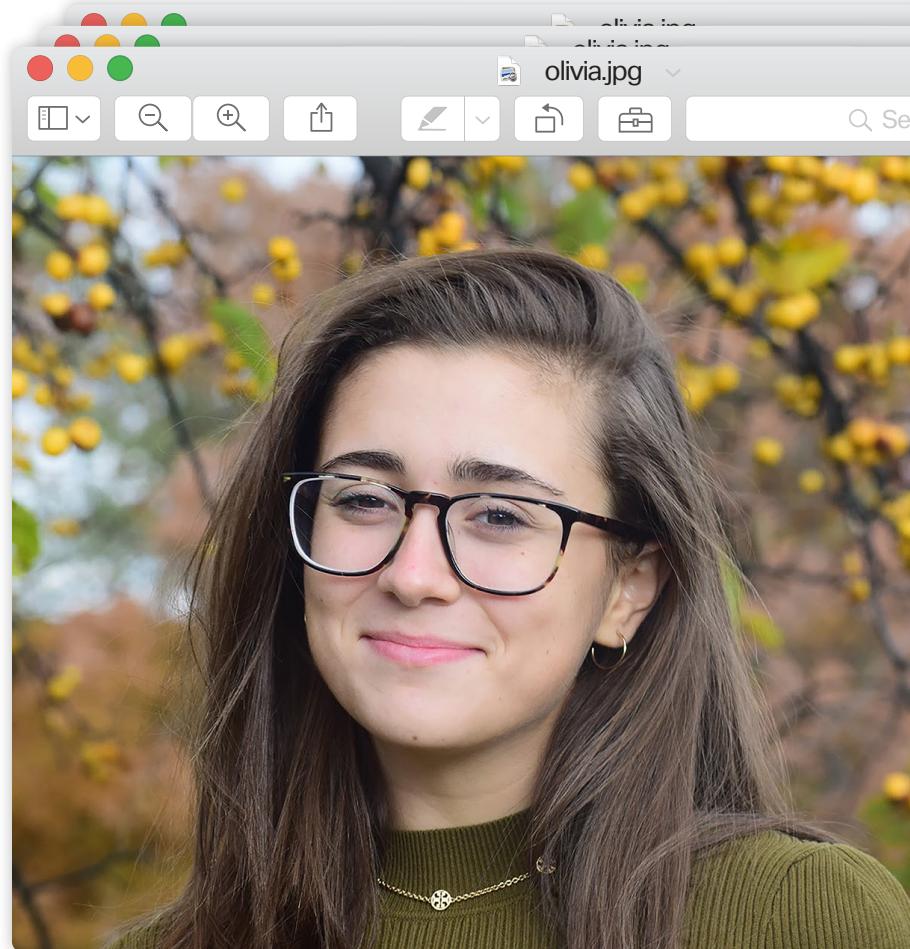


Olivia Lyle

I'm a pretty shy person, and going into freshman year, things like public speaking and talking in class were really hard for me. I'm just remembering in Intro to Lit we had to do these things where you had to share a story that happened in your life, and that was really, really scary. But now after four years, it's probably something that I could do really easily. And I think that has to do with the kind of environment that Community gives, where the teachers are encouraging lots of different people to speak up, and that's really helped me.

I think it also has to do with confidence in my abilities as a student. I'd say that a teacher who has really helped me is Maneesha because math is something that I've never really felt confident with, but I had her for Algebra 2 and now Calculus, she's really encouraging, and I would eat lunch with her all the time. I feel like it's really special that Community teachers will help a student out, or give up their lunch hour to help you understand something.

[If I was talking to my freshman self] I would say: if you're worried about what people are going to think about what you're saying, there's a good chance that they're gonna forget within like 30 seconds of whatever comes out of your mouth. I know I can't remember what someone said freshman year of high school. I wish I wasn't so scared of what people thought because I couldn't tell you a single thing that someone said freshmen or sophomore year.

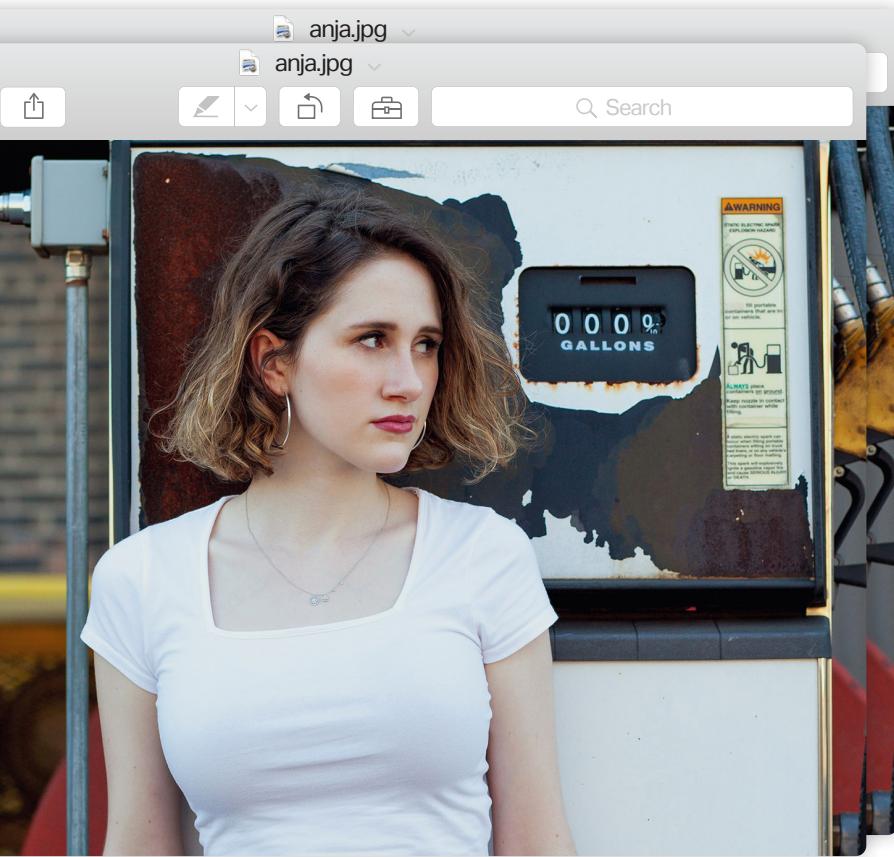


Simone Mahler

[A piece of advice I'd give my freshman self would be] to open yourself up to teachers and friends faster because it's a good school to do that. You have all the teachers and people around you at that school supporting you constantly. I had a hard time finding myself freshman year because I was at Pioneer and Community, so it was hard to figure out where I fit in well.

I am a very shy person when I meet new people, so it's very hard for me to be myself around people. Freshman year, I didn't really talk to anyone at Community besides the people I knew from middle school. It was really hard trying to feel like I fit in our community. I think definitely being myself around people, learning how to get out of my shell quicker and then find people who can support me well enough that I can feel like I can be myself was the biggest thing I did.

Matt wanted me to speak at the opening ceremony for Community, which I would have never done when I was younger. And he came up to me at the end and said, 'I'm so proud of you, you've grown so much and gotten out of your shell,' and that was something that I saw, and I was like, 'Wow I really did it.' I am me. I'm being me around people.

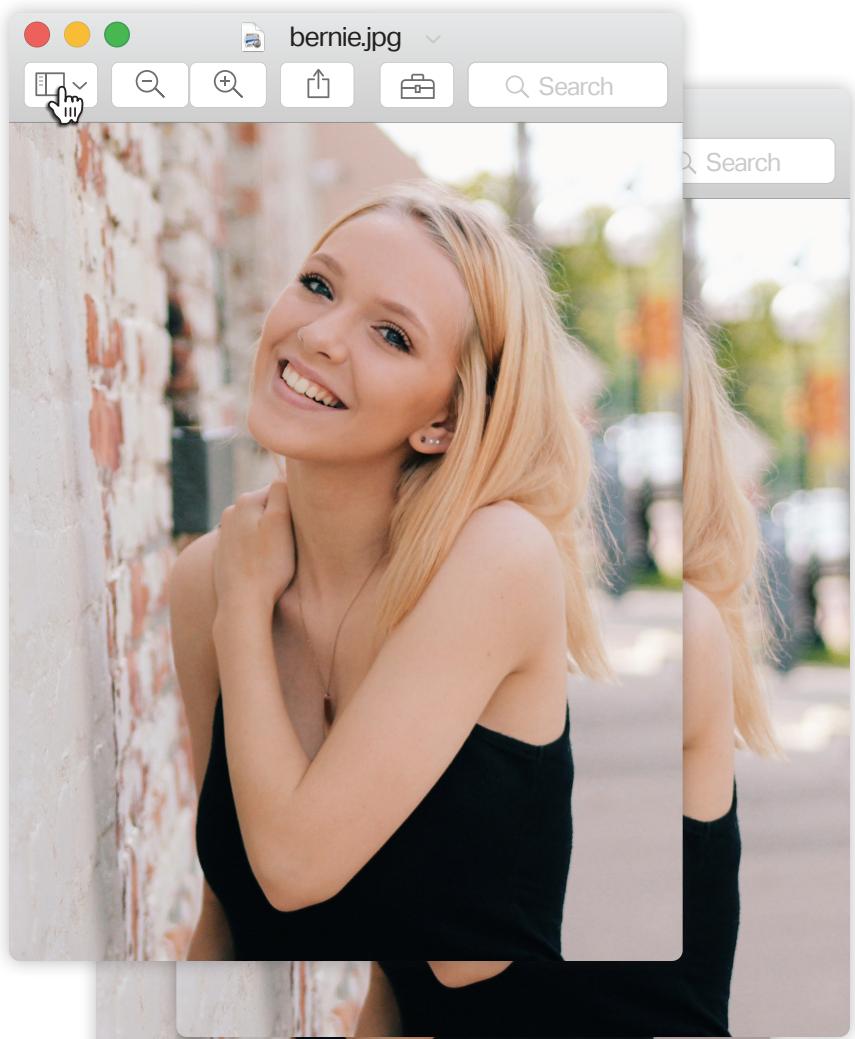


Anja Jacobson

I started high school with almost no friends. So the first couple days of my freshman year, I sat completely alone. Then, after a couple days, this group of sophomores and juniors came up to me, and they were like, 'Hey, do you wanna eat with us?' Quickly, they became some of my closest friends, and I felt so welcomed and so accepted, and I found out that I had a lot in common with these people. They showed me all of the amazing things Community has to offer. I'm just so thankful that I found Community. In my eighth grade year — even starting my freshman year — I was in a pretty bad place in my life where I just was not very happy, and then coming to Community and feeling so accepted and like I could actually be myself, I got so much happier. I attribute a lot of the happiness I have now to that shift from Forsythe to Community. I'm so sad to be leaving. My senior quote is, 'I'm so glad I didn't go to Skyline.' There are zero ounces of regret. I'm so happy that my high school was Community High School.

Bernie Barasa

Going to the 2019 graduation was probably my favorite memory because it was all of the people that I grew up with together in one place. It was sad to say goodbye, but it was interesting to see because I've never been to a graduation before. It was interesting to see how everyone had really nice things to say about Community. The teachers are so amazing, and they really care about you. All the memories I have with Courtney are really important to me because she was like my mom figure throughout high school. I feel like I'm just gonna keep a really good relationship with her until whenever. Just going into her class, and even after a really long break or summer, we just picked up right where we left off. We're really good friends, I feel like. She's just the best person I know, honestly. My freshman year, we were saying goodbye to seniors, and I was really close with her for my freshman year. She told me she's going to be sad when I am a senior and have to leave, and it was weird to think about that because it was going to be in three years, but it's happening now, and it's not the way I wanted it to be, of course. We're really close, and I feel like we're the same person.



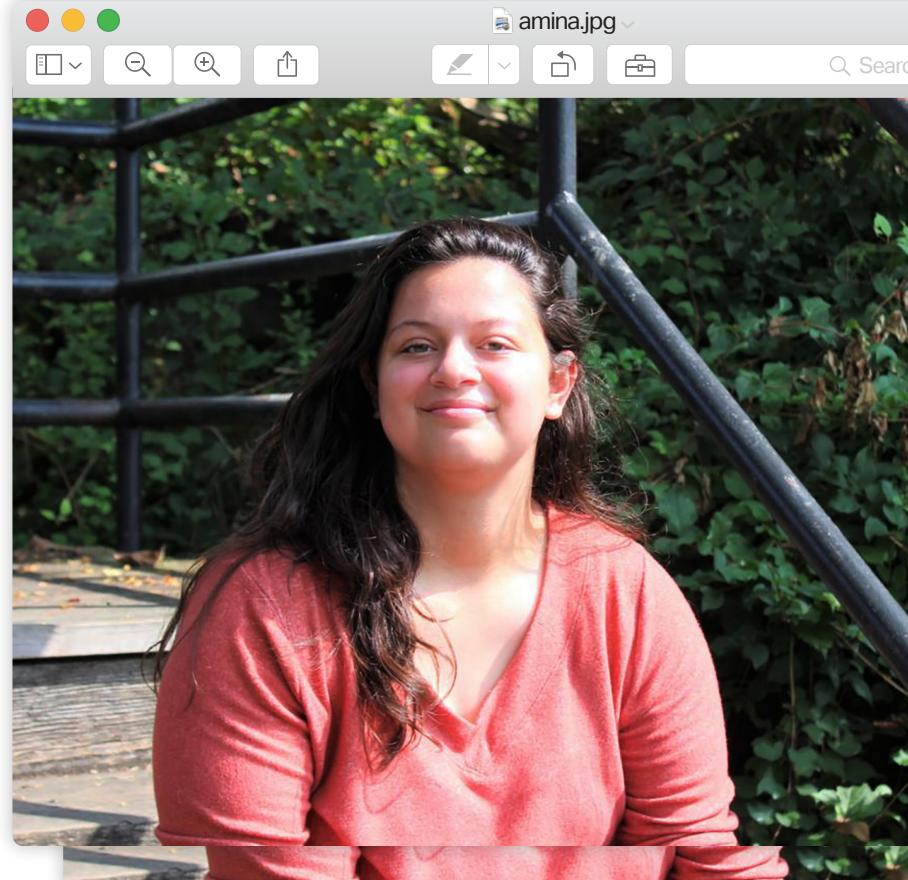


Atticus Dewey

My past four years of high school, I've worked extremely hard to accomplish several different things: [I've become] one of the print editors-in-chief for The Communicator; one of the youngest swim and water polo captains at Skyline; and I've transformed [the Yearbook] to something I'm really proud of because it's something that people can really look back on and be happy that they have. I'm a very work-centered person, and that means that I'm not really available to spend time [with people] outside of school because during the normal school year, I'm working from 5 a.m. to 9 or 10 p.m., which doesn't leave much time in my schedule to spend time with others. While I'm of the belief that working hard is something we all should strive for, I've also come to the realization that accomplishing goals and getting things done should not be done at the expense of relationships with others. Looking back at everything I've done in the past four years, I've realized that I've been able to do some of these things by disregarding relationships with people I truly value. While I've loved everything I've done these past four years and made some truly great connections with people, it's something I wish I would have recognized sooner and would have done things differently if I could go back and do it all over again. As the famous saying goes, 'You need to stop and smell the roses.' But c'est la vie. I've enjoyed everything that's happened during my time here.

Amina Ebrahim

I definitely think I became more chill [in high school]. I used to be really anxious freshman and sophomore year, really quiet. But I think throughout high school, I got more chill — more likely to raise my hand, more likely to talk, a little bit more friendly. I'm still not very loud, but I talk a lot more. Freshman year I came here with like one friend because no one from my middle school came to Community. And then the more friends I got, the more outgoing I became. The more friends I got, the more confident I became, and the more confident I was, the more okay [I was] with people hearing what I had to say. [I learned] that people at Community are there to help you, not to judge you. The vibe of Community is really friendly and outgoing and wants to help. I feel like taking that [vibe] with me will definitely help me in the future. I'm definitely going to try to be more outgoing at college. I wasn't super outgoing [at Community], so I think I'm going to try and do that in college. I want to try to help people — if someone doesn't understand something, I'm going to try to help them understand it.

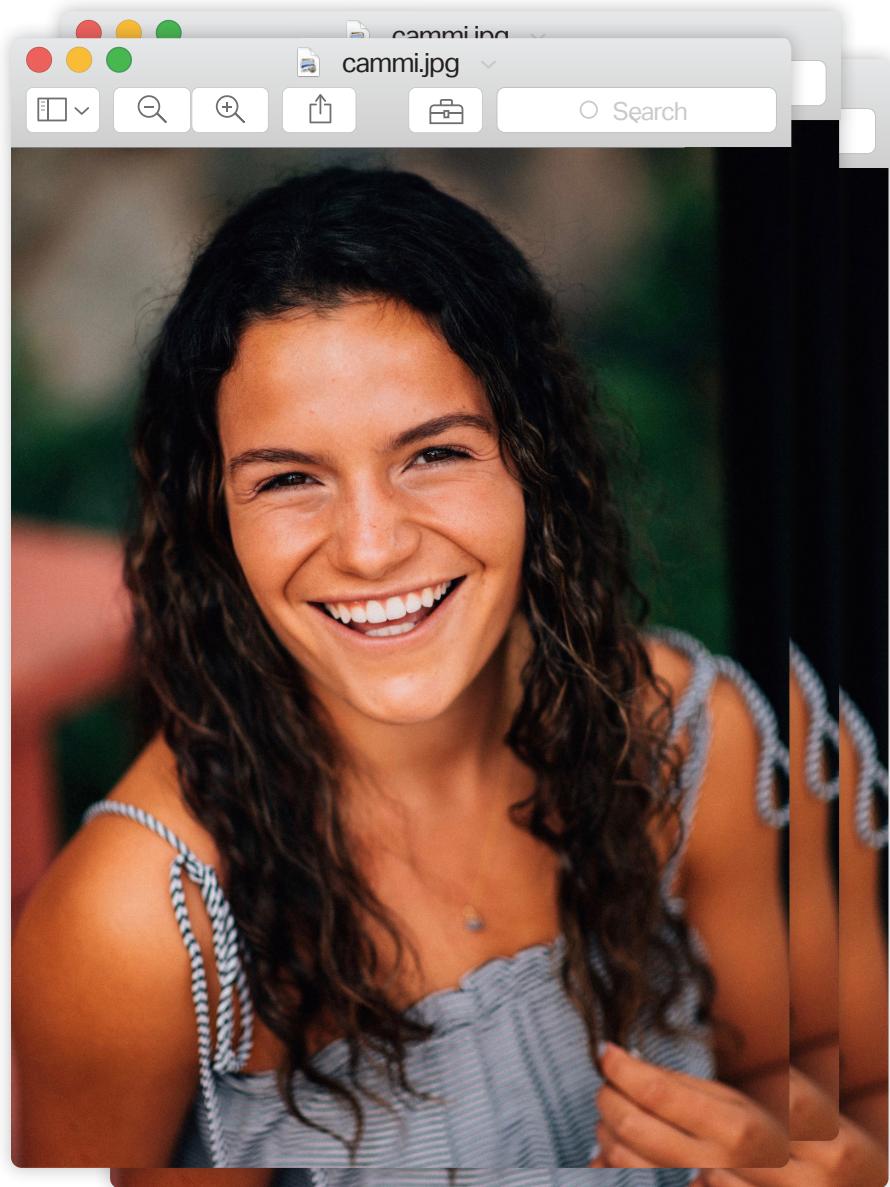


Cammi Tirico

I remember Connect with Community, when all the eighth graders that got into Community come to visit and you get assigned different forums. It's completely random. I was assigned to Robbie's forum with Ruby Taylor. We were kind of scared of some of the other kids. So we were bonding and talking to each other. It's kind of funny that we were each other's closest friends at Connect with Community, and we'd never met each other before that. Then we ended up being best friends throughout the four years of high school. That's my first exciting memory of Community.

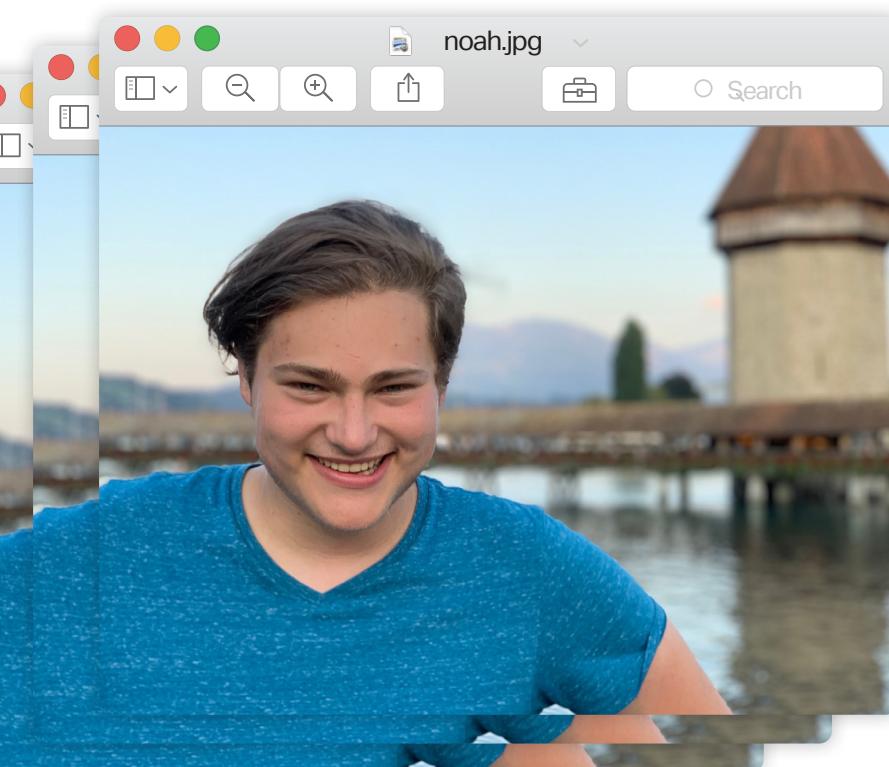
One of my favorite places is the back lawn. In the spring and towards the end of school, it's so nice to just be outside and be with your friends. My favorite is on market days when you're outside, and there are so many people around, and people go across the street and get slushies or food from the vendors. It's just a special place. Besides that, I like the third floor ledge and Tracy's room, just because I feel like I spent so much time there. It's like the hub of everyone. Tracy's impromptu speeches are always inspirational, and I feel like she always knows what everyone needs to hear. She does it in such a casual way, which is always so nice. We had production on my birthday last year. She brought a cake, and we had it on the third floor. It was so fun and so cute.

I'm going to study journalism and global health at Northwestern next year. But recently I've been thinking about doing medicine. So, not at all related. In middle school, I liked math and writing, but I hated reading and science. I think taking the science classes and english classes at Community taught me these subjects can be so much more interesting than they used to be. I never in a million years would have considered a science or medicine profession without Community.



Noah Pike

At the beginning of high school, I was trying to be the stereotypical jock kid. I did rowing for like a year and a half. I think I was trying to fit into a stereotype and a niche that wasn't for me. I was trying to be like the 'manly man,' but it didn't work for me. I have a different personality. I was unhappy. Then basically in sophomore year, I was like, 'This isn't going to work for me,' and I quit rowing. It was a bit of a crisis. I eventually ended up doing theater and Mock Trial, and I just really sort of changed what I was doing. The guys [on rowing] were friendly and all, but I didn't connect with them as much as I did with people who did Mock Trial or theater. I think [in life you have to] stop pretending to be something you're not and sort of follow what you actually want to do. Your parents and everyone else wants you to do stuff, but you have to find out what you actually want to do.



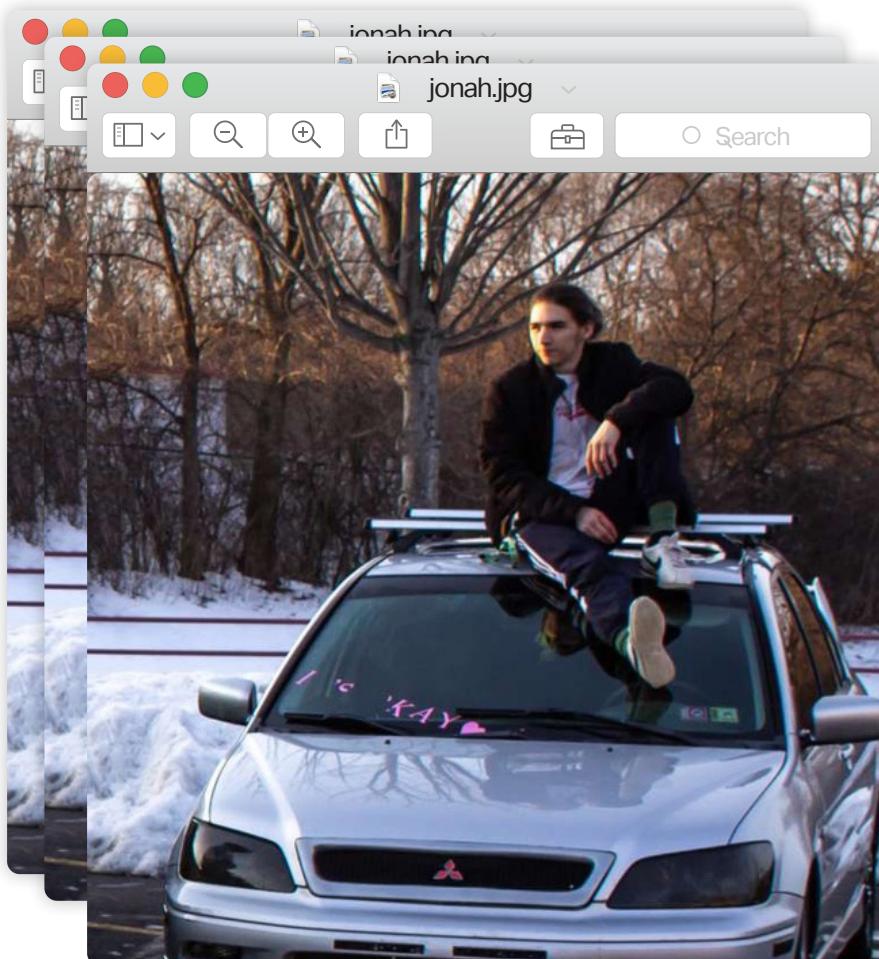
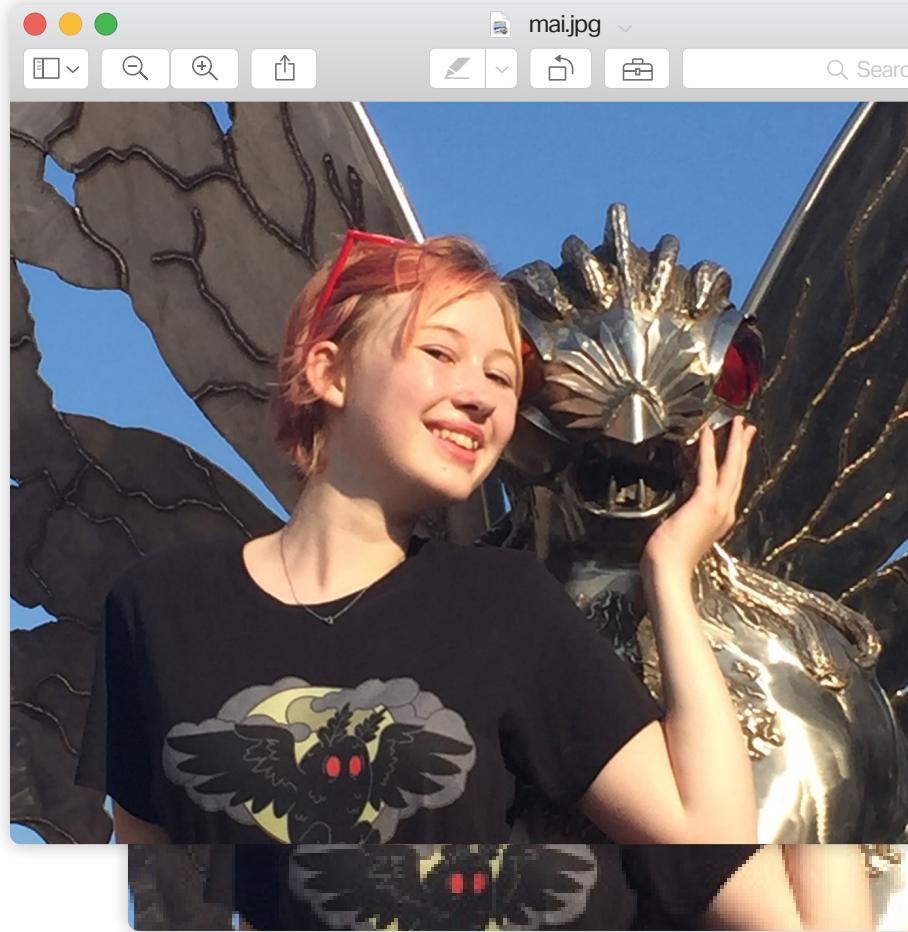
Mai Seyfarth

My first memory of Community is probably the opening day assembly. My first year I had just come from Skyline, so I didn't know anybody except for a friend I had in middle school. I felt very nervous because there were just so many people, probably not that many, but it felt like a lot in comparison to the church. I enjoyed the opening ceremony my first year. Skyline doesn't do an opening ceremony like that, so I was just awestruck, and I was like, 'Wow, the school puts so much effort into their first day.' Over the years, the dazzle of the Opening Day ceremony wore off a little bit. I would say it was a pretty good introduction to Community. It definitely helped me feel like I made the right decision going here.

My favorite part [of Community] is how much trust they put in the students. Being able to have an open campus and calling your teachers by their first names builds a really good environment for students.

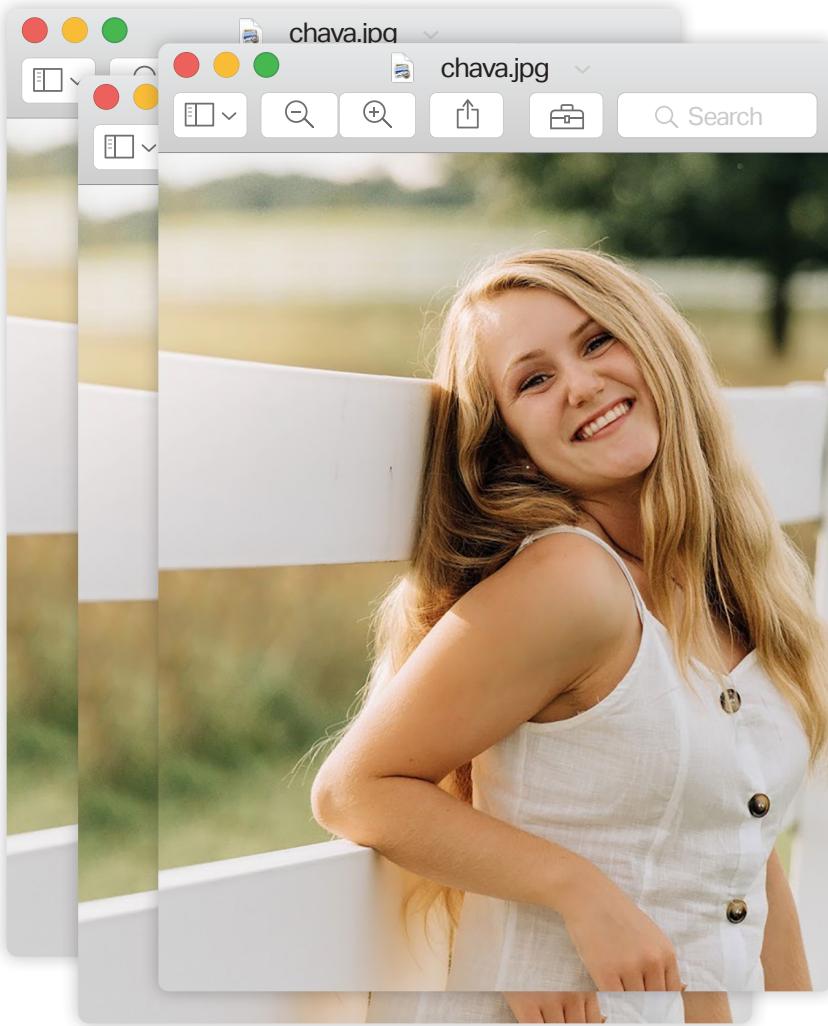
Fashion was the big thing for me when I got to Community. I started dressing nicer than I did at Skyline, and that's been a big part of becoming confident in myself and becoming who I am. I was really quiet and shy at Skyline, and I still am sometimes, but at Community I'm very loud and out there.

Next year I'm going to Washtenaw [Community College], and I'm going to take just a bunch of different classes. I don't know what I want to major in yet, so I figure I should try a bunch of things out before choosing, and I don't waste a bunch of money on a degree for a job I hate."



Jonah Nunez

I've learned some new things. I've picked up some new hobbies. I got really into cars, which I never showed an interest in before, but that became a big part of my life. Doing that with my friends and going out working on stuff became a new thing in my life. I started [working on cars] probably around sophomore year when I was about to get my license. I started to be more interested in that, and then I decided to take auto at Pioneer. And so I met people who were doing that, and then I bought a new car that wasn't my minivan and started to try and learn some new stuff. I think that has become a lot more important to me than it used to be, so it's like most of what I do.



Chava Makman Levinson

I was getting so mad because a bunch of seniors were talking about [March 13th] being our last day of high school, and I didn't think it would be. I thought that we were just going on a three week break. But the day after, on our last day of classes when Matt told our class, "If this is the last day of school this year, I loved teaching this group," that was when I started to get worried that it could be a longer break. It felt different from other school days because we had a more personal conversation with our teachers; we spoke about what we hoped to do with our free time and what they wanted to do with theirs. After school, my best friends and I went to the Arb, and we had a picnic. I was cheerful. I still thought that I was going to be driving to Florida for break. None of us thought it was the end.

Robbie White

Depression Awareness Group was a big deal to me after Miles' death. I kind of started to realize I have a lot of mental health stuff going on myself. I thought it would be interesting to learn, not only how to cope with these things, but just the fact that everyone deals with these things in life. It was also just nice to be in a group where everyone is open about it. There's a huge stigma around talking about mental illness, especially as a guy.

This is more of a lacrosse thing, but another one of my key high school experiences was when we played Pioneer on their senior night, and we came back and won the game. We beat them real bad the first game of the season, so Pioneer was grinding the entire [season] to be able to beat us. When we finally played them, they put us down by two late in the game. We then put in two critical goals with like 45 seconds to go. We won the game in overtime.

If I had any advice for Community students it would be that if you are lucky enough to be a Community High School student, then take classes that you want to take. Don't take any classes just because you have to take them. It's more important to actually enjoy what you're learning than taking a bunch of classes you probably won't even remember.





Sylvia Gabriel

I went to Rudolf Steiner and everyone says, 'Oh, [CHS] is a small school,' but to me, it was this huge school. I think I've changed in getting to learn how to really meet new people for the first time and learning how to put myself out there and be more confident. I feel the point of our community is to support each other and have everyone succeed versus weird competitiveness.

[Not having a German class at CHS] sort of forced me to become in charge of my own language learning, which I think ended up being really important. I really, really love languages, and I love learning languages. Because [CHS] is so flexible, and they really encourage you in following your passions and taking lots of CRs, I've been able to take lots of different CRs for languages and study like four or five languages in high school.

I'll be going to Stanford after this year. So for the Class of 2025, and I'm taking a gap year. As of right now, I'm planning to spend the majority of [my gap year] in Germany. One thing I'm hoping to do in Germany is this program where I can teach English to a group of Germans and Syrian refugees. I teach English to Syrian refugees right now, and it's something that I really, really love. My exchange student from this year, Maisha, is going back to Bangladesh. So I really, really want to visit her there as well.

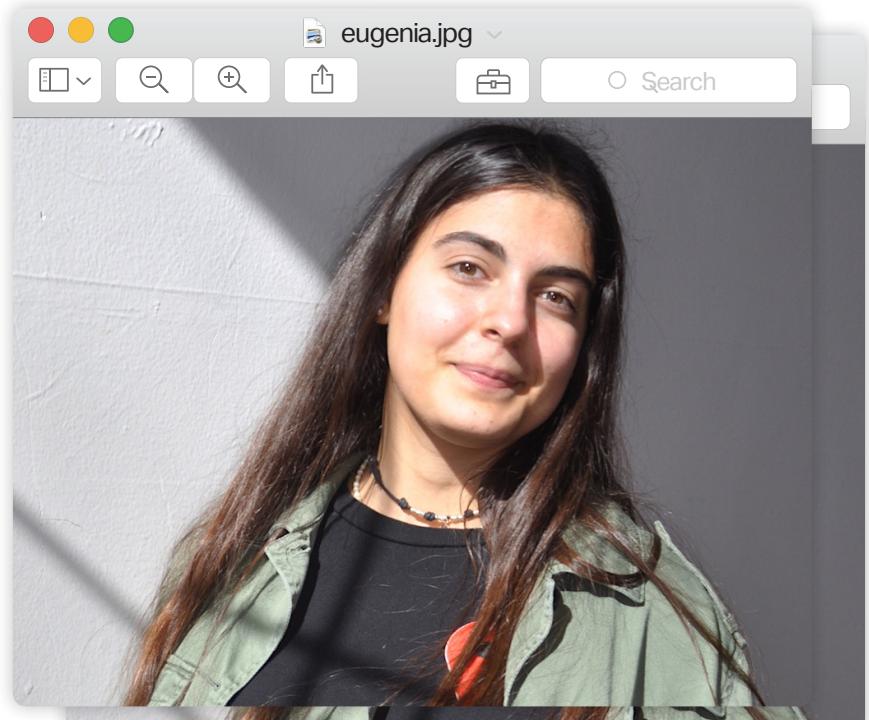
I think Community proved to me once again that I like smaller schooling environments. Not that Stanford is the smallest school, but it is smaller for undergrad than a lot of people would expect. I realized I do like smaller schools. You get a lot more personal attention from the teachers.

I'm planning to major in linguistics and international relations. I love more than just the language learning aspect. I also like the linguistic aspect, which I know from having taken two linguistics classes [at the University of Michigan]. Then for international relations, I worked with refugees, and I'm also really interested in the deaf community from ASL, and the deaf community abroad and access to sign language. My whole life, I've been pretty interested in politics. So international relations seems like a pretty clear choice for me.

Eugenia Del Gaudio

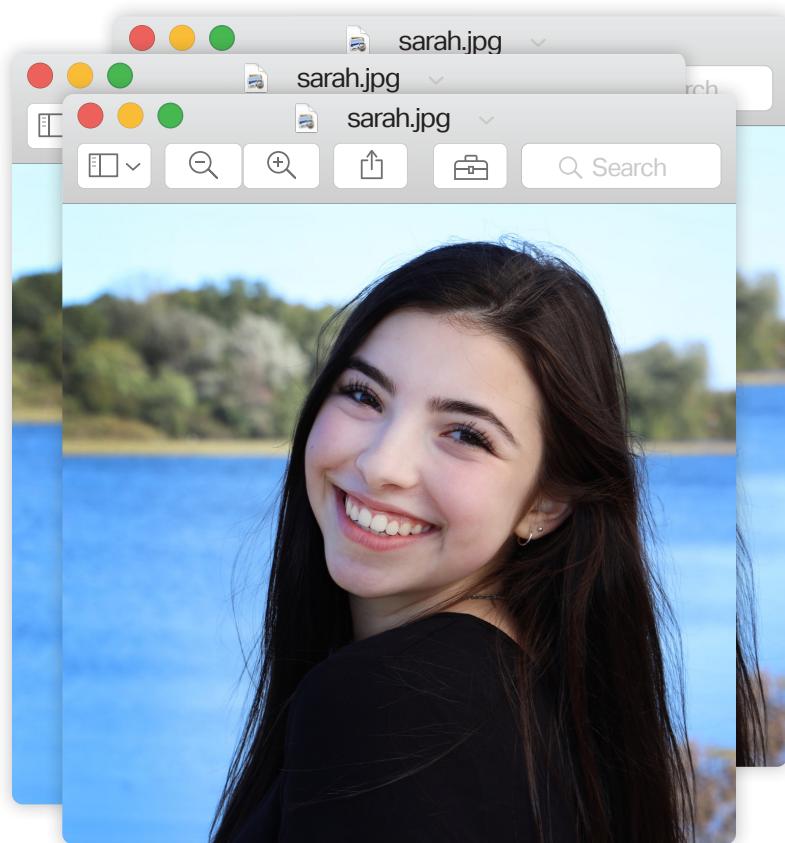
What I really liked about Community was that people always helped me, like teachers and also students, so I learned to be more open and help people when they need help. At the beginning of my time here, I was so confused because obviously, it was so different. But, every time that I asked for help, everyone was like, 'Oh yes sure,' and very nice.

The very very first day, I was with one of my roommates, and we met her friend Nina in the hallway, and they showed me the entire school and introduced me to everyone. It helped me because everything was new, and I was really scared since I didn't know anyone. But that made me think that I wasn't alone, and there would always be people ready to help me.



Sarah Levin

I dual [enroll] with Huron and Community, and first semester I was at Huron in the afternoons, and I was at Community in the mornings. But then, the second semester came, and that got flipped around. That meant that I could be in a specific class with some of my friends. One day, my friends and I were talking about how much we were going to miss each other, and one of them joked about getting a cardboard cutout of me and bringing it to class so I'd always be with them. I totally thought they were joking, until I came to school two weeks later, and they had a cardboard cutout of me in the classroom.



Max Steiger

It's corny, but Community is very deserving of its name because it feels like a community. I know that's what everybody says, and I know that's kind of the lame answer, but for example, I've been texting with Courtney, and I'm friends with my teachers on Facebook. There's a real sense of community at Community.

Whenever there was something more serious in my life happening, if one of the teachers knew about it, then they'd kind of all know about it, and they'd all be helpful. It seemed like there was an 'all in this together' mentality, and it just felt like teachers kind of always were looking out for the students.

I came into Community a completely different person than I am now. Community was very welcoming of my really weird phases that I would have been bullied for at other schools. Maybe I wouldn't be bullied, but something like that.

I started a juggling club, and I had that for like three weeks. And that was it. I just decided for three weeks that I wanted to have a juggling club, and that was okay with everybody. I would just randomly carry around my man purse that had juggling balls in it, and nobody would actually care.

Another time I went to school for two weeks straight with a 'Ben 10' watch on because I wanted to, and nobody made fun of me. They were just like, 'Yep Max is wearing a 'Ben 10' watch, that's cool.' So, yeah, overall Community is very accepting, and whoever I wanted to be, even if it was that crazy 'Ben 10' kid, I could be that crazy 'Ben 10' kid.

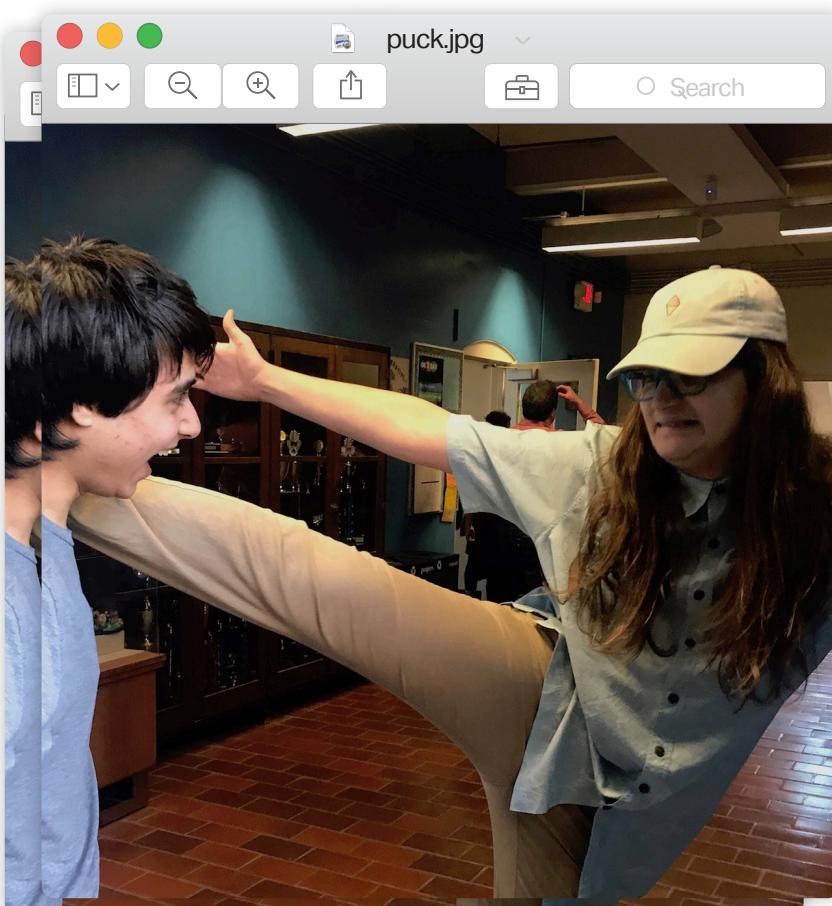
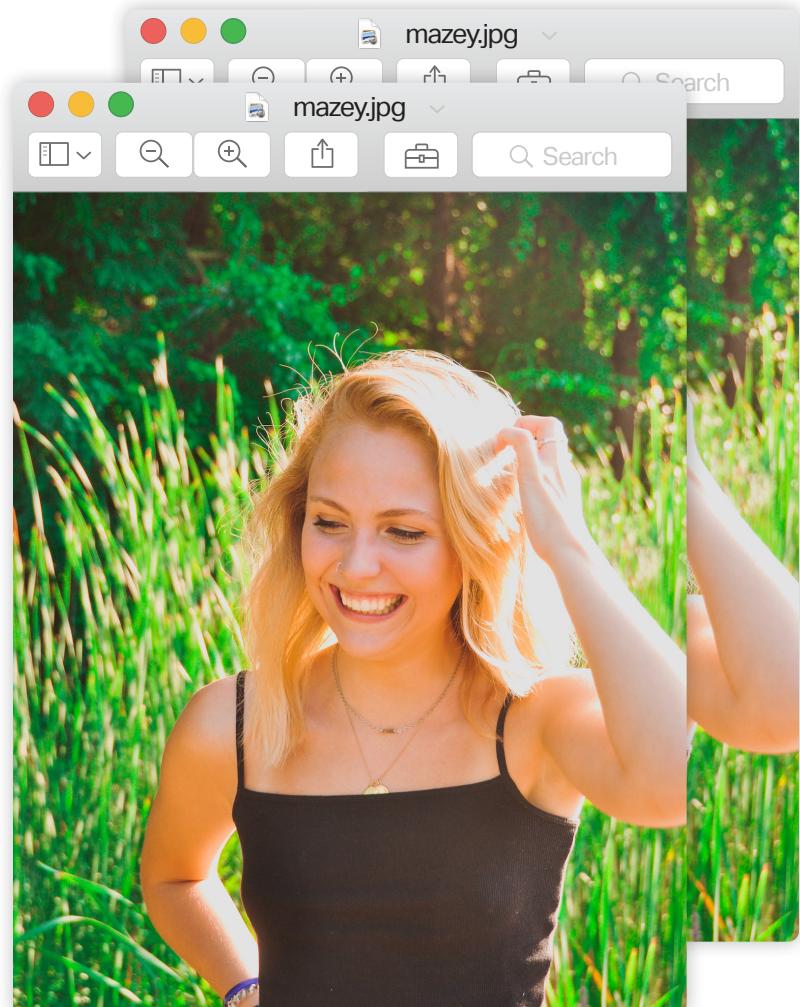


Mazey Perry

Putting Community into one word is really hard to do. I feel like Community has so many different layers of things that it does for its students.

Last year I had World Lit with Ken McGraw, and we got let out early because I think we were taking a test. Max Steiger, Lainey Queen and I decided to go to Chela's for lunch. On the way there, we found a TV on the side of the road, and we decided that we were going to bring it back with us — and it was like one of those huge TVs with the big back and everything. So we put it in Lainey's car, brought it back to school and we were bringing it up the stairs, and then we were met at the third floor by Kevin in the elevator and he's like, 'You might as well just walk that right back downstairs. If you don't get that out of this building right now you're going to be suspended.' And we're just like 'Oh, okay.' And then Courtney came out, and she was cracking up, and then realized that Kevin was there, and she was like, 'You guys need to get that out of here right now. I didn't ask for that.'

Stupid stuff that I feel like if had I gone to another school, bringing a TV back to the school wouldn't have even been a thought that crossed my mind that is something acceptable to do.



Puck Gatto

I'm in the Morgan forum. My first forum day we went camping. We played Capture the Flag the second day. What we did was we hid the flag in my hat. And then before the game started, I went to the bathroom because it was right on our side. I put the flag down and sat in there. They never got it because why would they check the bathroom?

My second forum trip, we went rafting on the Huron River. I kept jumping out of the raft because I wanted to go swimming. I was in Robert's boat and he kept getting mad at me because I would jump out and then just hang on to the side because that was more fun. Why be on a boat when you could be in the water?

I know it's cliche to say Forum is family, but it's true.



Jacob Perlmutter

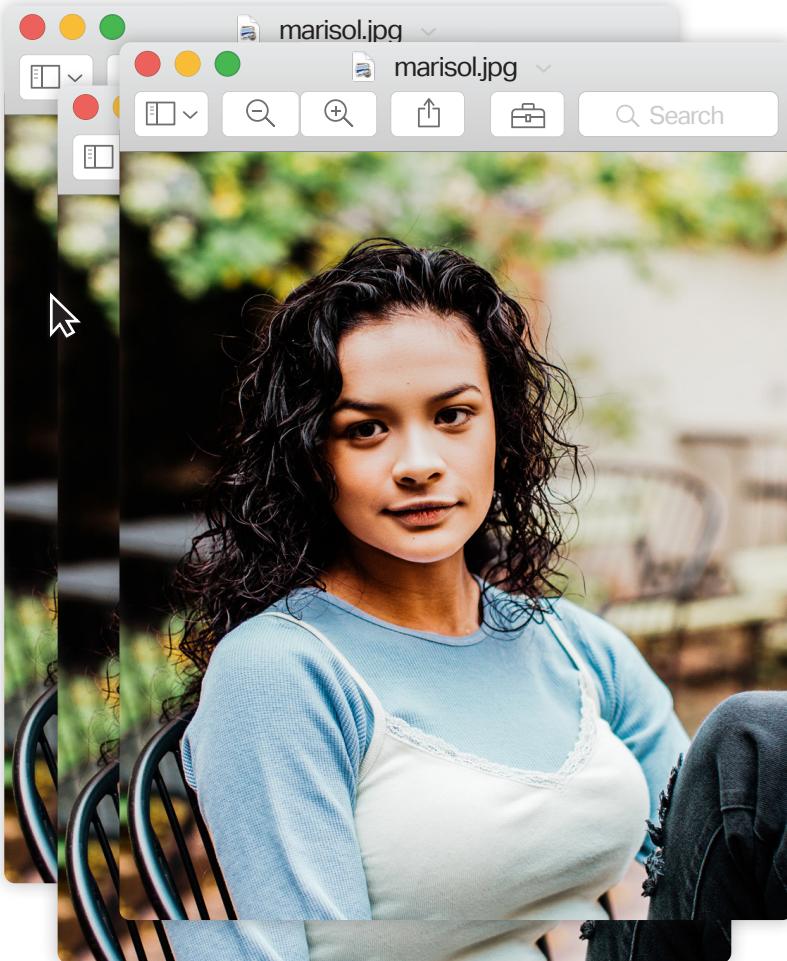
I think [during high school], I've become more comfortable with being independent and not relying on my parents for anything, really. I think Community, in a really good way, has instilled in me this sense of competence that I didn't feel like I had before coming into high school. I feel like I have more courage. [I'm] going into the unknown, going into college, [going into] the rest of my life kind of alone; or at least not with the same people I've been with. But I'm not scared about it, and I think Community has done a lot for that. I would say [the way that happened] is a lot of little things: the freedom we have like going off-campus, walking around and making a lot of decisions in terms of what our high school career is going to be like. [Community] lets us know that this is our time to figure out who we are and gives us this space and a lot of opportunities to help us do that. I think a lot of high schools don't really give students that space they need to think through things, and I think that's a lot of what Community is about—[it's] really just [a place to] think, 'Who am I? What do I want to do with my life? How do I want to do it now?'

Grace Bates

I've been a member of the Ecology Club all four years, which I love a lot. I've loved being with Courtney and seeing her energy and her enthusiasm for what she does. That's really special. Going on the Biostation trip was awesome — I don't want to say completely life-transforming, but you go there, and you don't come back the same.

I went [to the Biostation] junior year, and that was the first year Courtney introduced the Biostation talent show. We all just kind of threw together these mish-mash, odd-talent things, and it was pretty funny. Seeing people just be absolutely ridiculous, and then there's some people who are insanely talented, and that's really special to see as well. Another thing that happened on the Biostation trip was I hurt my knee really badly. It was the first day; we were driving up, and we had stopped in Michigan's old-growth forests. And we were walking and hiking, and I saw Courtney down the path, leaned up against what looked to me like a big pile of snow. A snowbank. I got the brilliant idea to run and jump on her. I'm running to her, and I couldn't hear her over my own excitement about the fact that I was about to body slam her. But she was saying, 'Grace, don't do it. Grace, there's a bench. Grace don't do it.' So then I jumped and I slammed my knee into the bench. I still get pains in my knee sometimes.





Marisol Cisneros

[If I could give advice to] my freshman self, I would have said be more open, talk to more people and just try your best to enjoy the school and not hate it. I didn't talk to people freshman year because I was very shy, and I felt like everyone was weird, and I didn't really want to open myself up. But I've opened up now, and it's just so much nicer because I've realized what Community is as a whole. It's full of so many artistic, unique and beautiful people. And with the teachers, it's just 10 times better and it really, really is good. I know now that I got in because I was meant to be there, and I really do appreciate Community because of that.

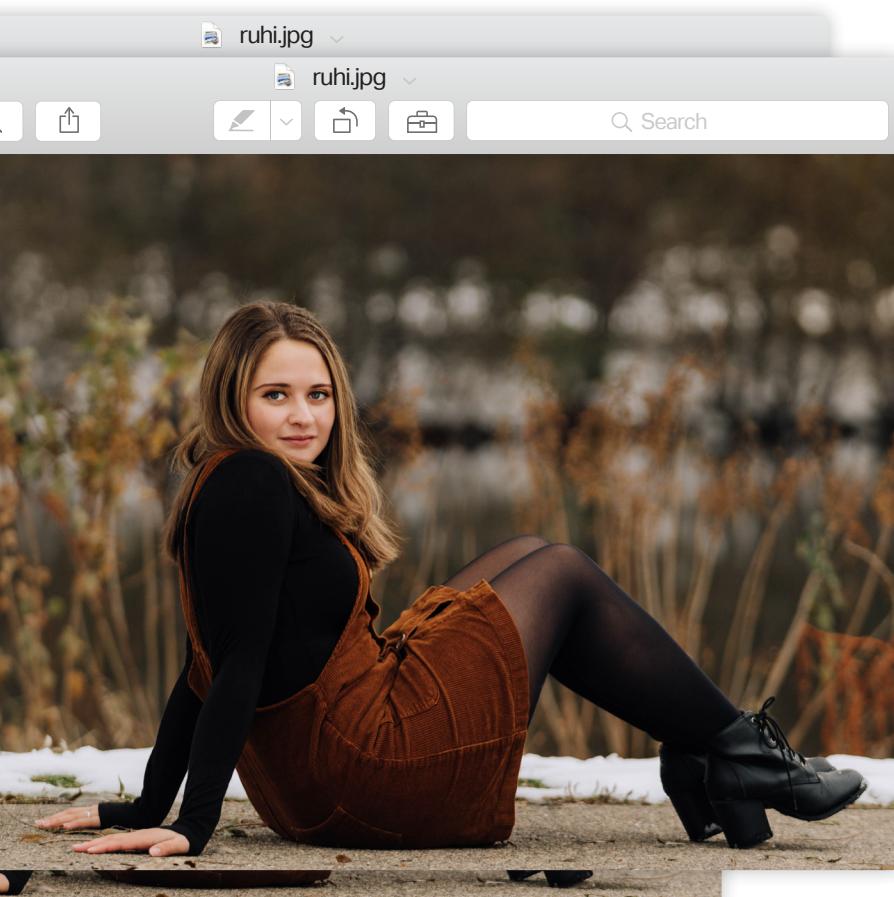
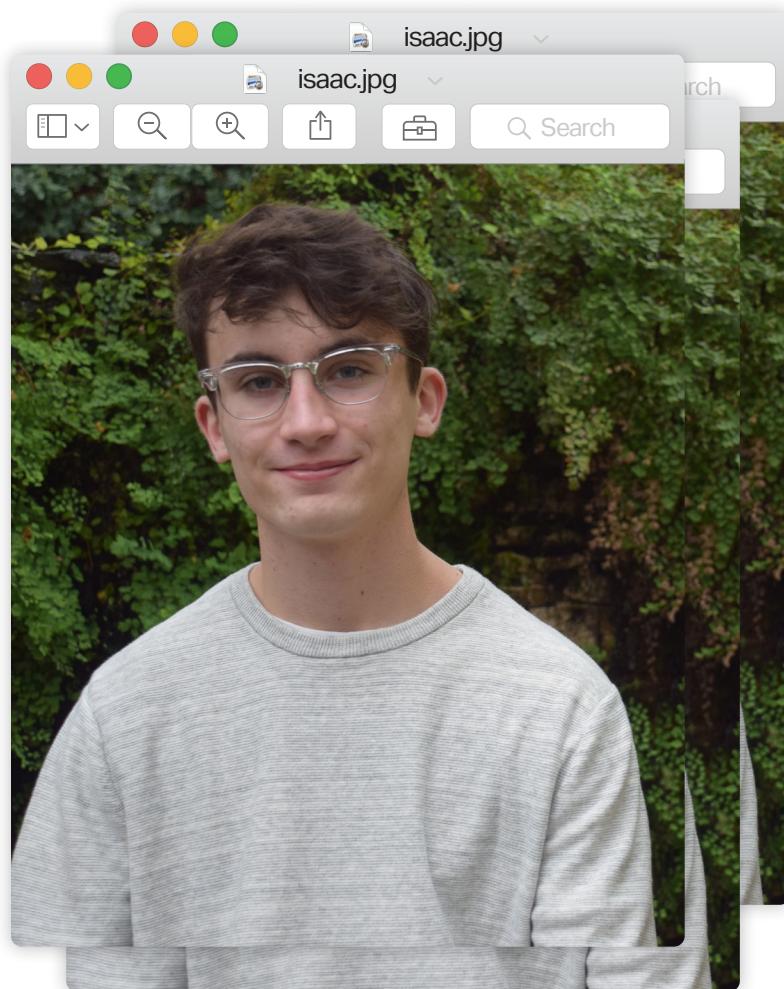
Leah Dame

It was sophomore year. I just got into journalism, and I needed to interview someone. I knew that there was this new art teacher who was learning under Steve, and so I thought about interviewing her because I knew her from camp. I knew of Steve because I was a sophomore, but I [had] never taken a class with him, so I didn't really know him. I was really intimidated by him. I remember I had to interview him for questions about her, and during the interview, it was just so goofy. We would just start laughing and couldn't stop laughing. I had just met the man. It was so crazy. I remember I was chewing gum, and I suddenly spit it out at him, and we just couldn't stop laughing because I was just so nervous for some reason. He was also kind of intimidated of me too. I don't know if he'll admit to that, but he did say that about me. We just kind of broke down those weird walls, and I just feel like I've been his friend ever since that, and it's just all been good vibes and happiness. Except when something bad happened this year, when I actually drove a car off campus, but he forgave me for that because we're friends, and friends forgive people.



Isaac McKenna

[My favorite memory at Community] would probably be this year, working on The Communicator really late at night. The first three years of being on Communicator for me — my freshman, sophomore and junior year — I think I looked up to the seniors and was in awe of how much work they did, how late they stayed and all that stuff. And I think being that person this year has given me a little bit of perspective on what it means to do a lot of work and really enjoy doing that work. I think that's been the most impactful experience that I've had, and probably one of my best memories as well. Just staying really late and enjoying going crazy over this thing. Of course, not enjoying every moment of it. A lot of it is stressful, but just enjoying the experience and the final product. It was about doing something that felt real while spending time with friends and connecting with those people.



Ruhi Khanna

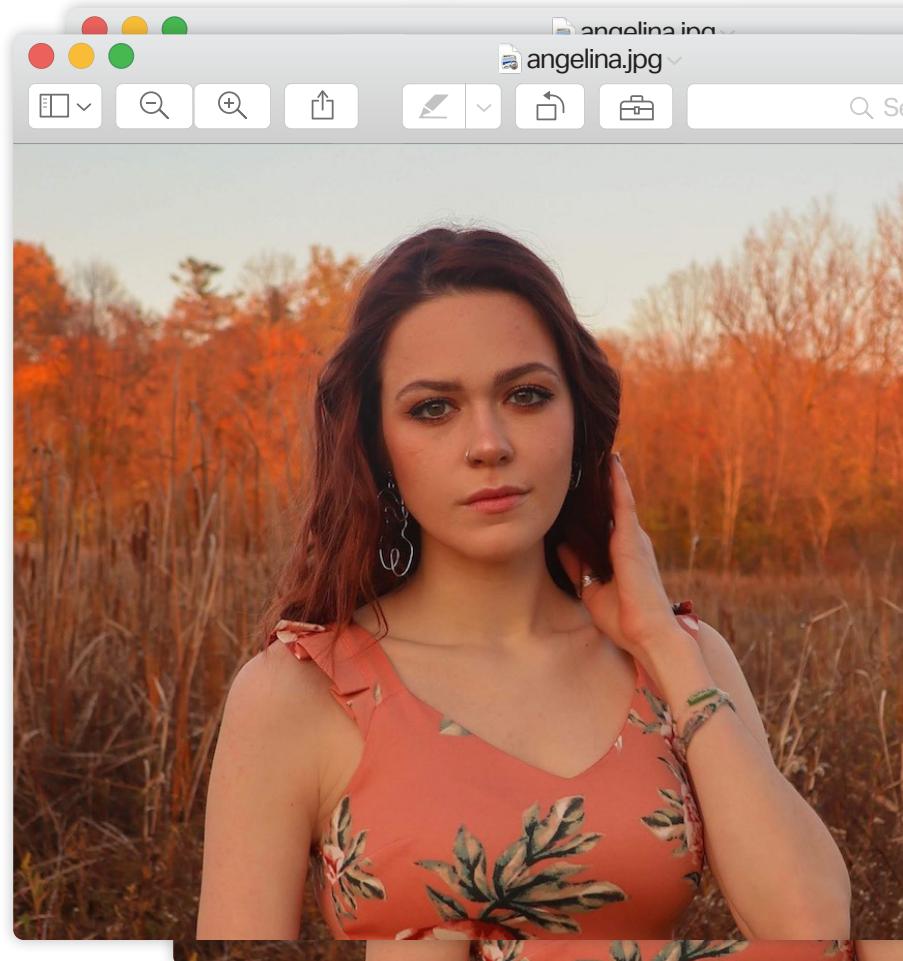
I think the way that we do Forum is really cool and unlike any other high school; just having that connection with other students in different grades and building that relationship with your Forum leader [is really meaningful]. I remember there was this one day in Forum, I think it was last year, when we were just talking about what was going on in life. I was talking to Tracy, my Forum leader, and she was just telling me how hard life was, and I was telling her about how hard my life was. We ended up just sort of crying together, it was really sweet. It just kind of shows how close you become with your teachers at Community and how strong those relationships you build [are]. I will remember that moment. I think that it embodies what Community is about — just the closeness; how those relationships that you build can continue on for like a long time; how [at Community], you're always accepted for who you are. I'll definitely miss the relationships that I've built with teachers [here]. That's probably unlike any experience that I'll be able to get in college.

Angelina Smith

Throughout my years at Community, I feel like I've really learned how to become myself and how to not care as much about what other people think. There's this way of life at Community where everyone has the ability to be whoever they want, and no one is really judged for being weird. It feels like at bigger schools, you don't really have the same dynamic where anyone could be friends with anyone, and everyone talks to everyone in all of your classes.

Community really taught me that I don't have to try and fit in, and I can really just be myself. Throughout the years, it's also just taught me how to be a lot kinder to everyone around me and also to myself. I really like the people I met at Community, and they really helped me gain a lot of confidence and taught me how to be myself.

I've learned a lot about the kind of people I want to surround myself with as well. I feel like everyone at Community has this very open-minded mindset, and everyone there is very optimistic about change and equality, and that's not something that is common throughout the rest of Ann Arbor. But for the most part, I feel like Community has just taught me that those are the kind of people I want to surround myself with, and the kind of people that make me a better me.



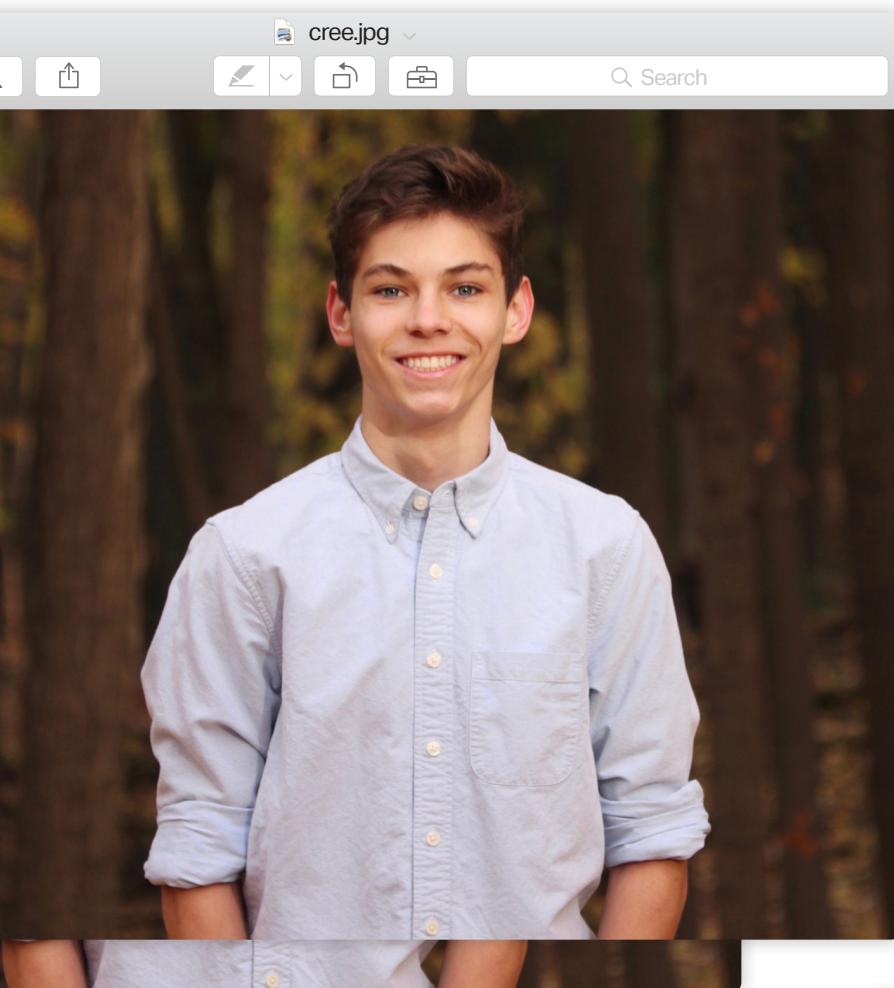
Sam Dannug

Just be yourself, and try not to worry about what other people think of you. That's kind of what maturing is, and I feel like a lot of people develop that throughout high school. [As a freshman] I was very conscious of what other people thought of me.

I think it wasn't one event that caused the growth in myself, but I think going to a lot of the forum days and events. Those events were good for me socially because they made me branch out, which I took with me. I found a lot of my close friends in my forum, so those were great experiences for me.

I'm definitely looking forward to finding what it is I'm passionate about. I feel like I'm the kind of person that picks up a lot of hobbies because I'll be super interested for a little bit, but then that interest quickly fades, and I'm onto a new hobby. Whenever I find a new passion, I'm intensely intrigued with the subject, and learning about the new hobby is very rewarding to me. I'm just hoping to find that same feeling next year at college and follow it.

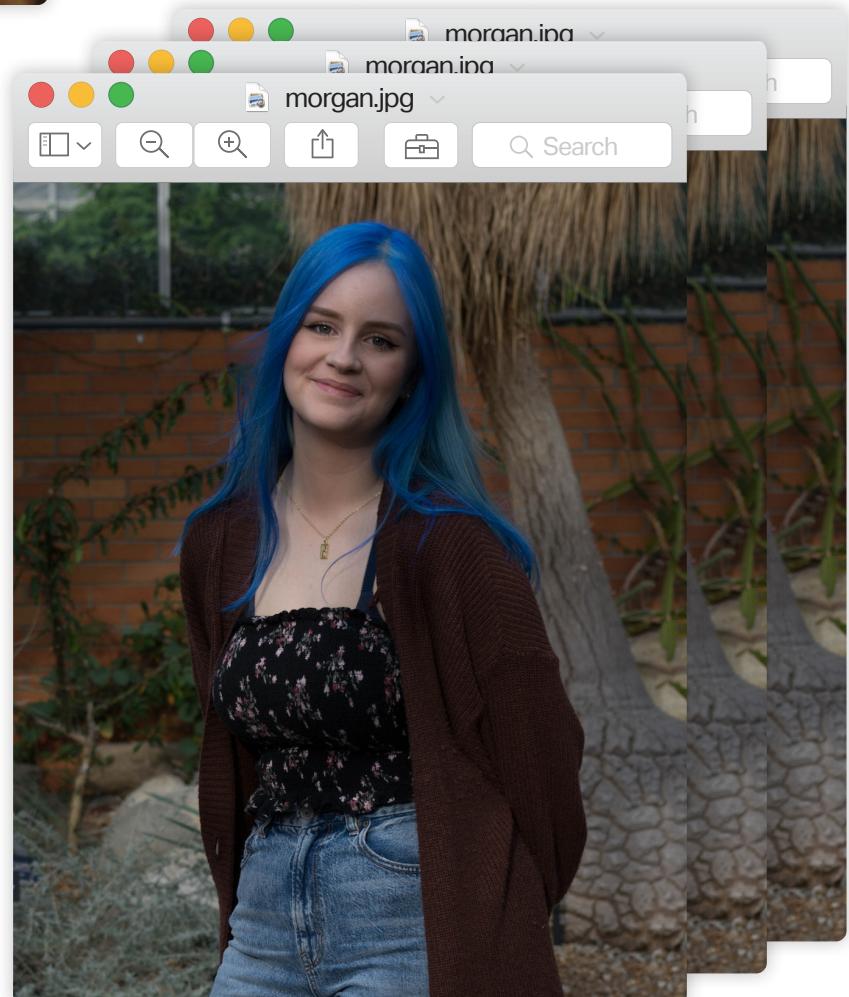




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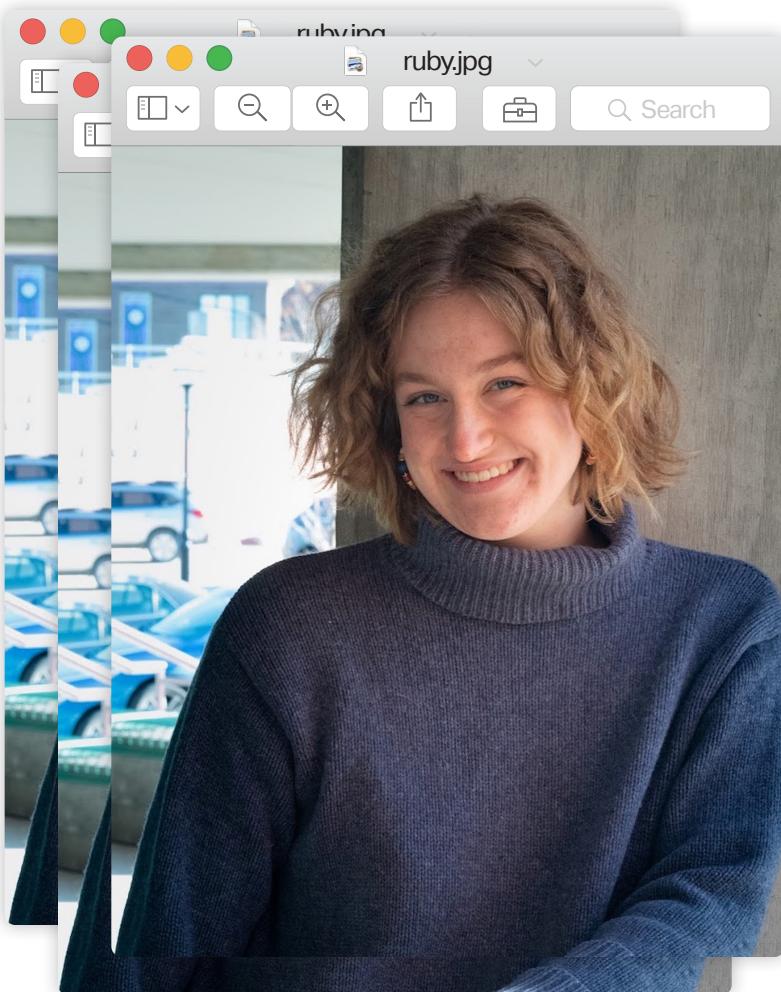
My experience has been awesome. I came from a really small school, and I was really nervous to go into a bigger school. Community was a super welcoming environment, and I had a great time. I went to the orientation, and I just fell in love with it. I thought the teachers and the faculty were really cool. I thought that the way the school works was really awesome, the open campus was really cool and the freedom with your own classes and everything was great. So once I got in, I was really happy.

The camping trips with my forum were definitely my favorite part. Sitting around the fire at 3 a.m. with everyone talking, and you get to know everyone. I thought that was really awesome, especially my freshman year because that was an awesome way to get to know my forum and to just know more people. Those were my favorite memories.



Morgan Fitzgerald

I came to Community my junior year after leaving WIHI, and I remember it being really hard at first. I remember missing my friends and all the teachers I had bonded with over there, and it took a few weeks before I had any close friends at Community. But I began making close friends with people, and I realized that everyone at Community is pretty relaxed, and I could really sit down with anyone, and they would gladly include me in their conversations if I wanted to participate. Also, the teachers at Community, you can tell that they truly enjoy teaching their subjects and interacting with students, even outside the classroom. I [was a teacher's assistant] for Judith and Cindy, and I remember that there were some days where I would sit in their classes during lunch, just talking with them about random topics, and I think it's really cool that Community makes the environment where you can be pretty good friends with your teachers.



Ruby Taylor

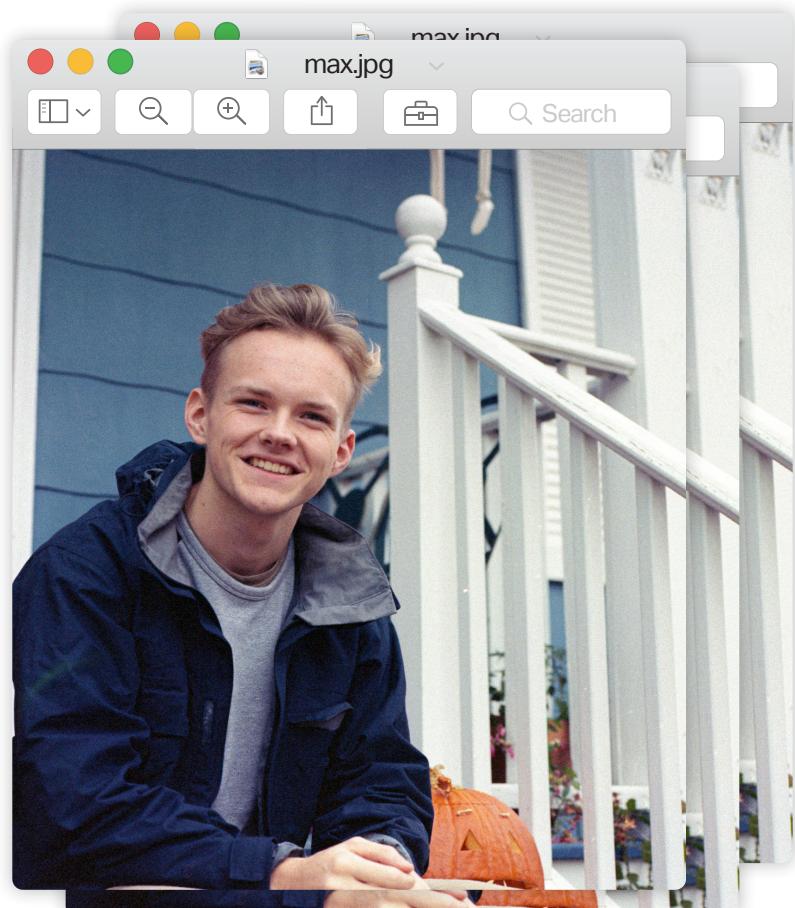
I can picture doing the Connect With Community, going down and being so excited to see the new freshmen. I saw this thing the other day; I haven't been logged on to my spam for like a year, but I logged on to it just because I was feeling nostalgic. And I saw this dumb thing I posted my freshman year, and it was like, 'Anyone who's a prospective Community student who got in to the eighth grade raffle, please talk to me I'd love to like talk to you about Community.' It's cute. Community itself was so important to me and something that I really loved and cherished the whole time I was there. It's cute to have been really into something when you were 14 and still really like love and care about it.

Max Mellor

Community has definitely changed me for the better. When I went into high school, I had less of an idea of who I was, and I think Community helped me find that. Freshman year me was not necessarily trying to fit in, but I think I was still trying to find my group and my people.

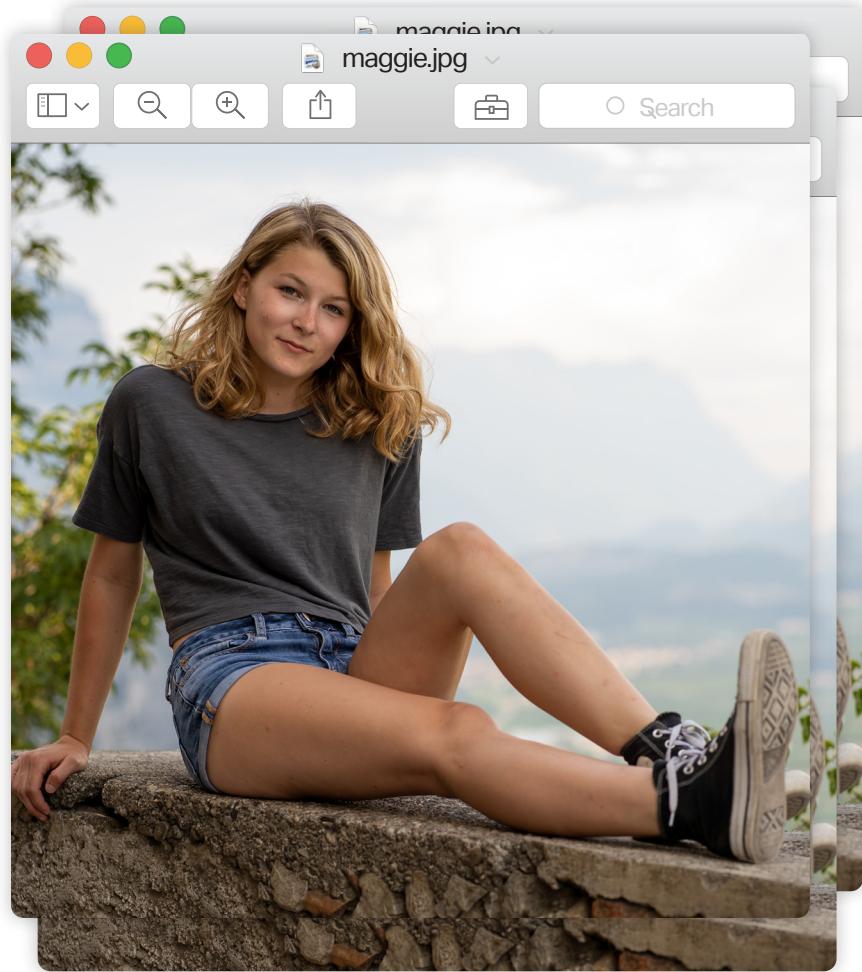
Back then, I cared more about what people thought of me. As the years went on, I just sort of came to care less about what people think and more about how I feel and what's important to me. It's hard to think back to then because I definitely was a different person. But I'm still me, just a better version of me.

I know a lot of my friends at Skyline, and I ask them, 'Are you going to miss Skyline?' They're like, 'Whatever.' But I'm going to genuinely miss my teachers. The bonds that I formed with some of my teachers I don't think I would have found anywhere else. Jack Wagner, for example, my jazz teacher, I think we formed a good bond over these four years that I don't know if I would have found anywhere else. Forum is another example. I think I really learned to love my forum by the end of the four years.



Maggie Hammer

I initially was like, ‘There’s no way I’m going anywhere but Skyline. I’m 100% going to Skyline; there’s nothing that can change that.’ Then all of the high schools came to my middle school and did their little spiel. I was like ‘Okay, I guess there’s no harm in applying.’ Then when the lottery came out, there was a mistake, and my number wasn’t on it. I got really sad, and I realized, ‘Oh I actually did want to go there.’ It was more like a I didn’t think I would get in kind of situation, so I wasn’t allowing myself to want to do it. But then they fixed it, and I got in, and I was so excited. Everything about it seemed so nice to me, and I also kind of wanted to be different than my older brother. Until I went to Community, I had always had the same teachers. They all knew me from him, and I wanted to kind of make my own way, but I didn’t realize that until I was able to actually do it. All of my teachers – until I got to Community – knew me from Max and Max, my brother, is a great student, amazing and all this stuff; they kind of already had that expectation for me, but I wanted them to know that I was good and great on my own. I really think I was able to do that at Community. My teachers got to know me for me and not just my brother. I’ve created great relationships with my teachers because of that. Community is an amazing place, and I don’t think I would’ve been the person I am today without it. It really helped me develop as a person. I’m really grateful for the experiences I’ve been able to have there. I’ve been able to make amazing friends and connections with teachers and people, and it’s just an amazing place to be. I’m very sad that I don’t get to have a goodbye before I leave.

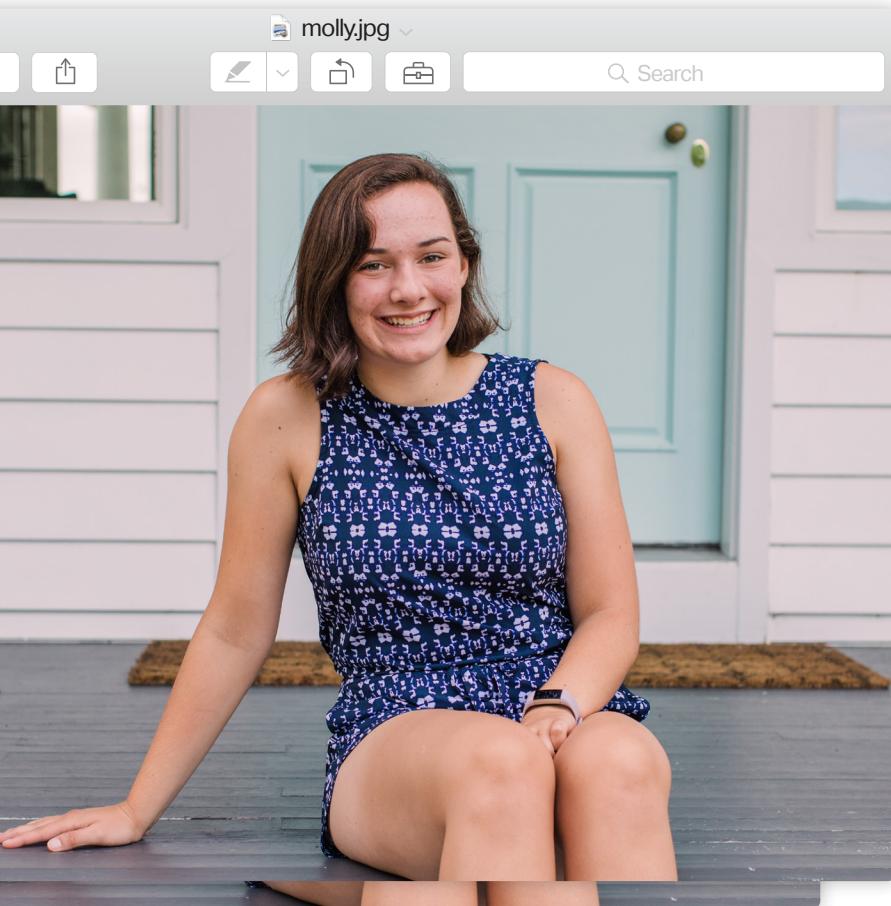


Molly Maloy

I’ve definitely become more confident. I learned about who I am as a person and not try to be someone I’m not, like I did in middle school, accepting who I am and becoming more confident in my abilities. [Being at Community] had a part of that. The freedom of Community allowed me to grow my independence and find out what I am good at and allow me to grow.

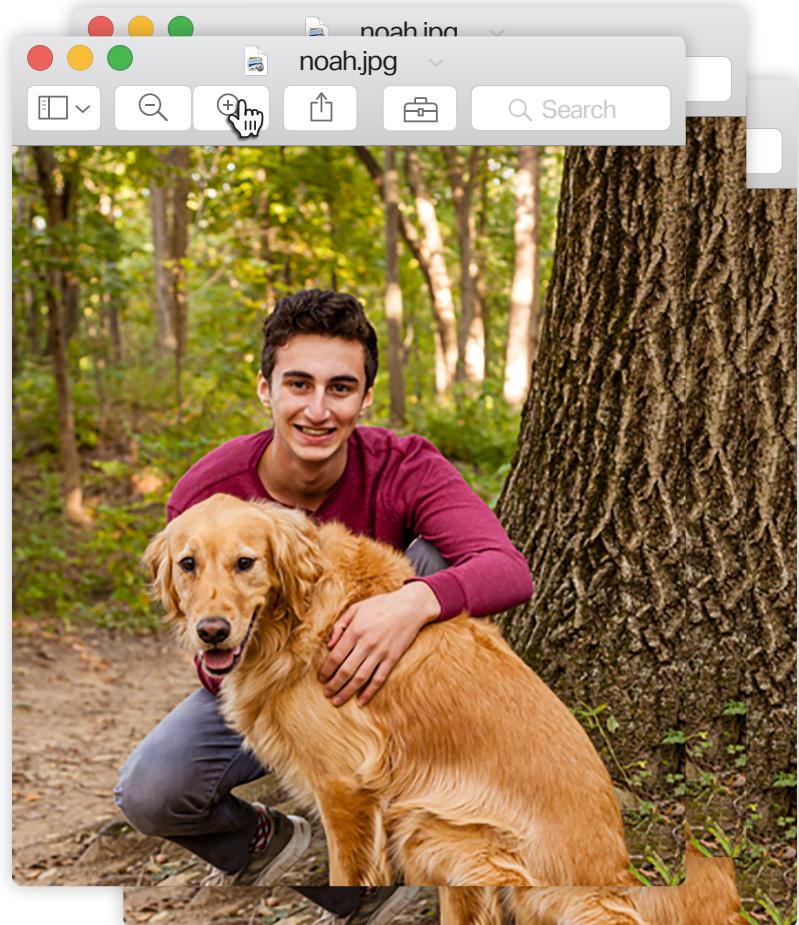
I think the Blue Ribbon ceremony we had this year was super fun. We went over to Kerrytown and had a fire pit in the Farmer’s Market, and we were all dancing. It was just a very Community thing to do in the middle of the school day.

I’m planning on studying Aerospace or Mechanical Engineering at the University of Michigan’s College of Engineering. It’s scary going from [CHS] to a school of 40,000 people, from a school where I know every single teacher. I think that teachers at Community have a much better relationship with their students than from what I hear about teachers from other high schools. That lets you learn more when you have a great relationship with your teacher. Good things happen when you trust people. We have a lot of freedom at Community, and yet the students do amazing things. I think it’s really opened up my mind to that there are a lot of different paths out there that people will take. People will do different things, but when they have the freedom and the support to do it, they will go far.



Noah Greenberg

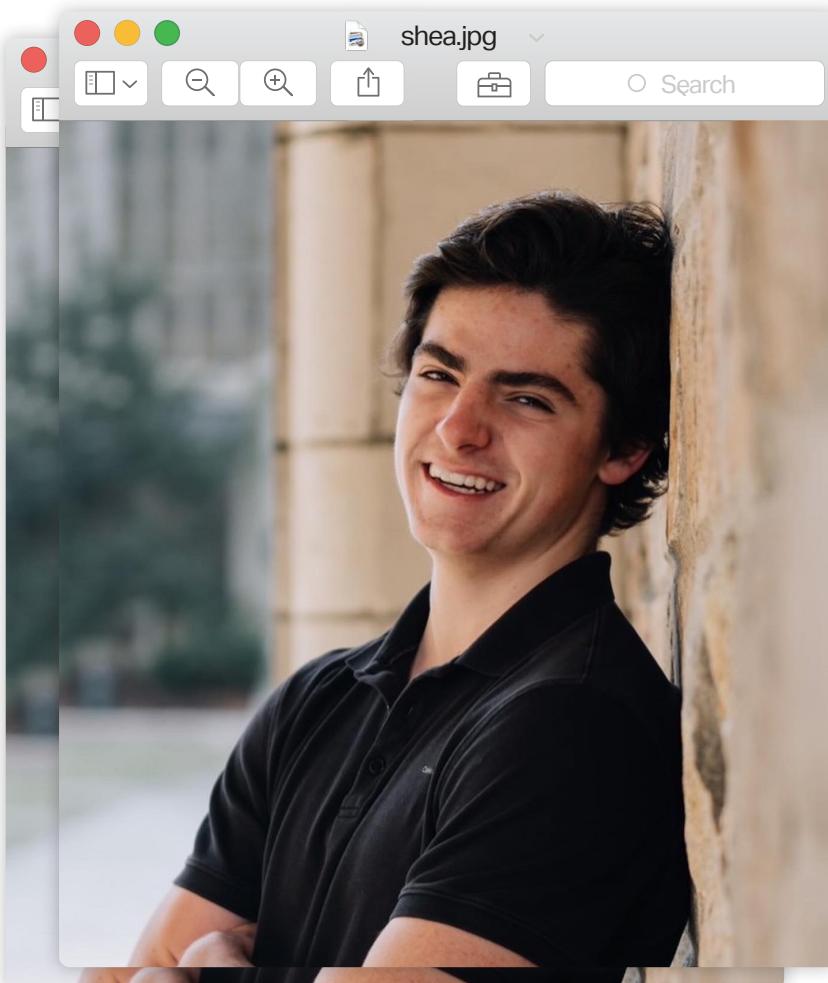
Looking back at my four years of high school, my only regret is that I didn't get into clubs sooner, specifically not getting into CET sooner. During my freshman year, I would just go home and have nothing to do because I wasn't part of any clubs, sports or anything that took up my free time. But then I went to see CET perform 'Fiddler on the Roof,' and I made the decision that I was going to join. So I went and joined the next year with 'Into the Woods' and looking back at it now, I think it was my favorite show. I watched as everyone supported each other and helped each other grow, and I watched as the show came together into something spectacular at the end. The group taught me how to find my voice, not just in the literal sense, but as a person as well. It's helped me learn to adapt to situations knowing that nothing in life is 100% certain, with the last three shows having experienced everything ranging from bats, to tornados, to pandemics. On top of that, CET has helped me realize some of my values, in that I feel most fulfilled when I'm helping other people, and so a lot of what I do — both inside and out of CET — is based on trying to make other people's lives better, or at the very least spark a little bit of joy in their days.

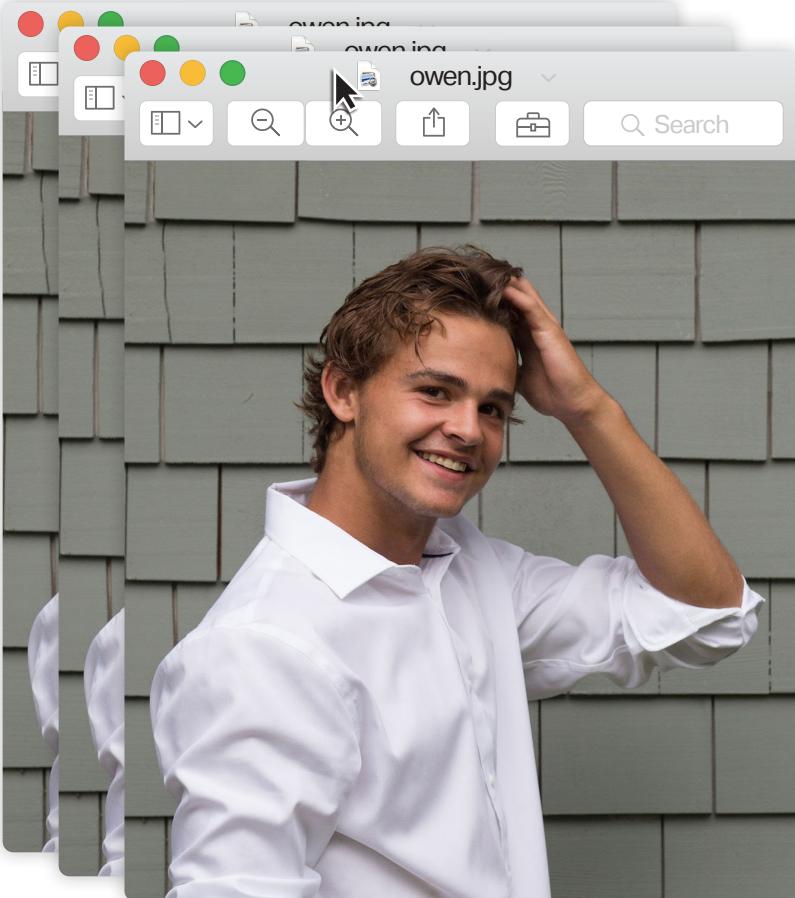


Shea O'Brien

These four years have rocked. I wouldn't trade them for anything else. I've grown a lot. Partially due to this time in my life and as a person growing up, but also it has a lot to do with Community and the way things are structured here. So it's been an awesome four years. Obviously I hope I didn't peak, but I'm excited for what comes ahead. I was choosing between Catholic Central (CC) and Community. My brother went to CC, and my parents wanted me to go there, but I really wanted to forge my own path in that respect. And as far as forging your own path, there's really no better place to do that than Community. I was drawn to the intense freedom that we bestow upon freshman here, and I wanted that in my life. I wanted to make my own decisions and be the captain of my own ship, academically and socially as well.

Field day is my favorite part of Community. Hands down. Athletics were always what I cared about in high school pretty much, and winning Tug o' War last year was my favorite moment in my entire athletic career. That was magical; I will never forget that.



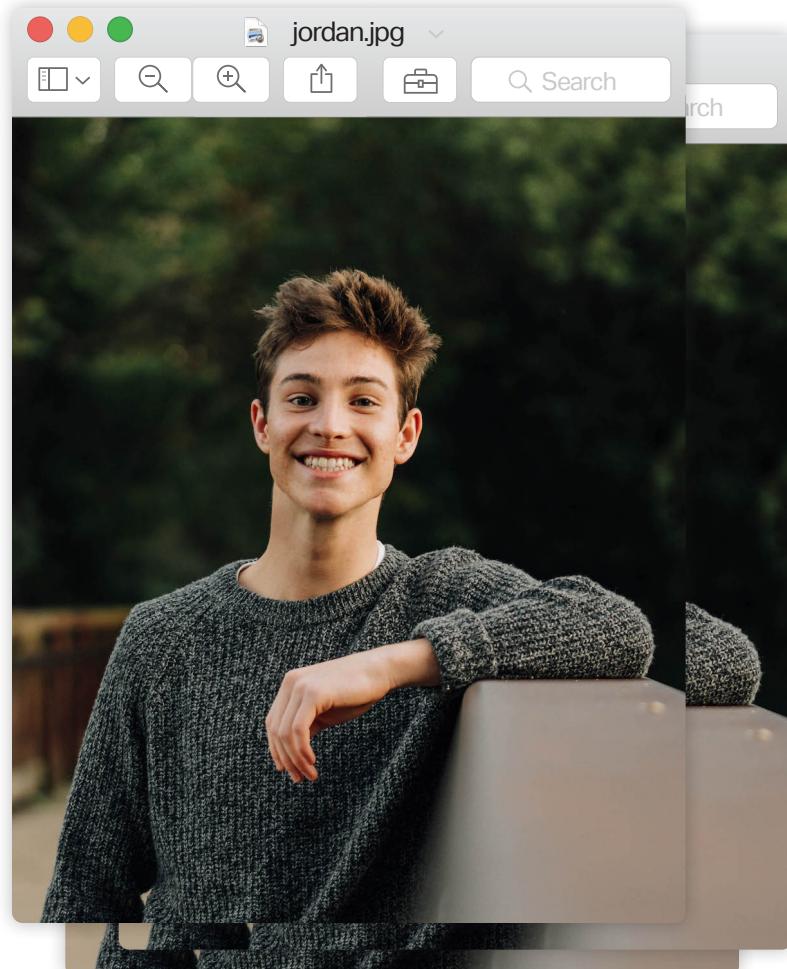


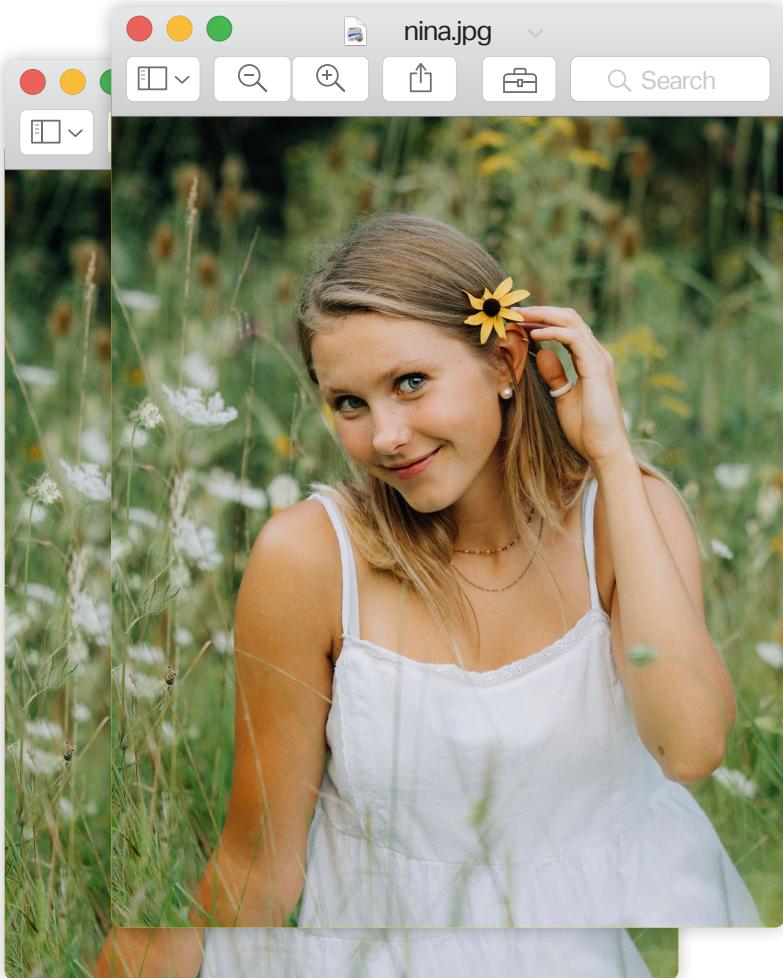
Owen Kelley

My best memory? So basically we're talking to Beth. She was like, 'We need to get a class pet.' Or we told her, 'We need a class pet,' and she's like, 'I don't know, maybe something like a lizard or a turtle or a fish. No rodents.' We said okay, and we went out. We saw this mouse at Petco, and I thought, 'That is the cutest thing I've ever seen. We're buying it.' So we bought it. I lost \$100 that day buying equipment for it. Then I had it at my house, and I brought it in. I don't remember what her first reaction was. I can just imagine it wasn't good. It was fun the first couple days. His name was Manchego, and we called him Man for short. Or Cheggs, whichever one you wanted. Then he smelled so bad. He started to stink up the whole room. Beth was like, 'He has to go. we have to get rid of him.' Also during winter break we left, so our friend was supposed to pick him up, and he forgot to. So Beth ended up being stuck with this mouse for two weeks. Oh, she was so mad at us. And then we ended up giving it away to this other other guy in our class. So Manchego is living happily with him now.

Jordan De Padova

I guess one that I always remember super vividly was the first test I had in math my sophomore year. Math was always something I struggled with, and I was very intimidated by it and kind of scared of it; I didn't like doing it. We had this test, and I felt pretty good about it, and then I got to the last question. It was a pretty big portion of the test, and I was looking at it, and I was like, 'I don't even think I learned this.' It was the first time in high school where I ever felt super unprepared and worried about something. I felt like I wanted to give up, a lot, and I hadn't been in a lot of situations like that before, and I probably would have given up. But I sat in the room and I used all two hours of test time. I sat there, and I figured it out, and by the end, I was pretty sure I had the right answer, and I had worked it out on my own. I left feeling super empowered. It was the first time I had really felt capable, self-sufficient and smart due to my own devices, not because I was good at memorizing something, and not because my mom helped me. I remember I left the room, and I felt elated. I still think about that sometimes. I remember the thing I was thinking was that if I had a car, I would speed out of the Community parking lot and blast music. I was just so happy, and I didn't know how else to fully express it other than that. From then on, I invested more time and energy into things that were challenging, especially math, and it turned out to be one of my favorite classes, and my teacher, Moe, ended up being one of my favorite teachers.

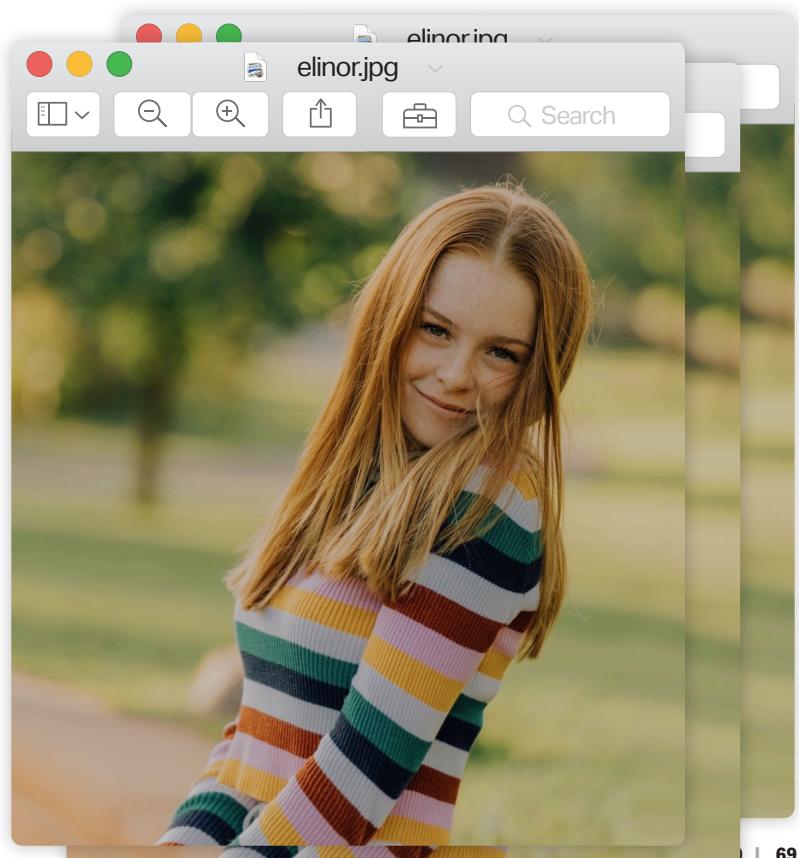




Nina Beardsley

I am excited to be at Kenyon College next year. It's located in the small town of Gambier, Ohio. It's kind of in the middle of nowhere, but that's what makes it very special. It is this town of a bunch of college students and their professors. I'll be running, which I'm super excited about. One thing that I loved about Kenyon is the whole cross country team reached out to me, and that was super helpful because they are welcoming me with open arms. They're all super friendly and text me all the time asking if I have any questions or what I want to do. We zoom often. I'm excited to go to college where I can learn things specifically what I want to learn. I'm choosing all my classes, so I don't really have to take a super boring class. If I find a class boring, I can just switch out of it. I'm also excited to be super involved, and be surrounded by people who share the same interests as me — where we can just have long discussions on what we believe in and stuff like that. I took a look at Kenyon's website, and they have like so many clubs.

As much as I am excited, I'm also terrified of leaving my family and the people that I've gotten so close to. I'm leaving, and I won't be able to see them every day. Also I'm terrified because I have moved around a lot. I've switched schools, and anywhere you go, there's this period of one to two weeks of complete and utter loneliness. But it's because nobody knows anybody. I moved to Berlin, and everybody already knew each other. And I had to wiggle my way in. Maybe it won't be that way because everybody doesn't know each other. But I think for at least for the very first few days or maybe even a week, it'll be really hard to reach out to people and just feel comfortable.

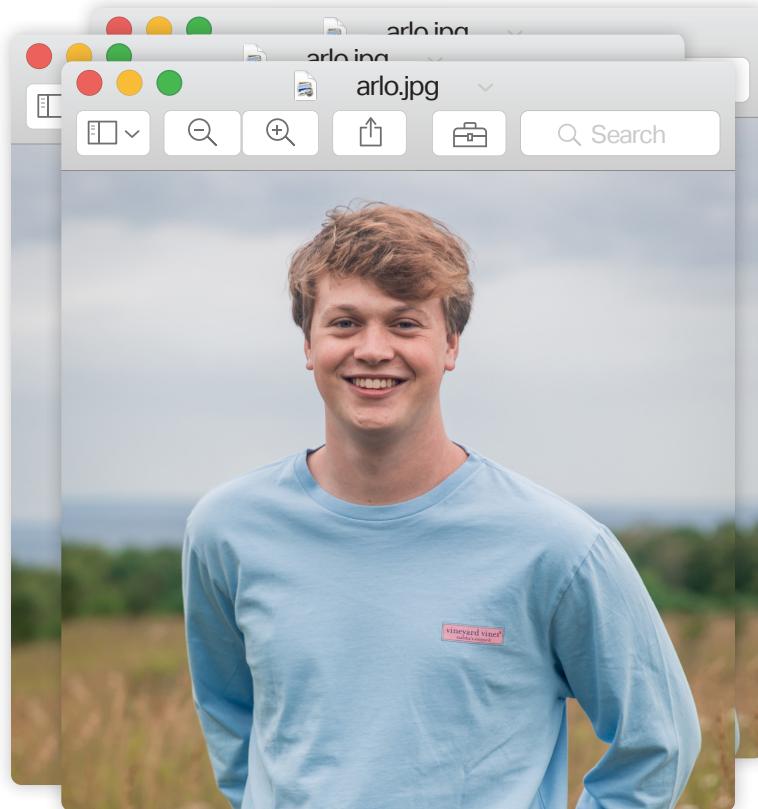


Elinor Duck

I think the biggest thing I'm looking forward to is just being able to live in [New York City], being where the fashion industry was made and meeting a lot of people who have the same interest. I'm excited to be independent and have really good relationships with my professors. I want to be able to intern at Vogue or Montclair and work with advertising. I think the biggest thing is just being able to live in the city because I've always wanted to live there and just to go to this fashion school that I have dreamed of going to since eighth grade.

Arlo Durgy

I would say [my favorite teacher is] Judith. I think it's hard not to. I took Judith for basically every English class I could, until senior year, because she was teaching American Lit, and I had already taken it. She said, 'Arlo, you need to try other English teachers.' I was at registration signing up for her class when she told me that, so I was pretty heartbroken. I think Judith would probably be my favorite, or Robbie Stapleton. I don't know, I guess I'm a softie for old women. [Judith] brings in really good food. I took Chinese Lit with her sophomore year, and during lunch one day — it was insane — she ordered five huge trays of Chinese food. We ate all that we could, and we couldn't even finish it. I remember her telling me, 'Arlo go eat more, go eat more.' I was ready to die.

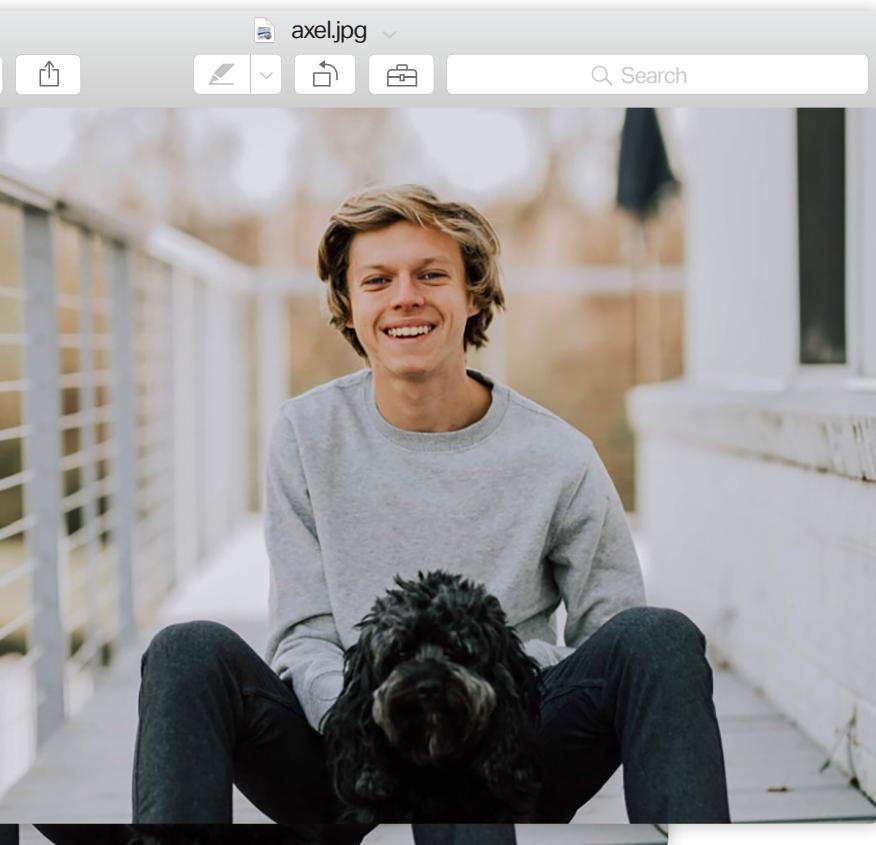


Axel Hiney

[I'm looking forward to] moving to Florida in August. I'm moving because that's where my step-family and dad live, but I'm going to be doing ASU online, and I'm also going to be going to community college down there for photography. I'll be doing a business communications program online, and then coupling that with photography.

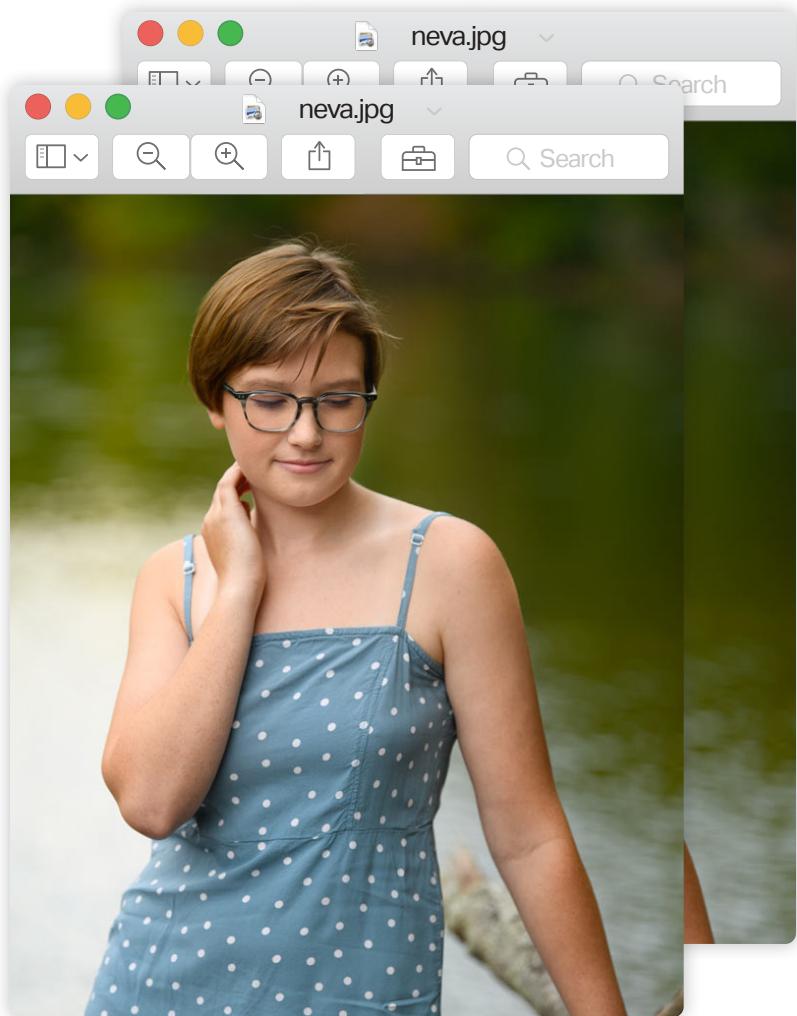
I want to get a van, and I just want to do school out of that. And then I want to travel. This is more of a launching board for me. It's just like getting started and getting out there, and then I'm going to use that to kind of see what works for me and go from there. As of last week, the plan was to join the Marines and be a Marine photographer. And then I thought, ney, the Marines aren't going anywhere. I should probably go explore my options first. And then if that doesn't work, that's always an option.

[Going into the Marines] is something I've wanted to do since I was a kid, but I never thought I'd actually do it. I was always attracted to the lifestyle, just living a life of servitude and trying to get over yourself and the goal of a team. It's kind of like a big cross country team, and I've always been interested in that.



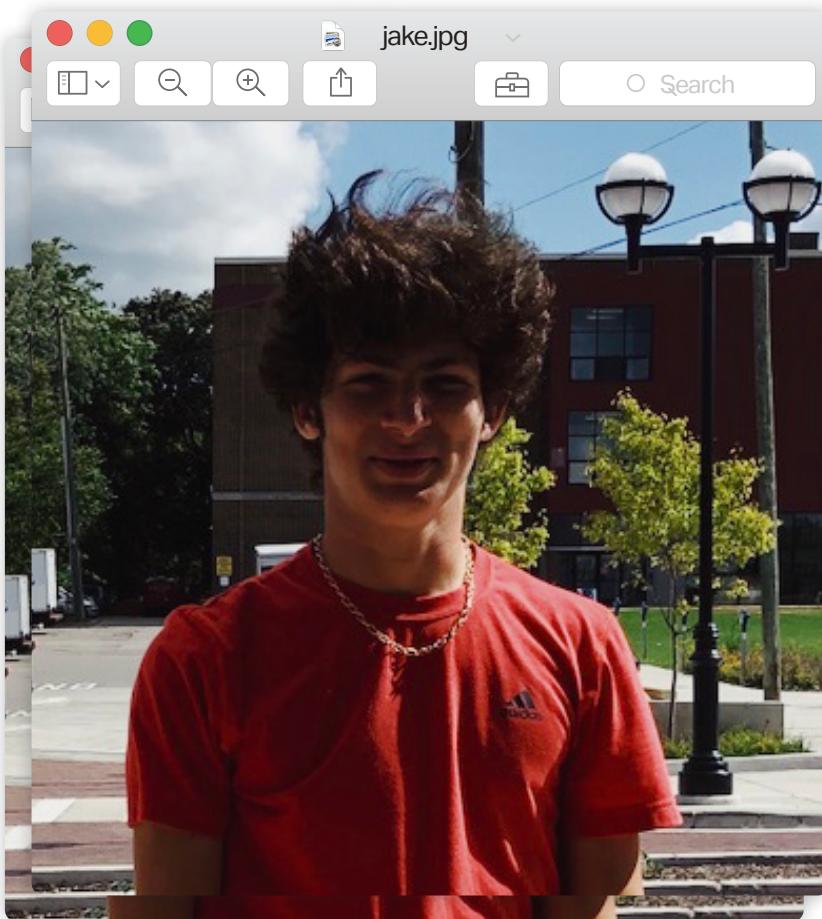
Neva Siers

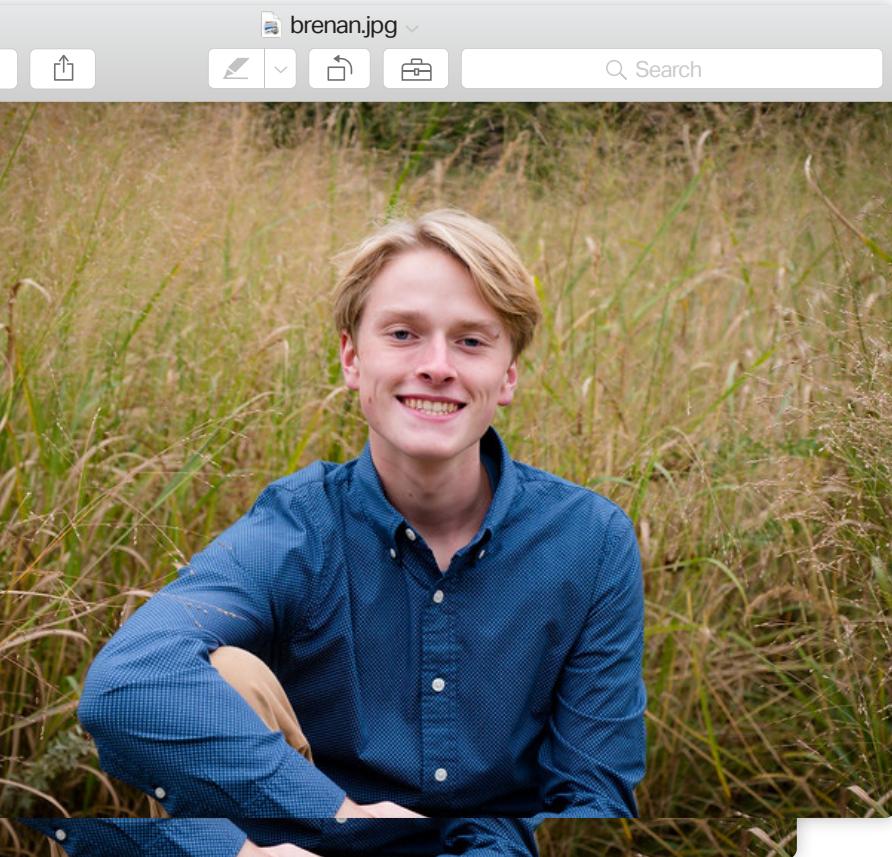
Junior year was my favorite year of highschool, although it's supposed to be the hardest year. I had such a good time. I made so many memories with my friends, and that was the year that my friend group got close. And I met new people, which is always good. My friend group always goes to Ahmo's. That's like our lunch room. Pretty much every day we went there, and it was just always such a fun time. Usually we don't all have classes together, so it's just time to come together, have fun and laugh. I also really liked all my classes. I think a lot of juniors get way too stressed out about the SAT and ACT. Yes, they're important, but I don't think they're everything. I think that I just made the most of it. And I didn't get stressed out about that. I was just able to really focus on my friendships, which I thought was super helpful. Senior year is so stressful, and it's so hard. I think it's a lot harder than junior year. Applying to colleges is stressful. I have harder classes this year.



Jake Bernstein

Freshman year I was not as outgoing, and I just stuck to myself. I feel like school and sports helped me become more confident in my ability to do things. I came to Community with one of my close friends, and it was kind of just me and him for the first part. Then we got into this friend group with a group of people I appreciate. I don't hang out with them as much as I should, which is my fault. I have always been in a really close group of friends with these kids at Huron that really helped me through stuff; if I needed help with anything, they would be there and support me. The same with my friends from Community — they will help me with anything. Owen — great dude — would help me with math if I needed it and is just a funny guy. High school definitely would have been tougher without my friends that I made at Community. I feel like I would not be the same person. I would be very quiet without them, and they really helped me find confidence in what I do and say.





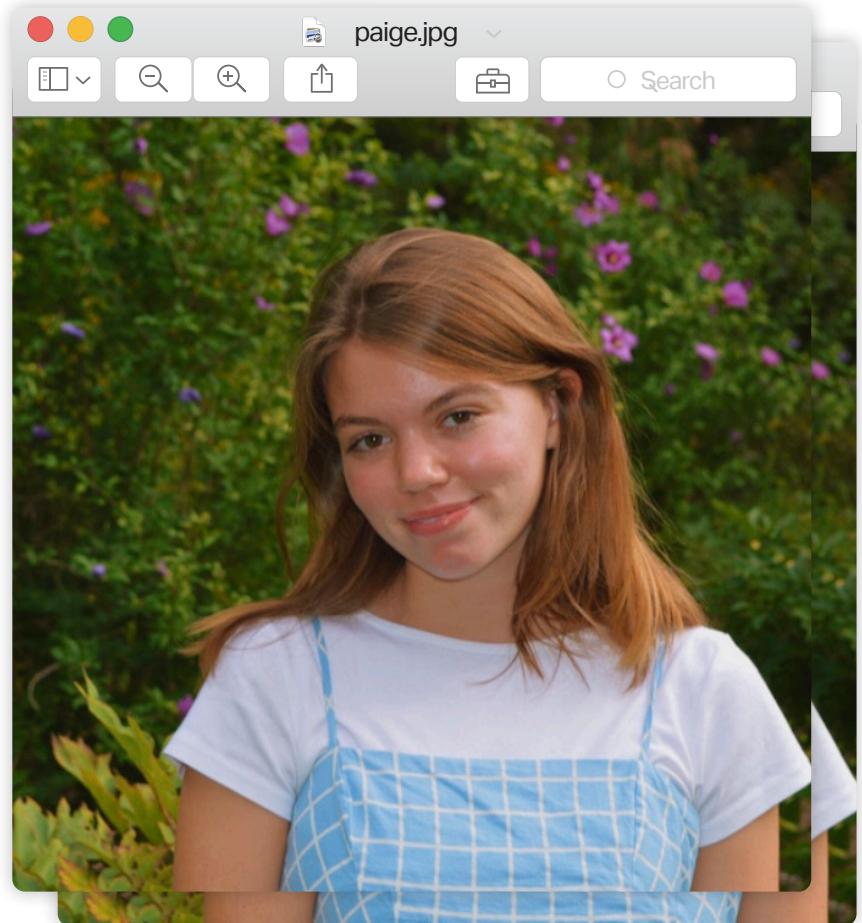
Brenan Dionne

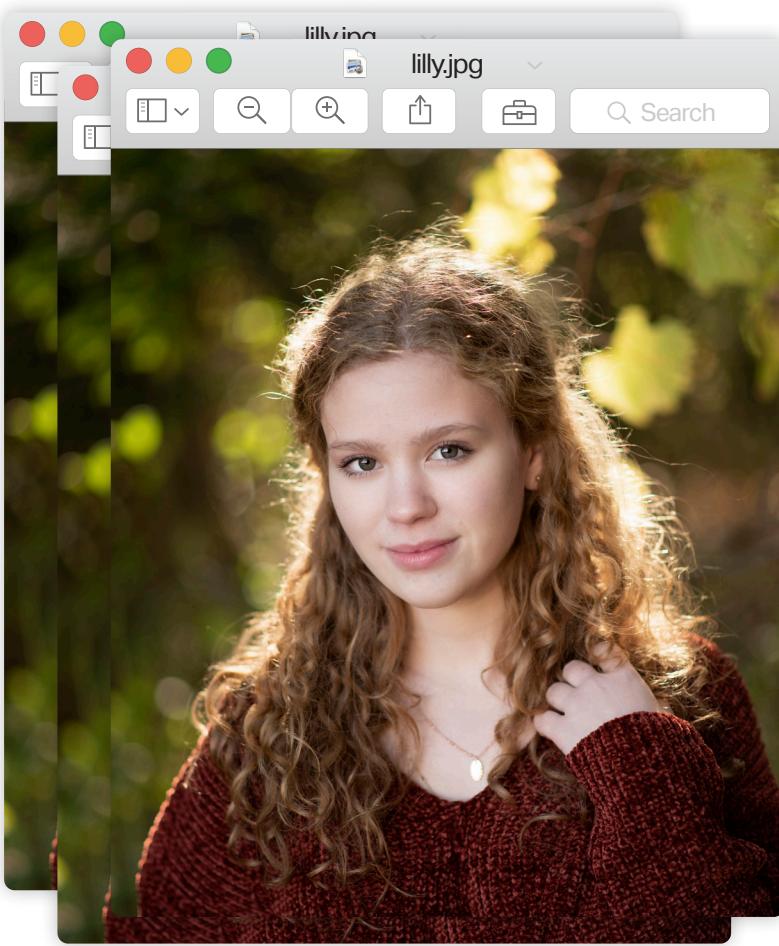
There is no game to be played. I put myself through academic hell, going through all that thinking, 'If I do this, I'll get into the school I want to get into.' What matters to me now is different. It used to be about doing well in school, in rowing, going to college. Now, I care more about people. My relationships now, I feel like these are relationships that will last.



Paige Duff

I applied to eight schools. I got accepted into two, I got waitlisted at two and then I got denied by four. It was really hard for me to hear about all my friends who were going to these places that they were so excited about and were deciding between — in some cases — two, three or four really great options. I think that it would have been really hard to go to school during that period, in that little window when everyone was hearing back from places. I was just disappointed in myself. Like, what could I have done differently, how could I have made myself more competitive? It wasn't until a couple weeks ago that I ended up just realizing sometimes, this is how [it] shakes out. And I think having that time to be with myself, to talk about it with the people that I really care about, who really care about me, to just sort of reflect and move through the phases, was really a blessing. I had kind of come to a place of, 'You just need to accept your options, and this was what the universe wanted, and you've got to figure out your plan.' Then, on Friday, I got off the waitlist and into what was one of my top schools. I just feel like I am so much more appreciative of it now; I just want to prove them right. I want to show them that they made the right decision, and I feel like I'm gonna work so hard to make it worth their time that they gave me this chance. I just feel like it worked out so well, and I know I wouldn't be looking at it through this lens without those three weeks.



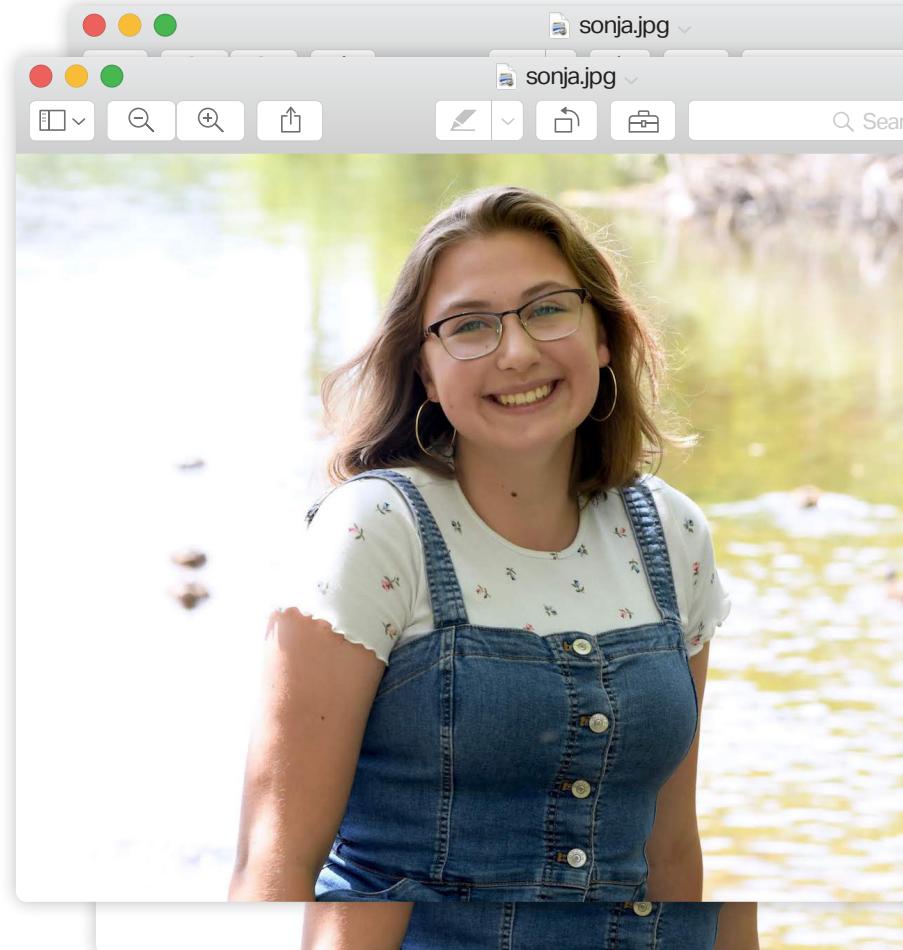


Lilly Crankshaw

You won't believe it until you hit your rock bottom. It took me a while to get to a place where I threw my hands up in the air and said, 'I need to get help. I can't live this way anymore. I'm tired of being miserable.' And then I got better. I've changed my outlook on life; it's not going to be my way all the time. I have to work for what I want, it's not just going to be handed to me. I feel like once I realized that, things changed. I love myself a lot now. I'm really happy with who I've become today.

Sonja Benjamins-Carey

There are a lot of great things about Community, but I would not have had a good time in high school if I didn't have such good friends. I really miss just sitting, eating lunch on the lawn. I think those are some of the best days. The most important thing that I did for my time in high school was joining CET, because it gave me my best friends and a family at school. I think it's really important to be part of a creative process with a team of people, have projects to work on and have something come out of it that you're really proud of. I don't know if it's necessarily something that I want to be my career, but I think it has definitely shown me that doing something creative and artistic is really important to me. I'll be at Barnard College at Columbia University in New York [next year]. I told myself it wouldn't really matter if I didn't get in, but after I did get in, I realized I would have been heartbroken if I didn't. I really think it's the right place for me to go, [but] the scariest thing will just be being so far from home. There's my house, that home, which I'll miss so much, but then, because of school and CET, I've spent so many hours of my life at Community that at this point, it actually does feel like home when I'm there too. It's such a mess of a building and everything, but I'm going to miss it so much because I just feel so comfortable being there.

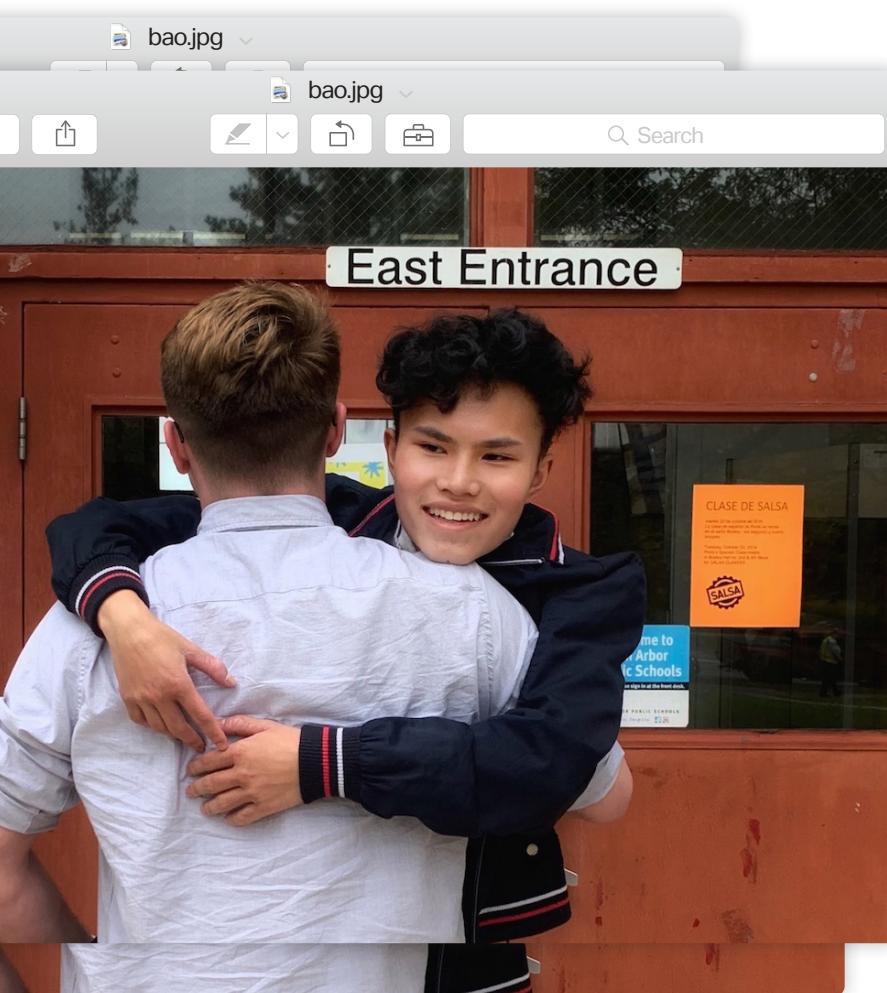
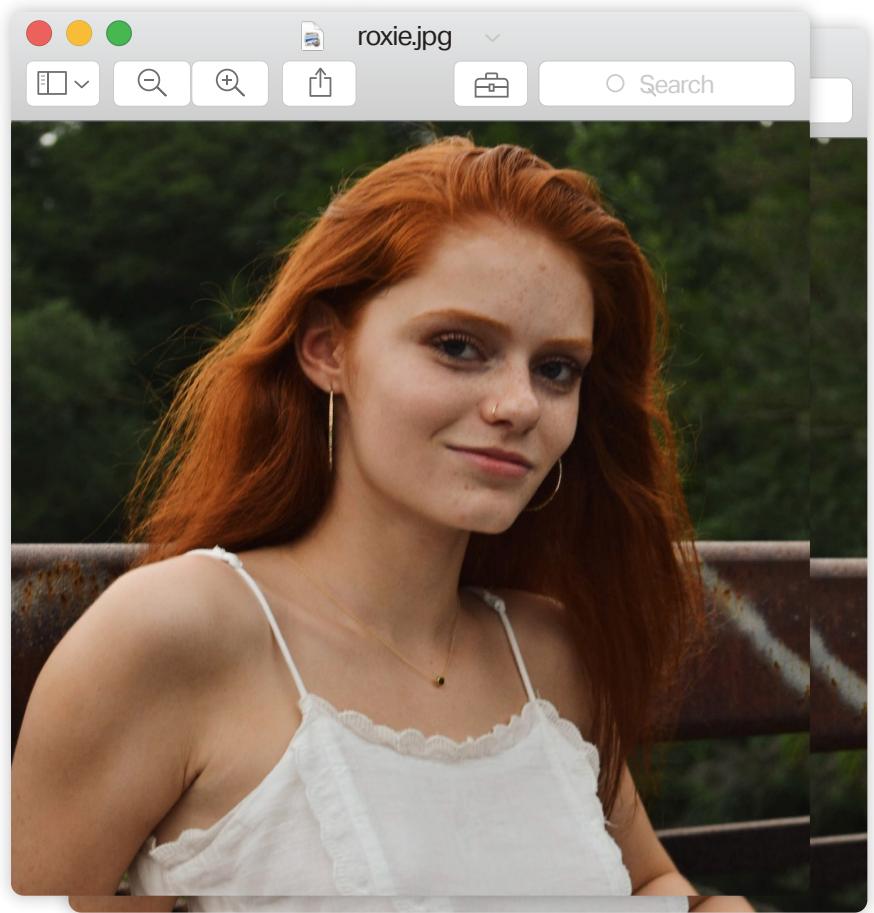


Roxie Richner

[The one word I'd use to describe Community], well this is two words, would be a second home. I think throughout my time here, it's just become a place where I can be exactly who I am and be supported by the staff, my peers and my friends. It's really just been a place where I felt happy and secure in who I am, and I think there's not a lot of places you could say that about, especially a high school. The fact that my high school experience was like that and allowed for that safe space is incredible.

I've learned a lot about what my strengths are, how I can best use those skills to do meaningful things and things that I feel make a difference. I think I've learned how to be a better listener, a better friend and a better community member, and all of those things I credit to being at Community.

I would say my two favorite memories are, one, all of the Communicator trips that I've been on that have been so fun. Some of my best memories have been staying up all night in the hotel rooms talking about life and getting to know people that I didn't know that well before. Also getting to know the people that chaperone those trips, like Robbie and Gretchen. And then also, this is probably so cliché, but eating lunch on the back lawn and just being outside when it's nice out, watching people play basketball and getting coffee. I'm just really gonna miss being around everyone in that way, and I'm really sad that I don't get to experience that again.



Bao Polkowski

During my freshman and sophomore years, I really cared about what people thought of me, and looking back at it, I feel as if I were a caricature of myself. I was loud and trying to be funny just because I was hoping to get recognized, but over time, I realized that it doesn't matter what everyone thinks about you, as long as you have people surrounding you that care about you. CET became that group of people for me. The group taught me that as long as I'm surrounded by kind, talented and warm people, I'm going to be able to enjoy doing theater no matter how successful I am, and while acting isn't necessarily a stable career, it's what I love to do, and I can't imagine life without doing something that I love. Looking back at my time doing CET, I get a warm fuzzy feeling whenever I think about any of the late-night rehearsals we had because I was with all these people that I really admired. Generally whenever we were there for late-night rehearsals, it was when a show was coming up, so that's always an exciting time in CET. These are the people I vibe with and have spent so much of my time with the past four years, and I'm so grateful that they helped lead me to find my passion in life.

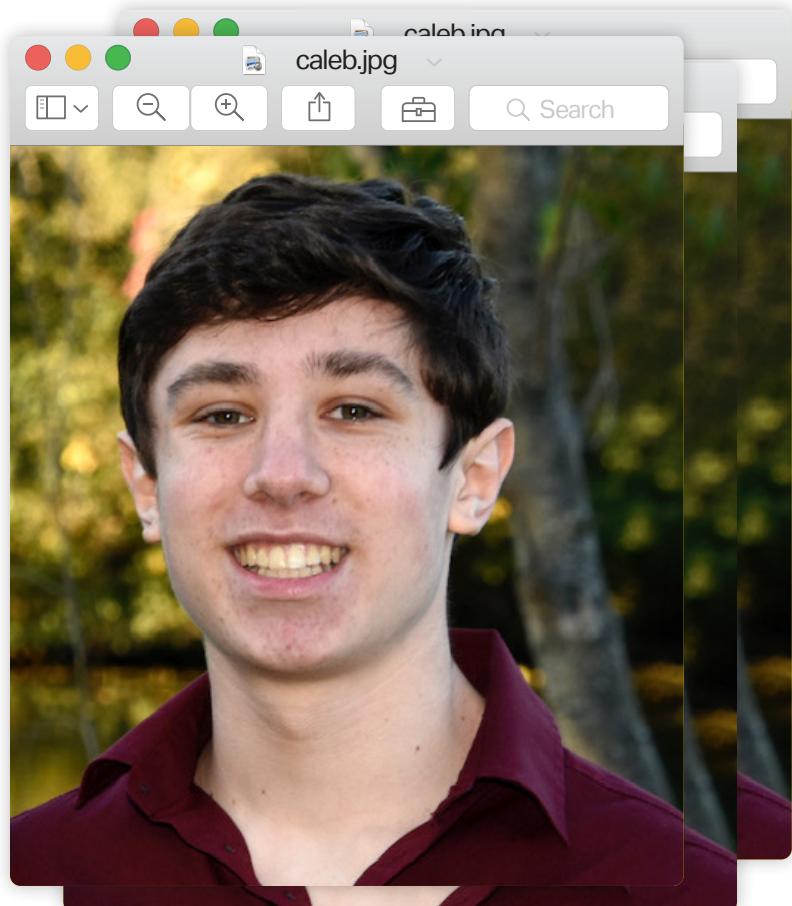
Caleb Giundi-Bright

[Senior year has] definitely been a lot different than my other three years because the other three years I didn't feel as much motivation to get all my schoolwork done. Overall, it has been a pretty good year. I wish it didn't end like this, but I had fun the entire year I was at school.

I'm definitely going to miss the teachers. I felt like I had a lot of connections with my teachers, and it is sad that I didn't get to say a final goodbye. I am hoping I can see them in person one more time.

[My advice would be] don't overthink anything because when you overthink, it's just going to hurt you even more. I'd always overthink the future. Just be organized, too, don't rush things — if you need more time than usual, just take more time to get stuff done. Have a plan, stay calm and be focused on one thing at a time.

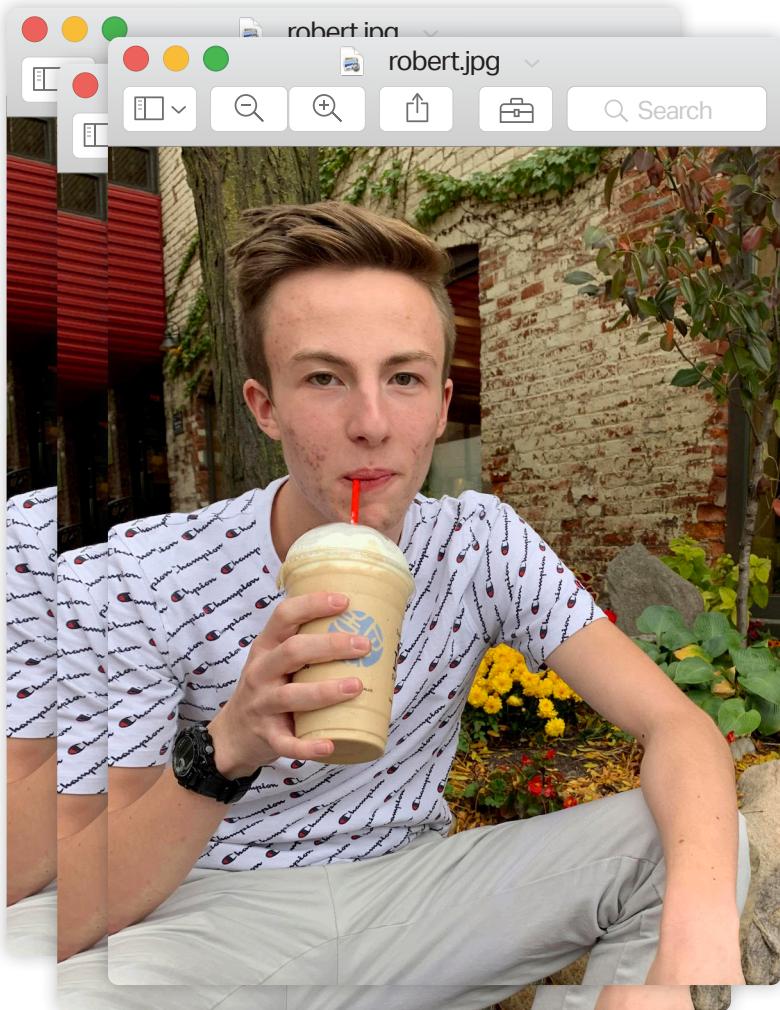
I'm looking forward to starting a new chapter in my life. It's kind of good to get out of the house and start living on my own. My plans are to go Michigan State and study criminal justice. I've been excited since I started high school, and now that I am finally here I feel like I'm ready.



Loey Jones-Perpich

As a freshman, I was very concerned with blending in and it took a really, really, really long time to get out of it. My freshman and sophomore year I felt like I was carrying the weight of the world on my shoulders because as much as I tried, or as much as I wanted to be like everybody else, I couldn't make it work. I wasn't outstandingly unique, but I was still never satisfied with myself. That has changed, and I'm not sure what changed it, but I think a lot of things changed in my life my junior and senior years. It became so clear that it wasn't going to be blending in that made me happy. I think if you told me four years ago that I'd be where I am now — pretty confident in myself and less concerned with doing the same thing as everybody else — I wouldn't have believed you. I'm really happy with that change, and I'm happy with the way my life has turned out and excited about what's coming next. I don't think I would be if that hadn't changed.





Robert Maglione

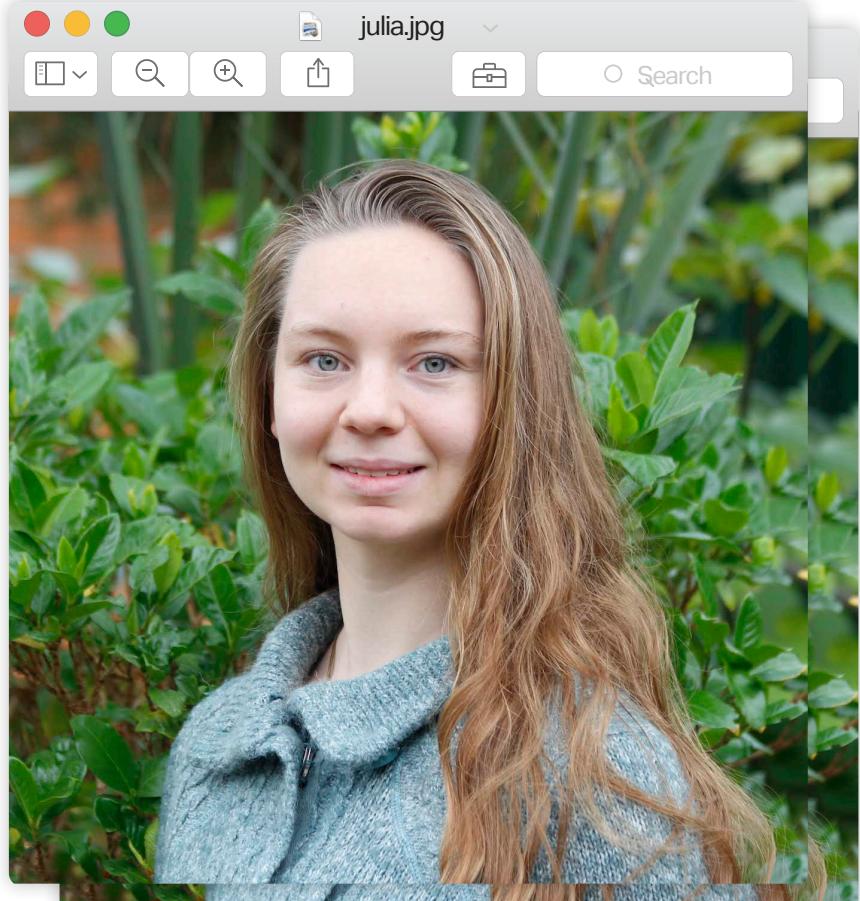
[During high school], I've learned a lot about responsibility and just maturity as a whole. Most freshmen aren't the most mature people, but I feel like I matured more than most. I feel like I was a literal child, a very young child when I was a freshman. I've become so much stronger socially and emotionally and just better at being responsible. I follow through a lot better. A lot of [that growth] was just how life is — you try different things, you do different things and you learn from your mistakes. Definitely the people around me, my teachers and my friends [helped], encouraging me to try different things and stay motivated. I know freshman Robert probably wouldn't listen because my dad told me this — but I'd [tell him], 'Robert, just focus because this [time] is so integral to your life.' One of my biggest things as a freshman was it just wouldn't get through to me how important high school was. [High school] just felt like an extension of middle school; I think in part because of the fact that I went to Ann Arbor Open, which is very similar to Community. It felt like such a smooth transition, I didn't really have that wake up call.

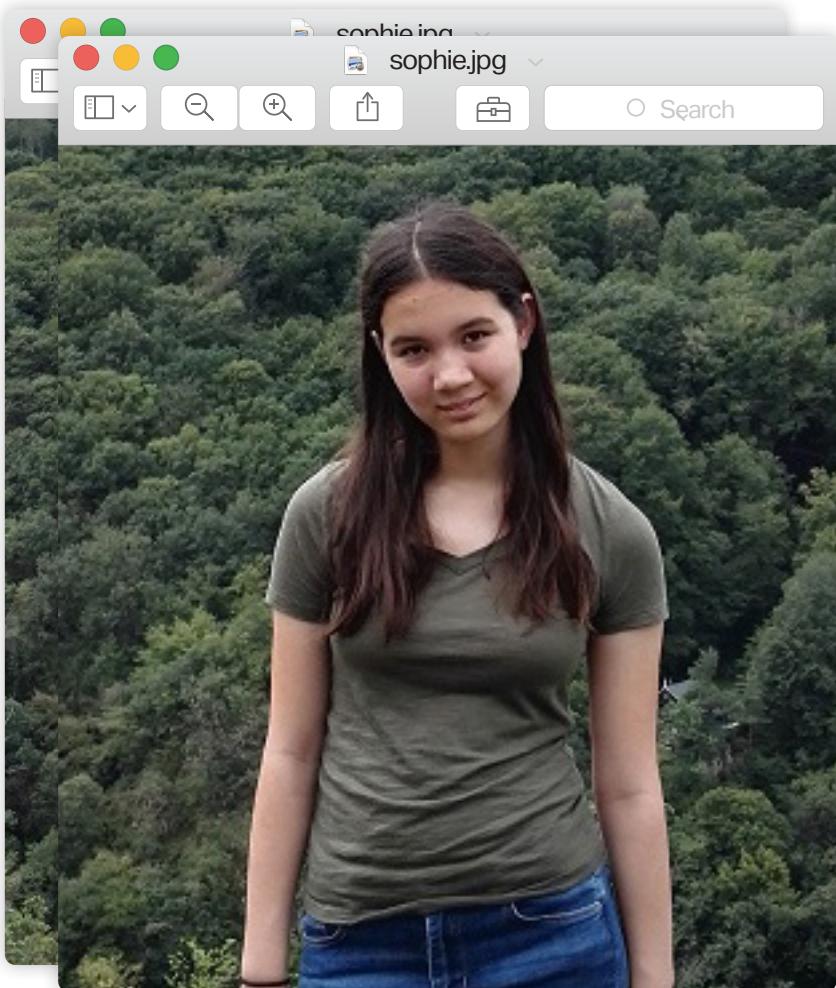


Julia Sonen

I think [I'll remember] being able to talk to everybody. I'd walk into a class, say hi to Chloe. I'd be walking down the hall, knowing everybody, and knowing that I had such a big range in my friendships, and not having so many close friendships, but having so many people I could call friends. I'm so glad it's not so big.

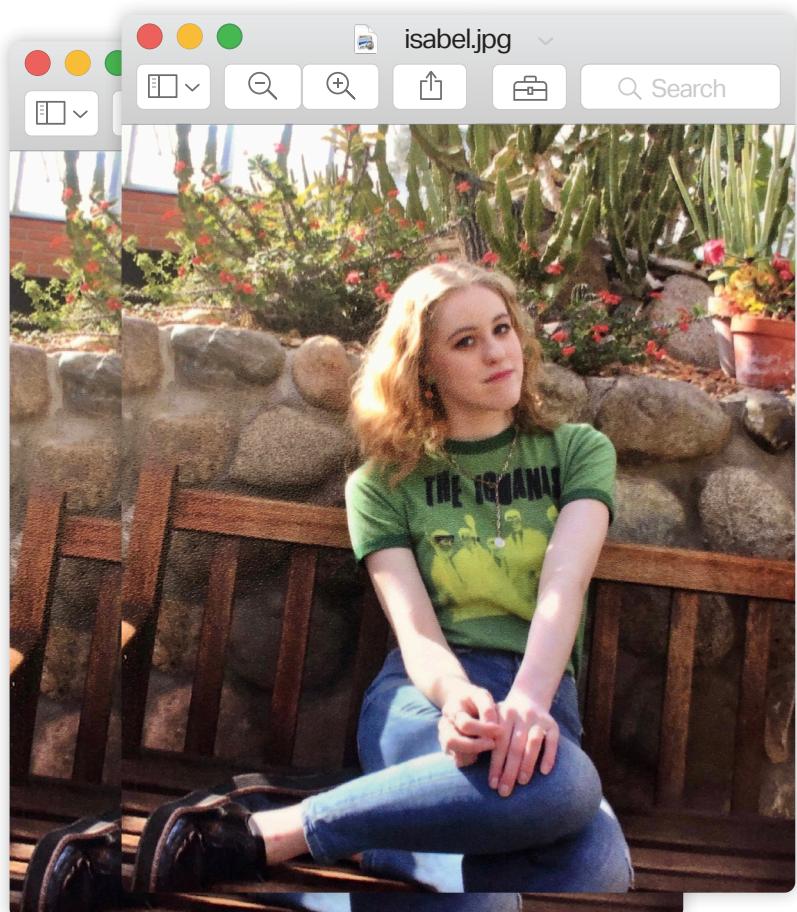
After high school, I'm going to Allegheny College, but I might defer for up to a year. I'm not sure what I would do, that's part of the issue. Probably some natural area work somewhere. Or, I might go out to my Aunt and Uncle's farm in Oregon, and just be a farm hand. Or, my grandparents have a place in Pennsylvania. Well, right now no one's there, so I could conceivably just become a caretaker, but I don't think that would actually take up enough time so I'd have to do something else in the area, but then I'd also be right there, at Allegheny because Allegany is 30 minutes away. So who knows. Hopefully, something's going to happen. It's exciting, but scary too.





Sophie Kriz

Math has always been my passion, and because I finished the high school math curriculum in middle school, I began taking math at the University of Michigan. From there I began branching out into other classes and found that I really enjoyed them. But other than that, I think I had a pretty typical high school experience, or at least typical for Community. I especially enjoyed how close the teachers are with the students at Community because I don't think I would have been able to have a really good connection with any teachers if I went to one of the bigger schools, and I definitely don't think it would have been as easy to take the classes at the University of Michigan. I think the teacher that has had the biggest impact on me this year is Tracy Anderson. She's so passionate about everything and is very observant of her student's moods and interactions. I want to go into education because I think that the world needs more scientists right now, and the best way to get people to go into that field is to cultivate their curiosity for education, and I want to be a part of that.



Isabel Perry

I just had a really tough year with depression; it's hard to explain but I felt very lonely. Being in school made me feel like I wasn't really wanted. It sucks, it sucks a lot but I got by. Teachers like Matt Johnson and Kevin have been great. Kevin would always text me and ask if I was okay. [And for] Matt Johnson, I didn't know how much he supported me until this year. I heard him saying nice things about me that I wasn't supposed to hear and I was just like, 'Oh my goodness, people know who I am. People care about me.' I feel like that's like a very common thing with all the teachers. They support you. Even if you don't know it.

Letter Home

Students from the CHS classes of 2019 and 2018 reflect on their time away from home at college.

BY CHARLES SOLOMAN AND TAI TWOREK



The first day was a whirlwind of emotions and experiences: The craziness of moving everything you owned halfway across the country; the excitement of finally meeting the roommates you'd been texting non-stop; the finality of watching your family drive away one last time. It all felt surreal and impossible, as if I were watching someone else's life in first person.

That night was hard. I lay awake in my new, slightly too-bumpy bed until four in the morning, mind racing, wondering how the h*ll I was going to make it through the year. Don't get me wrong — I had been waiting for forever to go to college and get away from my parents — but now that I actually was, I was terrified.

As the week went on, I slowly readjusted to my new surroundings. I met the other students in my dorm, who were all just as scared and excited as I was. My roommates and I took the train downtown and got lost in the hills and fog of San Francisco for a day. I bought my first Berkeley sweatshirt, and felt instantly comforted when I realized that it was the same blue and yellow as my Michigan clothes from back home. I met so many new people from all sorts of places and backgrounds — and all of the sudden my world was a thousand times bigger than before.

By the time classes started, though, I knew I was in the right place. I was finally getting to learn about things I actually cared about, with teachers who lived what they taught. I took a course in Robotics from a Turing Award-ee and another on Indigenous Art and Literature with an undocumented Native American poet (the irony was not lost on any of us). We built touchscreens, coded video games, and debated Judith Butler. Every day brought something new and fascinating, and while it was tons (and tons and tons) of work, it was always worth it. Besides, whenever I had a really bad day, I could just grab a friend or two and hike up the hills to watch the sunset over the Pacific Ocean. That always made me feel better.

So if any of you are ever in the Bay Area, hit me up and we can walk and talk and watch the sun go down — I'd love to share a little bit of my world with you all. It's the least I can do after everything Community has done for me.

WILL PANITCH

University of California Berkeley



ANDIE TAPPENDEN

Swarthmore College

Leaving to go to college was weird because leaving high school and Ann Arbor meant leaving things I didn't even realize were things that could be left. Random little mannerisms or interests that I had shared with so many people were all of a sudden just things I did. It's hard to remember now specific examples, but I was so aware of it when I first started school. I think giving and getting advice about starting college is hard, because at least for me I didn't really know what to ask about until I got to college, and I didn't really know how to apply advice either.

I don't really know if this can translate to advice or if it's just something you have to experience but imposter syndrome is super real and way more detrimental and difficult to detect than I had expected. Going into college I knew the definition of imposter syndrome — the feeling that everyone else deserves to be somewhere and knows what they're doing except for you — and wrote notes to myself the first week of college like "you deserve to be here!" But imposter syndrome came up in ways that felt so natural I didn't even question it. My first semester I took an intro-level physics class that's intended for people who want to major in physics, and it took me until about November to start thinking that I actually deserved to be in it. I don't want to major in physics, and the first two months I sat in class feeling like I was tricking everyone into thinking I belonged there. Like, if someone got an answer different than mine I assumed they were right not me, or I went into every problem

assuming I wouldn't understand it well enough. I don't really know how to explain it because it was largely just psychological. It felt like I was watering myself down. It's just exhausting. And at a certain point I was like, why am I thinking about myself like this? Why am I acting like this? It was the craziest thing to realize that literally everyone was as confused as I was. In October, I was certain that I was going to fail the midterm and then I didn't fail. I took it and I could feel myself understanding it. It was a take-home exam and everyone had warned me that the first problem was impossible and then I understood how to do it. Ugh. The feeling was honestly euphoric. But even then I still kind of felt like I didn't belong in class. I don't know if the feeling entirely goes away, or if you just have to continuously talk yourself out of it. I think it's good to be aware of imposter syndrome, and especially to realize that it affects you differently depending on your personality.

But yeah the class was on special relativity and quantum mechanics which both genuinely don't make sense, not even a little bit. The first week we learned about how there are three different types of time and after fall break we learn about how a quantum particle only becomes something after you measure what it is. But my professor said things like "your heart is a clock" and the last week we talked about the theory of alternate universes so it was worth it even though it gave me like five different identity crises. I remember the week before the physics final I saw that POETRY magazine had just published a poem called "poet wrestling with the true nature of the photon" and I felt pretty seen.

I think it's generally understood that the first semester and first year of college is hard. It's very overwhelming and emotional, at least for me it was. There was no point where I wasn't overwhelmed. It's cool because you meet so many people but also weird because you don't really know anyone the same way. I remember talking with my roommate Satchel early on and she was like, "the difference between knowing someone here right now and not knowing someone is like one conversation," and I was like damn and that was one of many moments where I was in awe by the large brain of my roommate. Satchel if you're reading this I love you.

But being in a completely new place kind of forces you to determine who you really are, if that makes sense. Like, all of high school I was like hmmmm I don't know what I want to major in but I was also surrounding myself with people who loved writing and art and then all of a sudden when I was around people who didn't know me at all I was like, yeah I'm an English major. It just made sense. Also, in college I lost insecurities I hadn't even realized I'd been holding onto. It was like by the end of high school I kind of knew who I was but there was this surface of who I'd always been. I noticed it the most strongly when I came back for Thanksgiving, and I was the same person I'd always felt like I was except I was actually that person. Or, I was closer to being that person.



The summer before college was the weirdest summer of my life. I felt like everyone was in a kind of limbo, just waiting for the day where they packed up all their things and moved on to their new life. I was very stressed about going to college. I am not someone who likes change, and this was a huge change. I had been living in the same house all of my life, in the same town all my life, and could not imagine my life anywhere else. But for some reason, I chose to go to school 13 hours away at the University of Vermont (UVM.) Over the summer, I grew to envy my peers who were staying close to home. I was worried that I would get there and not like it all, just waiting for the next break where I could go home. But I kept trying to remind myself why I chose to go to school. I wanted to study wildlife biology, and UVM has a fantastic environmental and wildlife program. It was also just a gut feeling that I had when I visited the campus the summer before my senior year of highschool. By the end of the college tour, just by walking around the campus, I knew that this is where I wanted to go. So, attempting to focus on that, I made it through the summer, said my goodbyes, and packed up my things.

Looking back on my first (and part of my second) semester, I realized how deliriously happy I was. I thought I would be missing home a lot, but I was so in love with my life at UVM that I was not thinking about home and Ann Arbor that much. My parents have pre-existing ties to Vermont, so they did come out and visit me a couple of times which probably helped, but overall I was so caught up with school and meeting new people that I didn't have a chance to be homesick.

Going into a college where I did not know anyone was one of the best decisions that I ever made. I was able to figure out who I was as a person, without my family or friends to define that for me. It allowed me to grow into a person that I wanted to be.

I realize how lucky I was to be in the position that I was in. I got into a small honors program of about 25 people within the Natural Sciences College, and we all lived together on the same floor of a freshman dormitory. There, I met some of my best friends. Most of my close friends

all lived in the same 6 rooms, and I loved living together with them. After finishing all of our school work for that day, we would spend the evenings together in someone's room hanging out and watching trashy reality T.V.

I also cherished the freedom that college gave me. As a fresh 18-year-old, I was still getting used to being considered an adult. Suddenly I found myself without parents, free to do whatever I wanted. Being on the east coast, I found myself traveling down to New York City quite a few times on my own, to visit one of my best friends who goes to school in the city. My friends at UVM and I also went up to Montreal a few times, because it is only 2 hours away from Burlington. Once, some friends and I arrived at our Airbnb in Montreal, and I realized I hadn't even told my parents that I had left the country for the weekend!

I also had a lot of fun experiences in the academic realm of college as well. In my general ecology class, we had a lab each week where we would go around to different places in Vermont. We did alpine ecosystem labs on the top of mountains, and conducted water health assessments on UVM's research boat on Lake Champlain. For the first time in my life, I was finally taking only classes that I wanted to take, about things that I was actually interested in. And the classes and opportunities that were offered to me allowed me to be fully immersed in the natural world around me, which made everything that we learned in the classroom even more tangible.

Overall, for how much I was dreading going to college and leaving home, I was completely surprised with how college turned out to actually be like for me. One thing that I realized, which might help ease graduating seniors stress about college, is that every other freshman is in the same boat. We're all figuring out how to exist in a completely new setting and place, and I overall found that it brought people together.

ELENA BERNIER University of Vermont

MINNA TREMONTI

University of Louisville

to play the sport I love, while exploring what I want to do for a career in my future. I actually came in undecided, and I did not have a clue on what I wanted to study. Everyone seemed to be set on their major and life path, but I literally had no idea what I was interested in.

During the first chemistry class I attended in college, the teacher asked everyone to say their name and major in front of the class. Every single student listed off impressive majors such as biomedical engineering, mechanical engineering, and chemistry with a pre-med track. I was the only one who was undecided out of the large group. This situation was intimidating for me because I felt everyone was confident and sure about what they wanted to pursue in their life.

After taking an array of classes of diverse topics, I slowly began to realize that I liked the science classes more. I am still undecided at the moment, but I am taking classes to be on track for a Biology major and a Psychology minor. I still have no idea what I want to be when I'm older, but this is what college is for — exploring who you want to be and what you want in life.

I knew I wanted to play field hockey in college even before I made it to high school, and I was extremely excited to gain a great amount of independence leaving my state and going to a university in Kentucky. When I arrived on campus at the end of June, I took a summer class with other incoming student athletes and started working out with the team immediately. Right away, the other freshman and I were amerced into the Louisville Field Hockey and student-athlete culture.

We worked out every morning at 7am and usually had fun pick-up games at the end of the day.

My first year at the University of Louisville was one to remember. I got

To fill in the time between working out and playing field hockey, my new roommate (and soon-to-be best friend) and I would lounge and take naps on the sunny beach chairs next to the dorm pool, occasionally taking a swim to cool off. Little did we know that this relaxation was the complete opposite of what the season was going to entail.

Preseason started at the beginning of August. We woke up early, practiced around 6 hours a day, and squeezed in naps in the locker room when possible. After a week of this vigorous activity, the real season started. I gained a new appreciation for gameday hair, Gatorade and my teammates. The excitement and buzzing in the locker room was a magical feeling. Away trips lacked the energy of our own Louisville locker room but was replaced with motivation to represent our school elsewhere.

This season had a lot traveling. Every time we traveled, I would miss my Friday class, and have to make up the work on my own time, which I did not have much of. This time was very busy but extremely rewarding. I never experienced physical and mental fatigue like this in my life, but I felt content with what our team was accomplishing in the classroom and on the field. We only lost 3 games during the regular season. For the first time in a long time, the University of Louisville hosted the first round of NCAAs. The first team we played was Michigan, which was ironic because I grew up being a Wolverine. After a thrilling game, we beat Michigan and were set to play Boston College to fight for a spot in the Final Four. We were tied at the end of regulation and went into double overtime. We had to go into shootouts and sudden victory to determine who would win. We lost, and it was heartbreaking. However, I think this will be great motivation for our next season.

I am very excited to see what the future will hold for me, this program, and team.





ARIS CHALIN

Western Michigan
University

that it's been difficult to really process things and sort out how I feel about them. But with all of my newfound time on my hands, I've really been able to take a step back and look at it all. This is my experience of my first year in college.

To start, I missed home and high school like hell. I really actually enjoyed my high school experience here at Community, and Western was a completely different environment that I found myself uncomfortable in at first. There wasn't the same feel, appreciation for the arts, and general town warmth that I always loved about Ann Arbor. I don't tend to get homesick very often, but this was definitely one of the more serious cases I had in a while.

This past year, I was incredibly fortunate to have studied jazz piano performance at Western Michigan University, in Kalamazoo Michigan. So many things happened during that first year

I was so overworked. I was enrolled in a total of seventeen credit hours, spread out across seven or eight different classes. I was a member of five different bands/groups at one point; Four of them were inside of school, and one touring band outside of school. Between all of these separate commitments, homework, practicing my instrument, eating, I probably averaged around five hours of sleep a night. If there was any room for downtime, it was at the expense of any one of these.

My work ethic suffered because I was too tired to focus on one thing for any amount of time, and mixed with my own personal emotions at the time, I almost lost my desire to practice or play music entirely. I became increasingly more homebodied and introverted, and neither had the time or the interest to go out and party with friends. Simple chores became grueling tasks that I had no motivation to complete. Life became almost impossible.

And that first year was probably the best thing that ever happened to me.

I later learned that this was par for the course for most music majors in their first year of university. Many people I looked up to at school told me about very similar situations not too long ago for them. I was having the exact experience that I was intended to have. I was thrown into a whole new situation, and I was trying to navigate it the best I could. And in spite of all of the negative aspects, there were so many bright lights that all of the negative things about music school were completely outshine. I met some of the most amazing and talented people I've ever met, made so many connections, and learned so much from my professors. I'm so grateful for all of the experiences I had, both cruelly and great.

Now, I kind of miss Kalamazoo in a way. I miss walking up to the top of Sprau Tower and watching the sun set, I miss the insulated campus feeling, I miss the grand pianos to practice on, I miss walking across campus in the middle of the rain because I forgot my umbrella but it was fine because I didn't mind it, I miss all of my friends. I wouldn't call it school-sick, but it's definitely

If I have any advice for someone going into their first year it'd be this: It's going to be a lot of work, so embrace it, and enjoy it if you can. Go out and live your life. Don't get so bogged down in your schoolwork that you forget who are. And never forget that if you're doing what you love, you can't go wrong.

ZOE LUBETKIN

McGill University

like it, for other reasons, now. I didn't have a top school and applied to 14, and originally applied to McGill on a whim in twenty minutes on a weeknight in December. I had done a summer program at McGill and I loved the city; I can't really describe Montreal in the summer, but it is so ideal. Think warm, think French on the subway (if you're into that), think walking through many different neighborhoods in the span of a few hours. When I left for school, I wasn't really sure what to expect.

I want to hug my previous self, the Zoe of right before I left for school. She didn't know what she was getting into. It's hard to encapsulate how much change occurred in those first weeks, months. It's so strange to realize you don't have a routine, like there's no consistency because you're doing everything for the first time. It's exciting but it was definitely an adjustment. But things become routine so quickly; everyone latches onto whatever gives them that stability. I took an intro economics class at 8:35 a.m., and every morning as I got ready I could hear the sounds of people playing tennis in the bright sun, the smack of balls against rackets, and I would lean out the window and watch them for a while (I wasn't on time to class; this was part of my routine). This is kind of an example of stability but also an example of small things I never would have thought of — myself of August 2019 could not tell you what tennis sounded like — bringing unexpected joy in the midst of huge change.

I definitely had to remind myself to be present. There's so much occurring at once it can be overstimulating. Little things you latch onto can be so helpful — meeting on the steps to the Arts Building and getting lunch, walking

I decided to go to McGill University mainly because I liked Montreal. I liked the city for a few reasons then, and I still

through the city or up the mountain just to see green, taking time to do things outside of school (for me figure drawing, climbing, the filming for the video-journalism sector of the paper I accidentally joined). It can be so freeing to finally be on your own, but I was always excited to receive mail from my parents, as I'm sure they were excited to send me all copies of Shakespeare in the house for a class I took on a whim. I think it's important to recognize that what we immediately latch onto isn't our only reality, which is definitely what second semester was for.

Going home early made me realize acutely the details I miss: eating with everyone at a big table at 6:30 every night. Never tiring of coming into my room, however small, with all the windows open. Being able to walk everywhere in the city, and if we couldn't walk taking the train. Hearing French every day. The winter, even during the week in February when all flights were disrupted and there was 60 cm of snow on a Friday and snowfall which continued through the weekend. Walking to a dépanneur, the convenience stores on every corner in Montreal, every Friday, forming those little routines. Avoiding other homework to read or write poetry for class, discussing it in a room which was always too hot.

I mean, you learn. The learning curve inside and out of the classroom was astronomical. Some things I learned throughout the year: you can't wear athletic socks to a sub-zero outdoor electronic concert. "College" usually means a trade school in Canada, so technically I go to university. Celsius makes more sense the colder it gets. The concept of wilderness is socially dictated, which I know thanks to a teacher whose parents both went to Michigan. You find small connections everywhere. It never fails to excite you.



ABBIE GAIES

University of Michigan

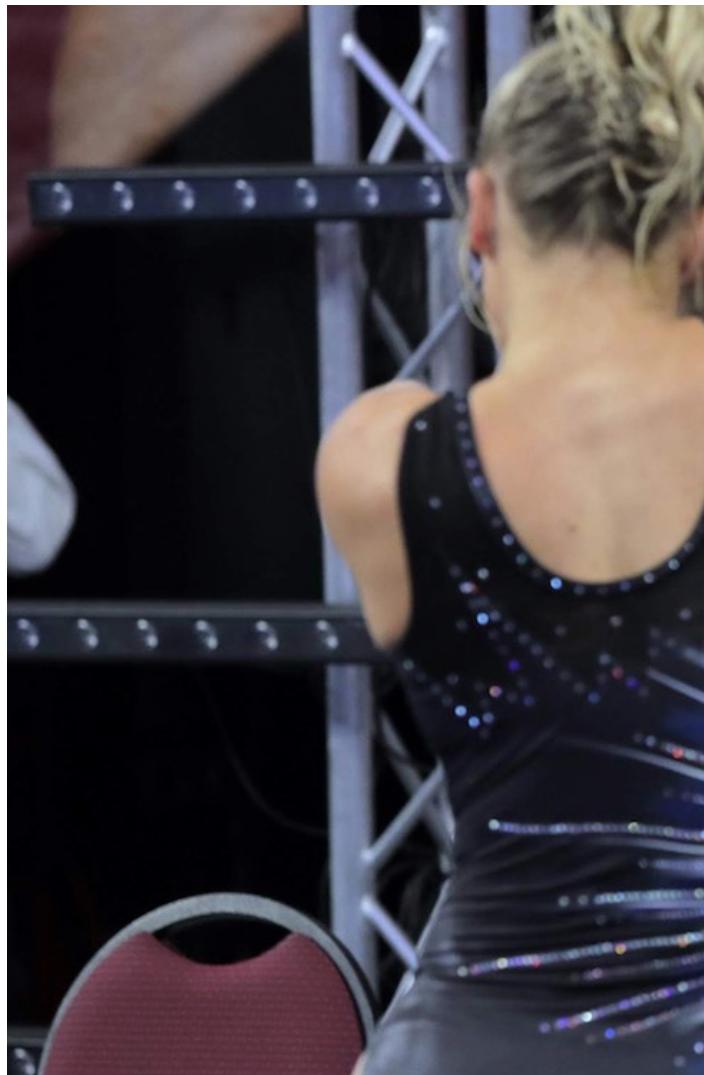
On the outside of my locker at the University of Michigan gymnastics facility is a sign that reads "grow through what you go through." It is beautifully hand drawn in a calligraphy font with minimalistic colors, given to me at the start of the semester by a senior teammate, and I've held it at the front of my brain ever since. I had a very set plan for a long time of what I thought college would look like, and surprising to no one, that plan was not followed completely. The number of times in which I had to pause, take a few deep breaths, and remember that quote is extensive, and I'm going to share a few with you all. I hope this can show you that change is going to occur and things will not go exactly as planned, but you have the ability to come out of everything stronger than when you went into it.

Chronologically, the first major deviation from my plan was getting told I had to have two knee surgeries. Due to the usual wear and tear of gymnastics, the cartilage in my knee had what my doctor described as a "pothole." The suggested fix was to take a small piece of the cartilage, grow it in a lab, and fill that pothole in. The catch was that it needed two surgeries around two months apart, and it had a recovery time of nine months, including six weeks of no weight bearing. This meant college in Michigan, in the winter, on crutches. Not fun. My first surgery was on Halloween and then again December 30. I had hopes and dreams of beginning college ready to compete for my team, and I physically couldn't do it. I had already been diagnosed with anxiety and depression, and you can imagine how I felt being faced with this. I had fears of being left out of my team, unimportant to them because I couldn't physically do gymnastics.

And somehow, they didn't let me feel like that. My senior teammate who gave me that quote reminded me that I needed to look at this as an opportunity to grow. Everyone supported me through it all, gave me rides whenever possible, helped out with carrying things, and reminded me that although my role would be different it was still important. My coaches taught me how to really judge college gymnastics so I could feel more useful during practice and checked in on me constantly. I be-

gan to look at this experience through glasses as rosy as I could make them. Sure, it wasn't at all how I thought my first year of college would go. Sure, it was going to be a hard road to recover back to full strength when I could, And sure, it really freaking sucked and made it hard to get out of bed some days. But I burned "grow through what you go through" into my mind so vividly that I stayed as positive as I could.

Another part of my plan was to come out as gay to my friends and family in college. I wanted to be strong enough to do this as soon as possible because it has never been something I'm ashamed of, but it can be terrifying to possibly have people look at you differently. My personal timeline was interrupted when I was outed to various people. I freaked out and wanted to shut down, but those around me didn't let that happen. My teammates were the ones who supported me the most and never let me fall down. Learning this changed nothing about how I was viewed by them on the team or in life in general. I



grew so much closer to them when I was shown how I could completely be myself and be loved and wanted. My growth through this experience was centered on learning what type of people I want in my life: the type who don't even blink when they learn I'm gay; the type who look at me the exact same after finding out; the type who continue to support me as they always have. My teammates are these people, and I've decided to surround myself with more like them.

This just couldn't be complete without mentioning how I've had to grow through the experience of a worldwide pandemic. You all know how this story goes: my season turned spectator-free, only to be fully cancelled a few hours later; classes moved online; our access to facilities was taken away; we were given 48-hours to leave the dorms; all my friends moved away, back home where they had to stay for who-knows how long. This absolutely was never even near the radar of possible things that could happen, for me or honestly anyone, up until it ac-

tually happened. I've had a lot of time to think about this quarantine situation, and while it really sucks, the doctor in me knows it's what has to happen to keep people safe.

I again put on my rose-colored glasses to force myself to see the positives in this situation. I personally have not been diagnosed with COVID-19, and have not exhibited any symptoms. My stepmom probably had it months ago, but she is fully recovered now. I've been able to repair my relationship with my younger sister that was damaged in my move to college. I've had lots of time to start all the shows I wanted to watch—we all have that list that grows faster than you can keep up with. (Everyone should go watch *Blacklist* on Netflix.) I've been writing poetry, journaling, drawing and meditating, all things that help my mental health but I claimed to not have time for before. I honestly might be talking to my friends more, really talking, even though I don't see them every day. I'm not saying that this pandemic is welcome in any way. All I'm saying is that I have chosen to focus on these positives instead of getting overwhelmed by the list of negatives that I could create.

No matter what you do after high school, it won't go according to plan. High school itself probably didn't go according to plan. The way to keep going forward is one step at a time no matter how small the steps are. I try to look at upsetting things in this way: I give myself 24 hours to feel sad, hurt, angry, whatever negative things you want to feel, and when the 24 hours are up, make a list of the positives. A physical list that you can put on the wall so you can be reminded everyday that there is something good.

So, since my freshman year of college wasn't cookie-cutter perfect like I wanted it to be, I decided neither would this letter. I could talk about missing *Community*, failing a biology exam, or loving the freedom and independence of college, but I know you've all heard those stories before. With the knowledge that every life experience is different, here's my secret to getting through life after high school: Have a plan, but be ready for it to change. Feel all your feelings, but then turn them positive. Experience the lows, but keep your head up through it all and take the time to embody the phrase "grow through what you go through."



AVA MILLMAN

The University of Notre Dame

Reflecting on the last year — from the time I graduated from Community through the summer, past move-in, then first

and second semester, and finally my unanticipated dance with online school — feels like a bit of a blur to say the least. I go to the University of Notre Dame in South Bend, IN. where I am studying Management Consulting with a minor in Real Estate. I chose to go to Notre Dame because when I visited it felt like home, the family oriented ideals and beautiful campus gave me the same fuzzy feeling I had at Community. Once I knew that I was not going to get that anywhere else my decision was easy, and in my opinion it was a great decision! For a lot of people the transition to college is really hard, between adjusting to living away from home, making new friends, and a more difficult course load it is easy to see why. However, my adjustment was slightly unique compared to most other students. A month before Notre Dame's move-in day I, along with 500 other incoming freshmen from school across the country, traveled to Naval Station Great Lakes for Navy Reserve Officer Training Corps (NROTC) New Student Indoctrination. This month-long program assimilated me to Navy culture and taught me how to represent the Navy in a positive light while on campus as an NROTC midshipman.

On top of re-learning how to walk, talk and eat I participated in training exercises including fire fighting, survival swimming, shooting qualifications, and the challenge chamber. After this experience I had four days to spend at home with my family before moving to school, so I had not completely adjusted back to the real world. Because of this, all I really needed to be happy was a good meal and a couple hours of sleep, one of which I got while at school.

At Notre Dame, the Freshmen all move into their dorms before anyone else and go through several days filled with fun activities designed to welcome them into the Notre Dame community. Fittingly this is called Welcome Weekend and compared to New Student Indoctrination it was the most fun summer camp ever! I made some of my best friends that weekend and I am so excited that, assuming we go back to school, I get to welcome the class of 2024 this fall!

Once the serenades, picnics and dance parties had come to a close it was time to get down to business. Notre Dame First Years do not get to pick their own schedule and they like to keep the NROTC students busy to say the least. I had workouts at 6:45 twice a week in addition to an overfilled course load so I never really had time to worry about how I was adjusting, and by the time I did it

was already Fall Break! Despite being inundated with assignments, essays and exams I was well prepared for my first year from my time at CHS. The fabulous teachers and faculty gave me a strong foundation for college and I could not be more grateful!

While I loved my first year at Notre Dame, college, as is life, is not all sunshine and rainbows. There are ups and downs, some days will be harder than others but if you challenge yourself to find the silver lining on the hard days then the good ones will feel even better. I was given some advice before heading to school that I believe set me up for success and I would like to share with you. First, find your people; they may not be the first people you meet or even the second but keep searching until you feel like you have developed almost a second family. Second, do not be afraid to step outside your comfort zone; keep in mind that your first day at college is every other freshman's first day, you are all sharing this experience and I promise you if you put yourself out there a little bit you will feel at home that much faster. Lastly, do not be afraid to ask for help; no matter what university you attend there will be countless resources to help you succeed, and if you need the support you must go out and ask for it because they can make a big difference.

Class of 2020, I know that this year did not finish how you wanted it to but I challenge you to find peace with the circumstances. It is easy to get angry and hold a grudge, and you are all entitled to feel that way, but if you can find the silver lining and move forward with hope I know the next chapters of your lives will bring just as much joy as your time in high school.



ISABEL ESPINOSA

The College of Wooster

liberal arts college in a small city surrounded by a lot of Amish farms. I came into college completely undecided about both my major and what I wanted to do with my life afterwards. At Community, I spent most of my time either working on the Communicator or on a CET show, but I also really enjoyed all of the science courses that I took. Because of this, I wanted to take a bunch of different courses in both the humanities and science, particularly revolving around the environment. All of the classes I have taken at Wooster have been very interesting and have pushed me to think more critically about things that are happening in the world, especially involving media and the environment.

Freshman year has been a lot different than I thought it would be. I expected the transition to college to be pretty difficult as I was leaving the comforts of Community and Ann Arbor behind for a place that I had only visited a

After leaving Community, I went to the College of Wooster in Northeastern Ohio. It's a small

total of three times. Luckily, it wasn't as challenging as I expected it to be. I happened to meet two of my best friends on our first day of orientation and we were able to settle into the routine of college fairly quickly. It definitely helped that one of my friends was from Wooster so we would occasionally go over to her house to play with her cats and get a home cooked meal from her mom. Having that home-away-from-home where I could escape from campus for a little bit was really nice, and I'm very thankful that I was able to have that. In addition, her family was gracious enough to host all of us for thanksgiving as our break was only three days long and the timing just didn't work out for us to go home. While there, her mom took us all black Friday shopping (the first time for both me and our other friend) in Wooster and several surrounding towns which was surely one of the highlights of my first semester.

There are many things that I miss about high school and Community, but I mostly miss the teachers and people that I interacted with consistently. I miss talking to Greg in Kerrytown, forum overnights when Robbie took our phones and "forced us to talk to each other," the hectic air in the theater moments before a show began, and, maybe most of all, the late nights in Tracy's room while trying to finish an edition. These interactions have continued to influence me in college. Community taught me the value of forming relationships with my teachers and the importance of creating personal deadlines. While I don't think it did a perfect job, I am very thankful for all of the experiences I had while at Community.

I've kept in touch with my high school friends and teachers as much as possible. It can be challenging because at Community we all had school in common and we were making memories together. But when you are at different schools you start to make new memories with new people, there's not as much to talk about. As simple as that is to understand, it's been pretty hard for me to reconcile with. Especially in the beginning, I think it's really important to keep in touch with friends from high school as you transition into a life that's completely new to you.

In my experience, the workload of college is completely different than high school, but, at least to me, there is a greater sense that you get more out of a class if you put more effort into it. It's important to know that college will be difficult at first, but pretty soon you'll start to feel like you have the hang of it. Some weeks will be harder than others but in the end, you'll be ready for the next step.





SUIBHNE O'FOIGHIL

The University of Michigan,
Ross School of Business

me as well. This is going to be written from the perspective of a college junior so forgive any naivety or preachy vibes. Also, I hope I don't make a grammar mistake in this letter. That would be super embarrassing. HAHA.

Let me just start this off by saying: I thought I was really cool in High School. I'm sure you can get a good picture of your head—large male with a bunch of large male friends, who really likes catchy phrases that are supposed mean something—think 'slat,' 'slime,' and company. The reason I bring this up is that high school was a huge show for me, a never-ending competition for you peers' admiration to prove that you can hang, despite a nagging feeling that all of it is kind of unnecessary.

Don't worry, this isn't turning into a lecture. But the point is that really everything is "unnecessary" when

You probably don't know me but I'm Suibhne. Graduated from Courtney Kiley's forum in 2018; seems like a long time ago for

you think about it. The only person who is going to define 'necessity,' what you value (please, look this up), is yourself. Not mom and dad, not Tommy or Josie (sorry if there is a Tommy or Josie reading this), not even Tracy!

When you leave high school, don't follow the crowd—despite how sweet or cruel external motivation may be. Find out what you love doing as soon as possible and pursue it until you hate it. Now you know you know your ceiling. Now you know what motivates you internally.

One more thing then I will talk about me. Knowing this — what motivates you internally — is super important. No one can ever take it from you. Your reputation may be tarnished, your relationships asunder, your home life broke, but they can never take your passion from you. Therefore, they can never take your motivation to exist and enjoy this reality. I'm sure you can think of a couple peers who've already suffered from the opposite — an obsession with external motivation. Things they can ultimately not control. Trust me, you'll see a lot more in the coming years. They don't know themselves. Please, afford yourself the time to know yourself; think critically about what fulfills you and truly makes you happy.

Alright. Enough of that. How am I? I'm doing well! I'm a rising junior at the University of Michigan at Ross — the business school. I want to be an entrepreneur and make useful things and ultimately enable other humans to be happier and more fulfilled themselves. I've always really enjoyed peoples' company and love ideas (new things/ways) of doing things, so I think I'm well inclined to the work.

To further illustrate my point about values — because I think it's very important — I work 12 hours a day. This isn't where I expect you to admire me (please don't, it makes me uncomfortable). The point is I LOVE DOING THE WORK. Because I know myself, what fulfills me, and ultimately what my values are; I do what I enjoy and am 'productive' at the same time! At least, that's what the goal is.

Best of luck out there. Community teaches you a lot of valuable lessons. Free-thinking is a tool and should be cherished.

SHANE HOFFMAN

The University
of Oregon

what all it entailed. I had decided to attend college not only in a different state, but perhaps the farthest I could be from home within the United States. Most students who go out of state have some semblance of pre-established relationships with someone in the area in which they go to school. This could be a friend coming to school with them, peers who are older than them or a relative in the area. At University of Oregon, I had none of that.

Despite the magnitude of my decision, I felt not only prepared, but excited to start the next phase of my life. In retrospect though, I probably wasn't as prepared as I thought I was. Freshman year had undoubtedly high points and moments I will never forget, but for all those happy moments and memories were plenty of lonely nights, sad times and even the occasional creeping thought that I had not in fact made the right decision to go so far from home.

But all that is in the past now, as are countless aspects of our everyday lives, that up until a few months ago, we took for granted, never once imagining something like what we are all experiencing now would occur. Like thousands of others, my school year was cut short. And, in a way, I felt robbed. Robbed of the nicest part of the year in Oregon: spring time. Robbed of the last trimester of classes and my job on campus. Robbed of creating memories with those who I had fostered relationships with over my time in Oregon. The worst part was that there was really no one to blame, and while I could feel sorry for myself, it was pointless. So instead, I've done my best to make the most of this unprecedented time where our society has inexplicably come to a screeching halt. Part of that process has included looking back and reflecting.

Although a third of my school year was cut off and will never be given back to me, I can sit back and say, honestly, that I'm proud of what I was able to accomplish this year and the direction I now see myself heading in moving forward.

This year had its low points just like last, albeit far more infrequently. But those aren't the moments that dominate my mind. I've now had time to not only meet people, whether that be friends, faculty at the universi-

ty or community members, but parce out which people will be a legitimate part of my life going forward and spend meaningful time with them. Another huge part of my year was my job as a sports editor and writer for my school's main student-run publication, The Daily Emerald. It allowed me to live a preview of what my potential career could be. I got paid to write about what I love, help other writers grow alongside me and get access to athletics that other students don't get. Another thing I miss is the nature in Oregon. Whether it's waterfalls, rivers, mountains or sunsets, the state has plentiful activities which keep my friends and I busy.

Between my friends, classes, job and free time spent playing sports or exploring Oregon's natural beauty, it was often hard to sit back and take everything in. So now, with all my extra and somewhat un-wanted free time (all-though I still have classes for several weeks) I've realized how much going far away from home has helped me grow. I can't wait to get back to the life I've created on the West Coast.



HENRY SCHIRMER

Northwestern University

championships, my first time spending more than two weeks away from home and I can't forget my first global pandemic.

It's hard to think that only a year ago I was sitting in the computer lab on the third floor of Community, moving pixels across the screen to put the finishing touches on the senior edition of The Communicator. Let me just start by saying time flies, enjoy the moments you have.

Especially now, eight weeks into social isolation, I've really had time to reflect on what the last year has brought to me. It has been a roller coaster of emotions, good and bad. You can't have a rainbow without a little bit of rain. College is hard, don't get me wrong it has been amazing and exciting and I've had experiences I've never thought I would, but it is hard. I remember walking home from the library after a chem midterm, tears rolling down my face. It was traumatizing to say the least. I am not sure I have ever felt quite as defeated as I did in that moment, I felt like a failure, over twenty hours of studying down the drain. I remember telling myself "I'm too dumb for this school."

I had to wait two weeks for the grades to be released. I got a 65%, a solid D. This score was worth a quarter of my final grade, and I had just flopped it. There was nothing I could do, but accept it. Accept the fact that it wasn't my best grade, and move on. I learned from this. Learned how to better prepare, not with the material, but with the atmosphere and stress of the college world. I learned how to accept myself and accept the fact that I'm not the

Woah, what a year it has been. A year full of firsts: my first college class, my first big ten

top of my class, and I don't need that to be happy.

This was just part of learning to go with what is handed to you. I don't want to sound cliche, but I really learned how to "go with the flow." I learned how to accept whatever the world puts in front of me, both the good and the bad.

I found that things just kinda happened in college, one thing leads to another and suddenly I'm rushing a fraternity. Yes, my little gay self rushed a fraternity. It was something I didn't come into college thinking I would do considering who I am and my values, it just didn't fit into my life plan. But here we are, a member of Lambda Chi Alpha, five months after meeting a great group of individuals in the fall. Like I said, things happen, things change, and life just put things in place. Live in the moment, accept what is given.

A lot of my life skills can be expressed in terms of my sport, diving. College diving is something completely different than high school or club, it's a new caliber of skills. It can be terrifying watching your competition, some of which are set to go to the Olympics. In these moments it's hard to believe in your own skills. It's always, "wow, these kids are good," and never "I'm good." Some of the best divers in the country represent Big Ten teams. And me, a little freshman, was on a team who hadn't placed above ninth in years. That's ninth, out of ten if you were wondering. The energy was crazy, it is probably one of the most viewed events in the world of college swim and dive. And there I was mesmerized by the skill and talent of my competition.

Then we started. The first day of competition didn't go exactly the way I wanted, missing the B finals by one place, but hey, it was my worst event and I still had two days ahead of me. Day two was also disappointing. I got caught up in myself, worrying about what I did wrong rather than pushing forward. I wasn't able to accept my mistakes and move on. I wasn't able to relax and roll with the punches. By day three my mentality had gone to 'fuck it, just have fun.' To my surprise, I was the most relaxed I had been the entire competition. I wasn't thinking about what went wrong, rather accepting the dive as it is and moving on. I finished eighth, making A finals, a place I would have never guessed I would have ended up. And all I had to do was relax.

It's crazy how much can change if you drop some weight off of your shoulders and stop worrying about the things we can't control. Let loose a little bit and see where you might end up. I did end up passing general chemistry (stay tuned for organic chemistry), I am happy to be a lambda brother, and I am proud of where my diving has put me. The world is a crazy place, especially now. Yes, I am disappointed that I am no longer on campus and my life has come to a grinding stop. However, like I said, relax, let the universe do its thing, good things are bound to come out of this too.



A young woman with long brown hair is laughing joyfully in a field of tall grass. She is wearing a green floral dress and a necklace. The background is a soft-focus landscape of tall grass.

For the Sake of Change

Senior Kat Stanczak writes on the progress she has made throughout the final stretch of high school

BY KAT STANCKZAK AND JENNA JARJOURA

went into junior year with the wrong approach. Everything was kind of rocky from the start. I was trying to find different ways to feel things and distract myself from how numb I truly was, and like many of my peers at the time, I had a crippling nicotine addiction.

I was just barely getting by, and it became evident that something had to change by November. The change I thought I needed was boys and drugs. Today, as I write this, I am filled with anger over who I used to be. I got into a relationship with someone who treated me really poorly. It was such a destructive situation for me; I'd never been so happy but also so depressed.

Things got worse progressively, and it was apparent to everyone but me that I was in an emotionally abusive relationship. I would defend my boyfriend and constantly stress that he fought with me because of something I did wrong. During this time I was desperate to find ways to help cope with my anxiety, but it made my life spiral even more. I was barely aware of anything.

Even in the lowest of times, I assured myself that I didn't have a problem and kept moving forward.

I broke up with my boyfriend around Future Stars auditions, hoping it would make me feel better. I was so excited because I got into Future Stars and I was on the right track. Even though I tried to end things, we were inseparable once again. I was manipulated into basically getting back together with him without a label just so he could use me until he found his new target.

After Future Stars, our relationship became primarily toxic words, threats and conversations. There would be times where we'd try to be friends and then he'd use me for whatever he needed.

The months of February, March and April were a blur. I was on a lot of substances and dealing with a lot mentally. I didn't care at all about school; I barely kept in touch with my friends, and I barely cared about theater anymore. I just gave up everything that made me happy because in some weird way, I felt like I needed to punish myself.

By April I had truly hit rock bottom. I was stuck in a hole that I dug for myself. I was so deep that I didn't think I was going to pass the semester, but then, something happened that changed my life.

My forum leader Tracy came into one of my classes and took me to the counseling office. I sat there with her and one of the school counselors, Amy, and they told me that they knew something was wrong and that if I didn't do something about it, I wasn't going to pass the semester. But, throughout the conversation it seemed like that wasn't their



biggest concern.

Their biggest concern was me and my existence.

I remember Tracy showing me a picture of my dad and me on a forum trip. She said that the girl in the picture was the Kat that she knew. Then she handed me a mirror. I hadn't noticed until that moment how drastic my physical transformation had been.

When I looked at myself I saw a shell. I saw how skinny my face had gotten and how hollow I looked. It was really emotional to see myself the way that these people who loved and cared about me saw me. After that, they told me about amazing resources, and I decided I needed help.

The program that Tracy and Amy found for me was terrifying at first. Things like group therapy were very intimidating, but I needed that so bad. I needed to be shown what healthy coping skills looked like after realizing all my previous coping mechanisms were more harmful than helpful.

I wish I had been more honest about my issues, but being able to be around people that understood how I was feeling and knew healthy ways to combat those feelings was instrumental in my recovery.

The weeks I spent there taught me about different forms of therapy, how to identify specific feelings and where they come from, how to cope with anxiety, how to deal with drugs, and how to deal with loss. I still implement a majority of the things I learned there in my life today. Leaving the program was honestly equally as scary as going.

The day I got back I received a piece of pa-

per from Kevin.

"You're taking the SAT tomorrow," he said.

I was already so nervous about the social aspect of coming back that I forgot I missed the goddamn SAT.

That day I was so anxious. In the past I would've hid in the bathroom or just stayed home, but instead, I went to take my test. I used my breathing exercises, I identified all of my destructive thoughts to help remind myself that I can do it, and I thought about how much I wanted to change.

It was so hard to change. I won't lie. I had an intense experience a couple of weeks after arriving back home. My mental health had sunk again. I began to doubt the program. I was so flustered during this time that I forgot what I learned; the program only works if you use what it gives you. That's how I started improving myself again.

At this point, I had less than a month of school left and I was not going down without a fight. Before the program I went to in April, Tracy and Amy advised me to pick three classes to focus on and drop the rest. But, I knew I was capable of doing more.

I am not kidding when I say I put my blood, sweat, and tears into those weeks. I'd go to school, do my homework during the school day, go to rehearsal, go home and do all my catch-up work until 4:00 am. Although this wasn't the healthiest of methods, it was the only way I was going to get through the school year.

I ended the school year with grades that no one would be proud of except for me. I also proved to myself that I had the ability to do

more than I believed I was capable of.

I know how insignificant this seems to most people, but I was at a point where I could either let my mental illness take me down or find the positives in things and use the tools I learned to lift myself up.

I ended up having to retake the first semester of Algebra 2 during summer school. I finished the class with an A and had perfect attendance in the class. This was reaffirming because not only did I struggle with grades, but my attendance was atrocious. I proved to myself that I could do 100% of the work and be there 100% of the time.

In the summertime, Pioneer Choirs spent a week up at Interlochen. Last summer impacted me so much because I finally felt like myself again. I felt the way I did in the picture

that Tracy showed me. I had horrible attendance and grades in choir and I knew that after my junior year, it would be almost impossible for me to prove to my choir teacher that I'd grown. But, when we got to camp, I finally wanted to put my all into something. I wanted to be the best version of myself; and I wanted to stay in choir because at the end of the day, it made me happy.

I remember my cabin at Interlochen was practicing rhythms outside one day, and my teacher walked past and called my name. I was nervous because usually when he'd call my name it wasn't a good thing. He told me that he was proud of the leadership I was showing and that he saw I was working to change myself.

My senior year had some rocky moments,

but I had pretty good attendance. I learned how to communicate better and be more reliable. I surrounded myself with people who actually loved me and wanted me to be the best version of myself. This school year, my choir teacher told me several times that he saw me become so much more responsible, and that meant so much. Tracy and Amy also constantly checked in with me and told me I was a rockstar.

Obviously we're all constantly growing and in ten years I may be in a completely different spot. I get to choose what path I take, and I'm never going to take the self-destructive path again. Throughout high school I was given the opportunity to fail or to succeed, and the day I chose to succeed I became the person I am now. ☺



Photography by Tracy Anderson | Kat Stanczak and her father smile and embrace while they enjoy Kat's sophomore year forum trip. At the beginning of her journey, Tracy Anderson showed her this picture for motivation to get better. During her forum trip Stanczak felt like her true self.



Baking with Allison Cowherd

BY SOPHIE FETTER

Allison Cowherd found a passion for baking, now she hopes to make a career of it.

Allison Cowherd doesn't remember when she started baking. She does know that the first thing she started to bake was chocolate chip cookies, which are still her favorite thing to bake. She started increasing the difficulty of what she would bake, but she always comes back to chocolate chip cookies every now and again. Her second favorite thing to bake is chocolate chip muffins.

"I try to change what I bake so that I don't make the same thing over and over and so I don't get bored with what I bake," Cowherd said. "I've done basically muffins, sometimes bread and sometimes pie." The most complicated thing Cowherd has ever baked would probably be cheese-stuffed buns. "You must stuff the dough, freeze it, boil it, and then bake it."

Cowherd's biggest baking fail was one time when she made rainbow cupcakes. "Long story short I was at this person's house. We were in middle school. We made rainbow cupcakes, but for some reason we messed it up a little bit and they turned out [bad]. I think we baked them for too long."

During this global pandemic lockdown, Cowherd has baked whole wheat bread a few times, oatmeal raisin cookies, apple muffins, and chocolate chip muffins. She has also made cheese pinwheels, and cheesy pretzels with her sister.

Cowherd doesn't do a lot of cooking, but she cooks her lunch from time to time and sometimes makes dinner for her family. Baking what she usually does though. "It's just a lot of fun!" Cowherd said. "It calms me down when I feel kind of stressed. Even though you have to think about what you have to measure and how much of XYZ, it [still just] kind of calms me down. Sometimes I feel a little overwhelmed and I'm like, Well, how much flour do I add, is it enough or too much. If I think about how to measure it usually it will calm me down but sometimes it doesn't. I want to be a pastry chef or a barista. My perfect job would be making baked goods at a place like Zingerman's Cafe or Big City Small World Bakery in Ann Arbor." ☀

Blacksmithing with Bree Boehman

Bree Boehman has turned her passion for medieval weaponry and fantasy into an unlikely internship

BY SOPHIE FETTER

After high school, CHS senior Bree Boehman is going to be attending Wooster College in Ohio to study History and Art of Writing. Boehman is planning on getting an internship with a blacksmith where she will be making historical weapons for collectors. She was going to start her learning this spring, but had to postpone due to the COVID-19 quarantine. Boehman has never worked with metal before, but she has always wanted to. "I've done lots of wood carving and whittling before," Boehman said. "So I know how to make nice handles and perhaps some fancy wood pommels."



Boehman has a fascination with medieval weaponry. "I love studying history from that time period, especially how arms and armor evolved over time with the advancement of science."

Examples of these advancements would be how smiths developed better tools and skill to make finer alloys and how they started making plate armor instead of chainmail or lamellar. Boehman thinks that the advancement from bronze to iron is a really interesting and pivotal point in the field of innovation. "I just love researching military tactics, logistics, weapons and armor of the old world," Boehman said.

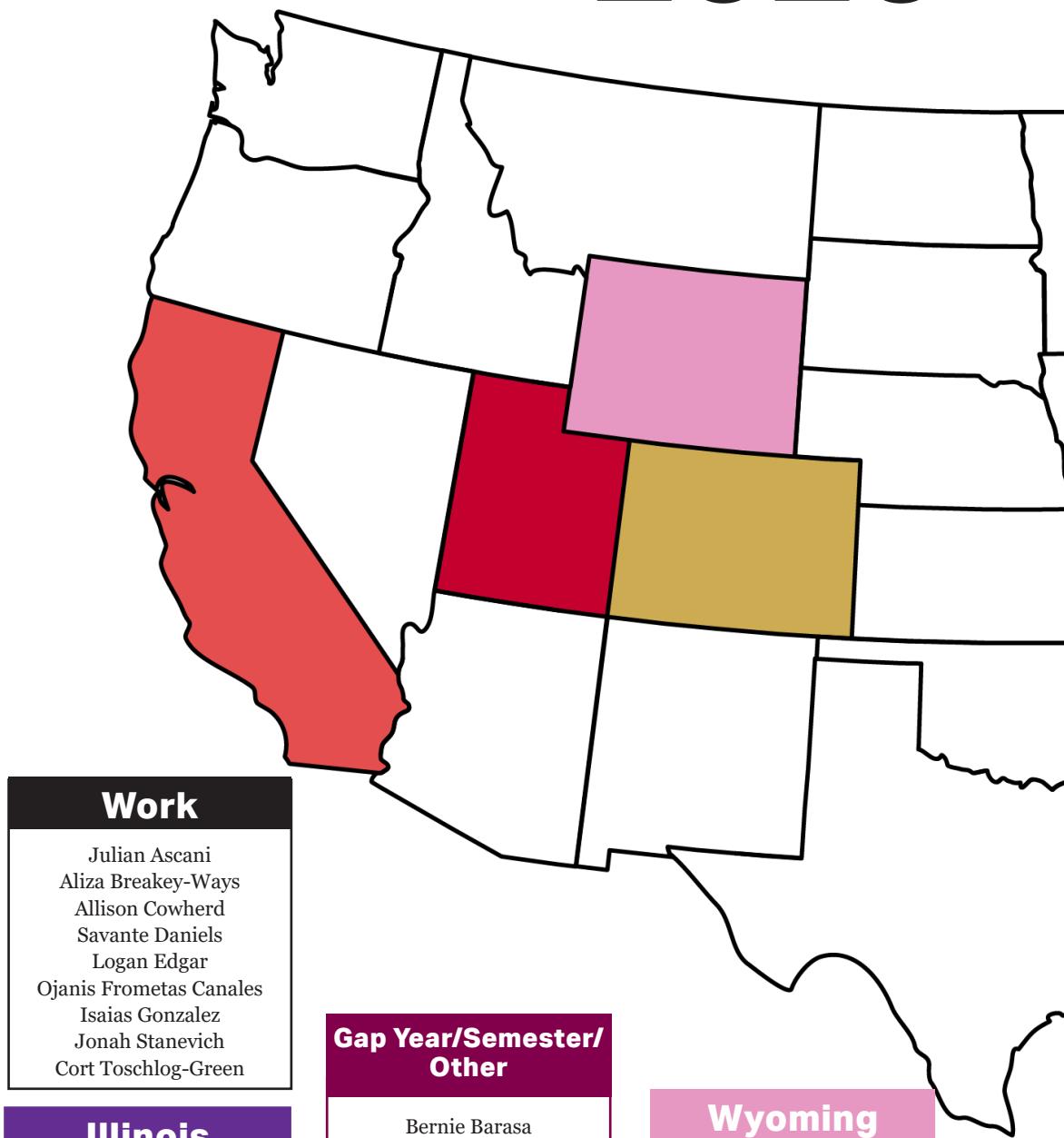
Boehman's passion comes from her interest in fantasy as a kid. Because she was so young, she didn't understand the differences between different weapons and armor. "As I got into Dungeons & Dragons and video games [where] the equipment had different roles and stats. I started wondering how accurate these in-game stats were to the real things," Boehman said. "So I started reading up on all the different kinds of armor, weapons, shields, their advantages and drawbacks, their historical applications, tactical uses, and evolution through history."

Boehman found that many of her fantasy games contained historical inaccuracies. An example of this would be the common misconception that swords were the primary weapon of almost all medieval warriors, when historically they were mostly used as sidearms and backup weapons; a warrior's primary weapon would often be a polearm of some sort. Another example, Boehman said, would be that movies and television depict armor as doing next to nothing and that armor is way more effective than it is shown to be. "I constantly see swords and arrows piercing straight through heavily armored characters when really that is incredibly inaccurate. Swords and arrows are awful against armor, That's why weapons were developed specifically for the purpose of dealing with high ranking enemies with very nice and expensive armor." Boehman is seeing that more games and movies are shifting more towards realism.

Boehman's blacksmith experience will start with making knives and daggers. "Almost every blacksmith that wants to pursue a career specifically in making weapons starts with knives and daggers," Boehman said. "They're small, easy to shape, and relatively simple." Longer weapons are generally harder to make because long singular pieces of metal since they're often heavy and prone to complications, especially if they are thin.

Boehman has three weapons she is excited to make: a Celtic leaf bladed sword, a halberd and a Scottish Claymore. She is so excited for her blacksmith internship. "I can't wait to start working some metal." ©

2020



California

Pitzer College

Owen Kelley

San Diego Miramar College

Henry Mosher

Stanford University

Sylvia Gabriel

University of California, Irvine

Irvine

Adarsh Tummala

University of California, San Diego

Chloe Kurihara

University of California, Santa Cruz

Leah Dame

University of Southern California

Shea O'Brien

Colorado

Colorado State University

Noah Pike

University of Colorado, Boulder

Billie Adams

Sophia Berry

Covey Hurd

Sarah Tice

University of Denver

Jesse Rosenberg

Work

Julian Ascani

Aliza Breakey-Ways

Allison Cowherd

Savante Daniels

Logan Edgar

Ojanis Frometas Canales

Isaias Gonzalez

Jonah Stanevich

Cort Toschlog-Green

Gap Year/Semester/Other

Bernie Barasa

Elliot Budzinski

Arlo Durgy

Eugenio Del Gaudio

Ian Figueroa

Sylvia Gabriel

Axel Hiney

Ruhi Khanna

Jesse Rosenberg

Leda Santic

Maisha Tabassum

Wyoming

National Outdoor Leadership School

JJ McKeown

Rhode Island

Brown University

Jordan de Padova

Isaac McKenna

New York

Barnard College

Sonja Benjamins-Carey

Fashion Institute of Technology

Elinor Duck

New York University

Noah Hogan (Steinhardt)

Rochester Institute of Technology

Josh Boland

Vassar College

Max Steiger

Illinois

Columbia College Chicago

Puck Gatto

Max Mellor

DePaul University

Mikaela Melcher

Lewis University

Simone Mahler

Loyola University Chicago

Grace Bates

Jayla Johnson

Cree Perample

Northwestern University

Cammi Tirico

University of Illinois, Chicago

Neva Siers

Virginia

Virginia Western Community College

Sophie Cain

Maryland

Peabody Institute, Johns Hopkins University

Thomas Ridley

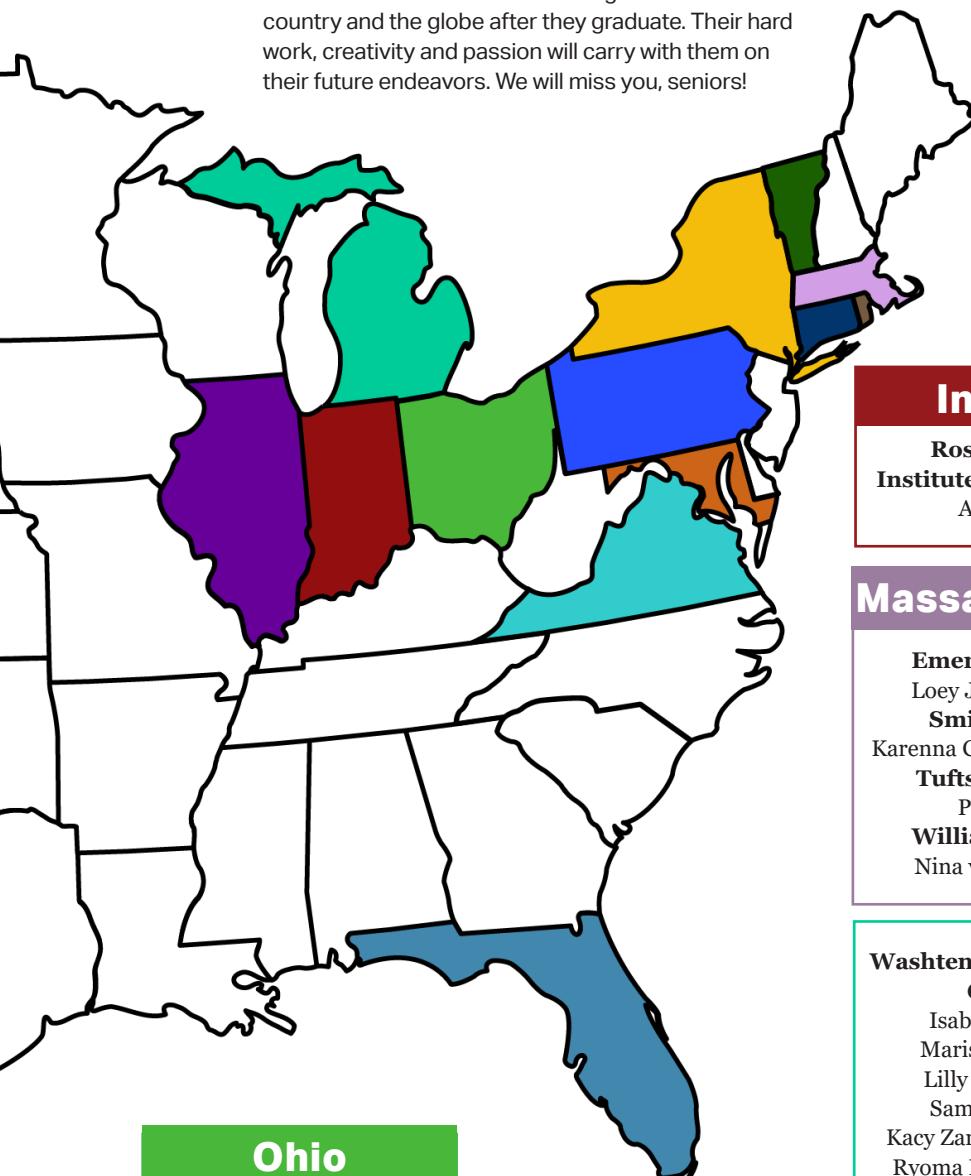
Utah

University of Utah

Maggie Hammer (Honors)

Senior Map

The class of 2020** will be traveling across the country and the globe after they graduate. Their hard work, creativity and passion will carry with them on their future endeavors. We will miss you, seniors!



Ohio

The College of Wooster

Bree Boehman
William Turnbull

Kenyon College

Nina Beardsley
Lucy Scott

Oberlin College

Max Mueggler

Wittenberg University

Atticus Dewey
Lillie Pieske

*Denotes stated intent to transfer
**This map includes all seniors who responded to requests for plans

Florida

Eckerd College

Jacob Perlmutter

Connecticut

Yale University

Etai Smotrich-Barr

Pennsylvania

Allegheny College

Julia Sonen

University of Pittsburgh

Thomas Duda Cortes
Olivia Weinert

Indiana

Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology

Alex Davis

Massachusetts

Emerson College

Loey Jones-Perpich
Smith College

Karenna Collins-Thompson

Tufts University

Paige Duff

Williams College

Nina van der Velde

Washtenaw Community College

Washtenaw Community College

Isabel Castrejon

Marisol Cisneros*

Lilly Crankshaw*

Samuel Dannug

Kacy Zanthe DuMouchel

Ryoma Fletcher-Suzuki

Ojanis Frometas Canales

Ruby Holyszko

Robert Maglione

Victor Montalvo*

Jonah Nunez

Emily Robinson*

Mairead Seyfarth

Gabe Simon

Kat Stanczak

Bruno Vazquez-Villagran

Western Michigan University

Jake Bernstein

Morgan Fitzgerald

Noah Greenberg

Wayne State University

Angelina Smith

Michigan

Central Michigan University

Sophia Scarneccchia

College for Creative Studies

Mark Mercier

Maria Weeder

Eastern Michigan University

Madison Wallace

Ferris State University

Cecilia McLoyd

Grand Valley State University

Emma Thornton

Kalamazoo College

Octavia Anderson

Sam Major

Mazey Perry

Samantha Ramser

Eli Shavit

Lawrence Tech University

Emma Thornton

Michigan State University

Amina Ebrahim

Caleb Guindi-Bright

Robert Haviland

Anja Jacobson (Nursing)

Isabelle Lenhardt (Honors)

Olivia Lyle (Engineering)

Bao Polkowski

Sunday Quillen (Nursing)

Roxie Richner

(James Madison)

Amy Rodriguez

Jack Schmader

Nathan Sprick

Robert White

Zoe White

Michigan Technological University

Elijah Nation (Pavlis Honors)

Northern Michigan University

Morraina Tuzinsky

University of Michigan

Brenan Dionne

Natalia Eddy

Timothy Kohn

Jacob Iwashyna

Sarah Levin (Nursing)

Chava Makman Levinson

(LSA Honors)

Molly Maloy (Engineering)

Katelyn Miller (Ross)

Toya Pace

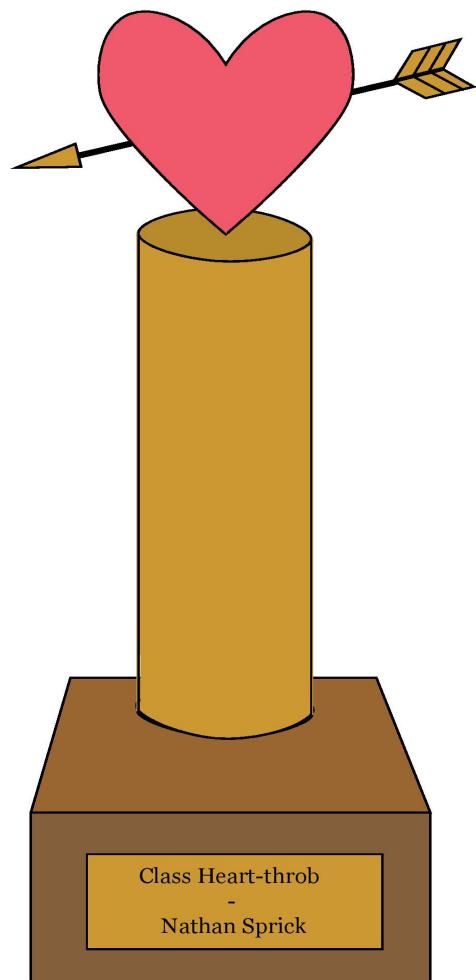
Claire Perry (Flint)

Andrew Plotner (Engineering)

Sophie Kriz

SENIOR MOCK AWARDS

- Class Heartthrob:**
Nathan Sprick
- Best Bromance:**
Shea O'Brien and Jesse Rosenberg
- Most Likely to Cheer You Up:**
Chava Makman Levinson
- Cutest Couple that Never Was:**
Kat Stanczak and Shea O'Brien
- Cutest Couple that Was:**
Sunday Quillen and Thomas Duda Cortez
- Prom King and Queen:**
Shea O'Brien and Sarah Tice
- Most Likely to be President:**
Roxie Richner
- BFFs with Kevin:**
Max Steiger
- Ms. and Mr. CET:**
Chloe Kurihara and Noah Greenberg
- Homebuilding Hunk:**
Ojanis Frometas-Canales
- Back Lawn Baller:**
Adarsh Tummala
- Most Likely to Drop Successful Mixtape:**
Bao Polkowski



Most Free Blocks:

Henry Mosher

Chloe Root Award:

Grace Bates

Worst Parker:

Jenna Wright

Most Likely to Come in Late with Sweetwaters:

Emily Robinson

Communicator Connoisseur:

Cammi Tirico

Student Athlete:

Lucy Scott

Most Changed since Freshmen Year:

Cree Perample

Most Likely to Ask 'What is going on?':

Neva Siers

Double Agent:

Jack DeBona

Most Likely to Sleep in Car:

Maddie Wallace

Class Clown:

Max Steiger

Most Likely to be Famous:

Noah Hogan

Best Hair Transformation:

Cort Toschlog-Green

Most Hair Transformations:

Angelina Smith

Most 1st Floor Selfies:

Billie Adams

Style Icon:

Elinor Duck

Most Likely to be Heard on 3rd Floor:

Chava Makman Levinson

President of Every Club:

Katelyn Miller

Taken Personal Fitness Most Times:

Josh Boland and Sophia Berry

Best TikToker:

Sarah Tice

Aux Cord Master:

Max Mellor

Calculus Master:

Maggie Hammer

Best Sporker:

Angelina Smith

Yerb Queen:

Mazey Perry



POLISHED POETRY: TWO SENIORS SHARE THEIR POETRY, THEIR INSPIRATION AND THEIR PERFORMING EXPERIENCES.

BY TAI TWOREK

"NEW PLAN" BY GRACE BATES

I'm going to winter in Ireland
Like a goose, but better
Instead of honey, beaches and clouds
so full I can only dream that someday I'll
sleep on them
it'll be a sea of green
as far as my little eye can see
It'll be cliffs
Sharp drops, waters roaring
with the fury of giants
It'll be giants
I'll only see them at night
when there is a black spot in the sky
where the stars should be
and I look out
in the morning
into the sea
and know they are there
sleeping
It'll be sheep
And cows, probably
I'll see them when I go walking in the
morning
I'll watch as the momma with the chipped
left horn and the caramel hair nudges
her still
sleepy eyed baby
her baby's got the same look
I wonder if he will grow up to have

a chipped horn too
It'll be dirty
I'll always have dirt under my fingernails,
and maybe some on my face
from my garden
I'll grow the best veggies in town
in a little greenhouse all the
kids will come to me on days
when they just want to play
outside until their cheeks
are red and eat soup
until they are warm with love
It'll be imperfect
There will be a loose stone in
the walkway to my front door
that will make a little sigh as it
rubs against its neighbor stones when
it's stepped on and everyone else
will learn to avoid it but I will
always step on it
I'll like its little
sigh

What inspired you to write this poem?

This poem is inspired by a totally real dream of mine. I've wanted to move to Ireland for some time, and while I understand that this poem takes a really idealistic view on it, sometimes I think it's good to have that hope in your heart.

When did you write this poem?

I wrote this poem a few months ago, just randomly.

Do you see yourself continuing poetry in the future?

Yes. I'm pursuing English and writing in college, and I'm super excited about it. I can confidently say that I don't really think I'll ever stop writing.

How has your poetry changed during your four years at CHS?

Oh man, I walked into CHS not a writer at all. And now I'm leaving with a plan to pursue writing in college. I think finding poetry at CHS and having the incredible English department has helped me make peace with a lot of things. When I first started, my poetry was really harsh and often angry. Nowadays though, my poems are a lot simpler. I prefer making tangible imagery that brings people joy over trying to create upset in my readers. I think that both my poetry and I have matured a lot in our time at CHS.

What was your favorite event that you have read at?

I wouldn't say there has been an event I loved more than another. But, I will say that the moments where I have sat down with one of my friends — just the two of us — and read them a poem, those are some of the most treasured moments in my heart. I love my friends, and 80% of the time my poems are in part for them.

"LUCK" BY ISABEL PERRY

O loud-O tears-O blistering distrust
This morning the sun skins my face
through golden lines
Put in place so anybody who got the urge
to
All of a sudden
Topple off
Chick-style too brazen
Would have a barrier
To replace a mother bird or a forest floor
I have no plans to take off on wax wings
Especially so dawnlike when the wind
spills into my mouth as if saying
"Drink,
drink, I know you need to.
I will not refuse it, I will kiss it back.
A kiss is a reminder that my heart is
beating and will be beating until it isn't
anymore
As if my whole body were fire
Today I am in the heavens
Tomorrow I could be in the clutches of a
blue ringed octopus
Pulsing at the bottom of the ocean
Air does not embrace you like waves do.
I wake up in the morning, and I can breathe
and feels like an absence.
David thinks life is too simple
A woman takes our picture when we're
walking our dog off leash and he says he
Wants to bloody her just so they'll put him
in jail and he won't feel so tired all the time
Being caged is one of the best ways to
feel alive, I agree with him but I cannot
afford to have him go anywhere I cannot

follow when I'm standing here at the top
and everything is covered with light and
wire and I'm breathing and she's breathing
and we better all keep on breathing or so
help me I
I
I don't know I never know anymore
Maybe I will eat a crow
Talons and shimmer and all

My brain is under construction, I think.
Synapses in bright orange flit around
their pathways eating ham sandwiches at
lunchtime.
I blink, they cheer. I breathe, they get a pay
raise. Sometimes I feel like Notre Dame
after it drowned in flames. My rose window
is alive, but I'm missing
a gargoyle or two. grotesques. And a roof.
I am filling up with water.

I saw two crows perched on a
telephone pole
Crows are marks of death
But they're silhouetted so perfectly by the
sun and the blue behind them I
Can only think of how shining everything
looks to them
Every breath is to the birds

A stone I saw a crow tonight. I saw three
rabbits. My heart is beating. I am very
lucky.

What inspired you to write this poem?

This poem is a mashup of an older poem and a paper I wrote for Matt about my struggles with depression this year. When I wrote the first part, I had been standing on top of a parking structure before school with one of my oldest friends. We used to go up there every morning. And that day, the sun was especially gold, and it shone on two crows that were sitting next to each other, and it made me feel really happy. I've always liked crows, kind of because people think they're scary but they're actually so smart. I love them. And this year when I was really sad, I was walking home from the movies late one night with a few friends, and we kept seeing rabbits. They kept running into our path really fast or appearing in corners. And it just felt lucky. It felt like things were going to be okay. And then I looked up, and I saw this enormous roost of crows above me, and the moon lit them up, and it was beautiful. It was kind of one of the first moments that I started to feel okay.

What is it like to share your poetry with people at events and slams?

I really don't mind feeling vulnerable. I really try my best to wear my heart on my sleeve. I wear my heart everywhere. On my cheek, on my lips, on my knees. You know. I'm super emotional which is sometimes a good thing, but sometimes really bad. But it makes me a good poet because I'm not usually very afraid to speak about personal things. I want people to know me. It's really hard for anyone to really know anyone else, I think. So I like to try and help clarify, I guess. I remember reading at the Blue Ribbon Ceremony and just shaking the entire time. It can be scary even if I feel confident. There was one poem I wrote that was super personal. The most personal thing I've ever written I guess. And I read it at the Community slam, and I didn't want my parents to come in or be there for it because it made me so nervous.



Finding Balance in Fashion

BY ZOE BUHALIS

Photos courtesy of Mai Seyfarth

This look was inspired in part by Seyfarth's mom after she gave them the shirt and suggested they pair it with brown pants. Seyfarth wore a mesh shirt under their pink button-up to create a newer feel and the pearls to make the look a bit more vintage.

"The inspiration to accessorize that outfit was those old paintings of cherubs. I keep seeing people add little angels to their photos and it's always so cute so I wanted to do kind of a soft pastel with that."

Mai Seyfarth used to wear a graphic t-shirt, jeans and a flannel everyday. Now they wear velvet dresses tucked into high-waisted pants, trying to find a balance between masculinity and femininity. Seyfarth identifies as non-binary and uses their clothing to express themselves. Before sophomore year Seyfarth wasn't very into fashion, but after coming to CHS in tenth grade, they began to dress up more.

"Everybody at Community is really fashionable and very chill about experimenting," Seyfarth said.

Because of the openness of their peers, Seyfarth felt comfortable experimenting with new looks and started to find their own style. They started shopping at thrift stores, which they still do now. At thrift stores Seyfarth looked for button downs and vintage pieces, grabbing anything that catches their eye. Now, Seyfarth describes their style as "princely vampire," taking inspiration from movies, shows and

"I go for a princely vampire look: anything that could be on the cover of a fantasy romance novel, I'll wear."

"I feel like a lot of graphic tees are very simple, and I like those a lot," Seyfarth said. "My main problem with really heavy designed graphic tees is there's a lot of colors going on and it's sometimes hard to match pants or whatever you're gonna layer with it. But this one has like a nice black and white thing, it's all like old timey text. I feel like it plays a little bit into the fantasy motif I like with my fashion while still having this kind of modern rock look, because it's like just the sweatshirt."

This outfit features a Dorian Electra t-shirt from a concert and Seyfarth's favorite high-waisted pants.

"Normally high-waisted pants go in at your waist and then it kind of goes out, which I don't love," Seyfarth said. "I still like high waisted pants and these ones go in at the waist and they just go straight down. It's nice and flat and I love that."



Seyfarth's mustache is inspired by Dorian Electra, a non-binary musician.

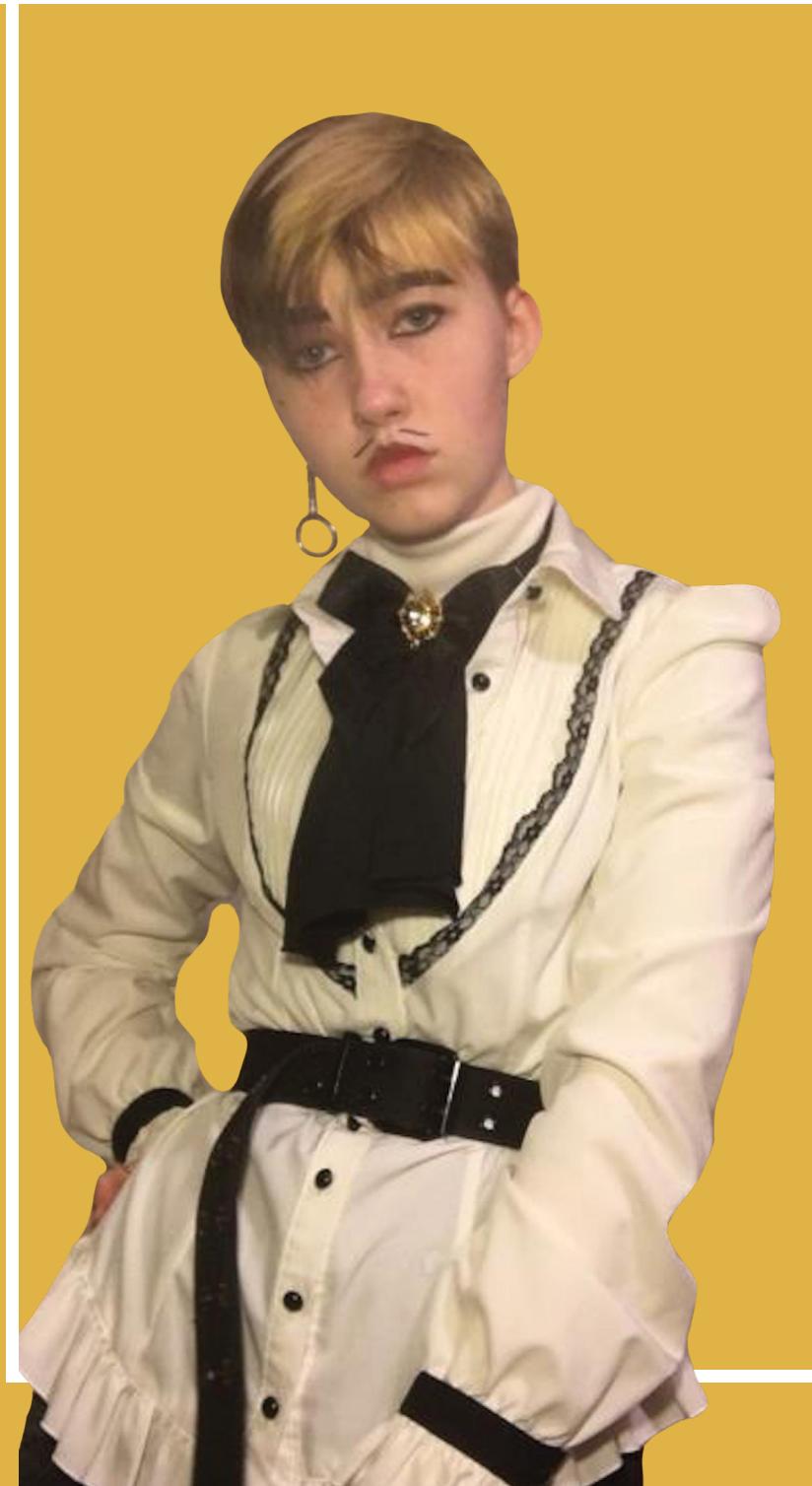
"Dorian Electra played a big part in me discovering I'm non-binary," Seyfarth said. "[The mustache] makes me feel a little bit more masculine. With a lot of my outfits I'm trying to find the balance between being masculine — because that's how I want to present a little more — and being pretty, which is a classically feminine feature. Basically I'm just trying to be pretty and masculine at the same time."



Seyfarth's style takes inspiration from TV shows and movies, if they see an outfit they like they do their best to emulate it. While they occasionally find inspiration on TikTok, mostly they will dress like characters or people with specific styles.

"Dorian Electra is definitely a big influence for me," Seyfarth said. "Studio Ghibli movies are too. All the men in those movies wear these big puffy button downs and I've always loved that."

The lip color is inspired by Shego, the villain in Kim Possible, who has a dark colored upper lip with a light color on the bottom. Seyfarth feels this contrast gives their look a "cartoony feel."





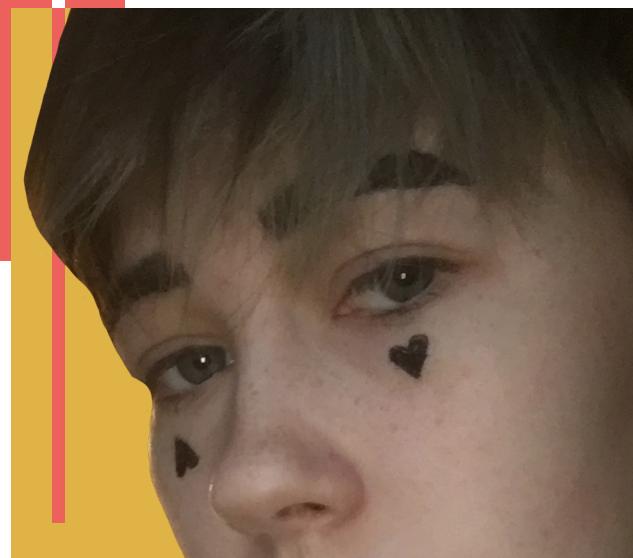
Seyfarth thinks makeup helps complete an outfit and make the look more interesting. They didn't wear eyeliner until e-boys became popular, now they regularly draw symbols under their eyes. Sometimes the symbols are coordinated with their outfit and other times they are the classic e-boy heart.

Seyfarth's eyebrow color depends on the colors in her clothing. For darker looks they draw on their eyebrows with eyeliner. For a lighter look they will partner pastel colors with a lighter brow color.

Seyfarth created this look after they got their first binder. Pairing the brown velvet dress with pants created a both feminine and masculine look and by wearing a binder under the dress Seyfarth felt more androgynous.

"I like to walk the line of like androgyny," Seyfarth said. "The dress is supposed to accentuate the fact that you have breasts and being able to look and see that it was doing nothing and I still looked flat chested made me feel amazing."

They like the dress due to its steampunk feel and enjoy balancing the delicacy of the lace with the edginess of the outfit.



STORIES FROM THE STAGE

Two CHS seniors share their stories of performance in theater and music.

BY LACEY COOPER



Photo courtesy of Noah Hogan

Noah Hogan

By the end of his junior year at CHS, Noah Hogan knew: He was going to college for music. Specifically, he was going for jazz guitar performance. Much of his certainty was born during a week spent at the Berklee College of Music over the summer before his junior year of high school. He attended a program during which high school musicians attended college classes, worked with professors, and observed concerts and clinics put on by guest artists and faculty at the performing arts center, all while spending their nights in the dorms. Once he returned to school as a junior, Hogan's passion only grew.

"I just absolutely loved it there, and I had been studying jazz for the past two years at Community," Hogan said. "So my passion for music had started growing and growing,

and that week at Berklee really pushed it further."

Throughout his senior year, music also furthered Hogan's personal growth as he began to get involved for the first time in Community Ensemble Theatre (CET) and started opening himself up to new people and experiences. He almost didn't audition at all — it was a phone call from Community's jazz program director, Jack Wagner, that finally convinced him to sign up for a time slot. CET's fall musical, *School of Rock* by Julian Fellows, needed a strong band of musicians to play the roles of characters competing in a rock competition and to provide the show with the rock soundtrack it needed. Wagner insisted that Hogan go out for the show, and after many weeks of rehearsals spent sing-

ing, dancing, playing, and getting to know his fellow cast members, Hogan was glad that he did. In combination with the week he spent at Berklee, Hogan believes that these experiences were really what helped him grow more confident and comfortable around others. He says that the week he spent at Berklee was where this growth really started for him, and that CET allowed him to continue this growth at Community.

"I think that week at Berklee was really a big turning point for me, because that week I was with 250 musicians from around the world, and I knew none of them," Hogan said. "I knew that I had to make the most of that opportunity, so I guess I opened myself up more."

Next year, Hogan will be attending the Steinhardt School of Music at New York University (NYU). He finalized his decision the day before the deadline, facing a choice between two of his top schools: NYU and the University of Miami. In the end, Hogan chose Steinhardt because of its location and because it offers the opportunities he thinks he'll need in order to build a career. In light of the pandemic, NYU has not yet announced whether or not its classes will be moved online for the next semester. Although Hogan is disappointed to be faced with the sharp cut-off of his senior year — a year during which he had experienced so much growth through getting involved at Community and through CET — for him, the time at home has meant more time to practice, listen to, and study jazz. Music, he says, has always been something he can fall back on.

"If I am stressed out about something, or worried about something, I can always just go back to music, and know that I can do that," Hogan said. "So that has allowed me to challenge myself, or do things that I otherwise wouldn't feel comfortable doing, because I know I can always sit down and play a bar if I need to." ©



Chloe Kurihara

When Chloe Kurihara came to CHS as a freshman, she was expecting high school to look just like the movies she'd watched since she was little.

"I think as a freshman, I came into high school with an image of high school that doesn't really exist," Kurihara said, describing the cliques and social hierarchy she'd been picturing. "It just wasn't like that at all."

Instead, she found a home within Community Ensemble Theatre (CET), which several of her friends from middle school had also been getting involved in. For the first two productions of the season, Kurihara's name had been on the audition list, but she had decided at the last minute — while standing in the hallway outside of the Craft Theater — that she was too intimidated to go in. For the third and final show of the school year, she finally mustered up the courage to audition.

"I think once I did it once, once I got over that fear one time, I could keep doing it," Kurihara said. "And once I was there, it was a lot of fun and I stayed."

Closely knit and full of interesting new people to meet, Kurihara says that CET changed her perspective and shaped her high school experience.

"I think being in an environment like that definitely helped shape me," Kurihara said. "It helped me realize that you can be friends with all different kinds of people."

At the end of her junior year, Kurihara was voted president of CET, a role that has helped her to improve her work ethic and leadership skills. She remembered how much the previous presidents had influenced her experience, and wanted to be the best leader she could. As CET's second production of the season, Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, has been indefinitely postponed due to COVID-19, and the final production of "Just Desserts" has been moved online, she finds herself reminiscing over the first show of the season, and the last time she performed on the Craft Theater stage: The fall production of *School of Rock*, by Julian Fellows.

"It's just strange to think about that, to

look back into your memories and realize that you were doing something for the last time and you didn't even know it," Kurihara said.

This year, Kurihara plans to attend the University of California in San Diego, where she will be studying urban planning. Having lived in Ann Arbor all her life, she is excited to experience a new environment and meet people from all around the country. She will be taking with her the many lessons she's learned and ways in which she has grown during her time at CHS, a key one for her being the way in which she brings kindness into the world. Kurihara says that she's learned that it doesn't take much to change somebody's entire outlook, even just with a smile.

"I'd like to think that I'm coming out of high school more accepting of the world, more willing to see and actually experience it for myself, than just going into it thinking I already know how it works, because I definitely don't," Kurihara said. ☀

ARTIST PROFILE

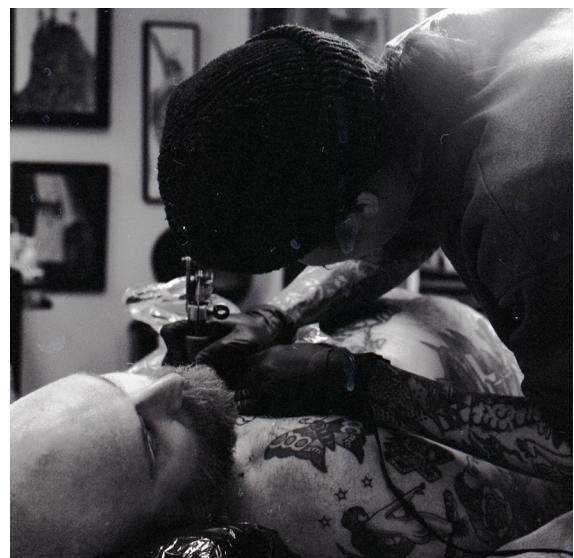
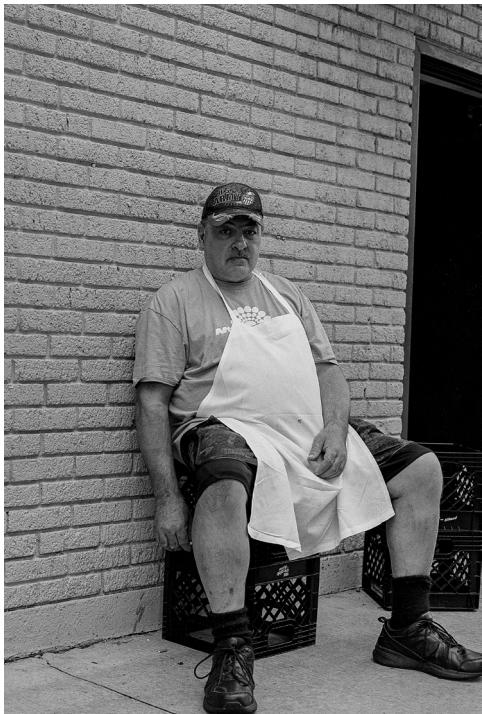
BY MIA GOLDSTEIN

Photos by Max Steiger

MAX STEIGER

Last summer, Max Steiger, Community High School senior bought his first film camera. It was an Olympus OM2N. He had been around photography and cameras his whole life — but on a sudden impulse, he bought his own. During the past year, Steiger has learned to be deliberate and purposeful with each photo he takes. When the shutter snaps, there's no redos. Every picture must be carefully framed, the angle perfected and hold true meaning before he takes his shot.

Recently, he has found a new inspiration for his photography. In August, his family is moving to North Carolina. Steiger decided he wants to start collecting photos that are most relevant to him and his town. Anything that catches his eye or holds a memory for him, he hopes to capture in a way that resonates with him and his audience. He hopes to extend the feelings he captures out to anyone who sees his photos.



HOW DID YOU FIRST GET INTO MUSIC?

The first real time I got into music was when I was seven or eight. At my old school in England, this dude came to our classroom one day and he was like, ‘Hey, who wants to learn an instrument?’ He had a list of instruments that you could go and take after school private lessons that were through the school. I wanted to play guitar because of my granddad on my mom’s side. He’s big into music. I grew up with him playing a lot of piano and guitar for us and showing me a lot of

HOW DID YOU GET STARTED IN THE LEFT LANES?

So there are five guitar players in Jazz four. Two of my good friends, and now bandmates, Isaac McKenna and Noah Hogan, were in my Jazz One class. And it must have been like midway through the first semester, and maybe closer towards the end. Isaac came up to me one day and said, ‘Oh, you should watch this movie, ‘Sing Street.’ A week or two later, he was like ‘Did you watch that movie?’ And I was like, ‘No, I’ll do it tonight. I promise.’ I went home and I finally watched it and it’s about these Irish kids that start a band. I saw [Isaac] the next day and I was like, ‘Dude, I watched the movie. It’s great. We should do this. We should start a band.’

ARE YOU GOING TO PURSUE MUSIC IN COLLEGE?

I’m going to Columbia College Chicago. I’m going for a Bachelor of Music in Urban, Contemporary and Popular Music. It’s a Bachelor of Arts music degree but with more focus in business and production aspects. So I get to learn how to produce my own music.

WHAT ARE YOUR FAVORITE SONGS?

Isaac, Gabe and I, we’re all really into this band Hippo Campus. When we started the band together, we were like, ‘Oh, we should cover some of those songs.’ For many of our shows, we played the song “South” by Hippocampus and that became one of our staples at our shows. Before the Left Lanes, we were in this other band with the Ann Arbor Music Center. We used to play “We Are Never Ever Getting Back Together” by Taylor Swift at all our shows. Once that band ended, me and Isaac were like, ‘Oh, we should totally do that at the Left Lanes gigs.’ In that same Music Center band, one year we played the song “Fatlip” by the band Sum 41. One of the most inappropriate songs to play. We played it at the Ann Arbor Open Ice Cream Social. Right at the end of the song, there’s a little drum break, where our drummer, he shouts, ‘The doctor said my mom should have had an abortion!’ It was such a good memory.



DO YOU HAVE A MEMORY OF THE FIRST TIME YOU PERFORMED ON STAGE?

My first memory of really performing was with the Music Center band. We’d finally gotten enough material to play a full 30 minutes or 40 minutes. And we played The Session Room. Alex Johnson, who’s the one of the head teachers

of the Music Center, he’s a Community graduate. When he was in high school he had this fake band. They just did funny promotional videos for it and bumped around. They were called Goatus. Their logo was this goat head with the anarchy symbol. So the month before our gig, our band leader custom printed these Goatus shirts for us. We had them under our sweatshirts. After the first song, we ripped off our sweatshirts to reveal our Goatus t-shirts. We gave one to Alex.

**MAX
MELLOR**

**ARTIST
Q&A**

BY CATE WEISER

Photo by Ebba Gurney

Chef Ebba's Recipe Box

Ebba Gurney has been cooking up a storm.
Here are two of her favorites to spice up your quarantine.

BY LOEY JONES-PERPICH AND EBBA GURNEY
Photography by Ebba Gurney

Cashew mac n' cheese (It's vegan!)

1/2 cup cashews
3 1/2 teaspoons minced garlic
2 tablespoons olive oil
1 1/2 cups cold water
1/2 cup panko bread crumbs
1/4 teaspoon paprika
1 1/2 teaspoons salt
1 tablespoon vegan butter
1 1/2 tablespoons flour
1 1/2 tablespoons nutritional yeast
1 teaspoon apple cider vinegar
1/8 teaspoon turmeric
8oz elbow pasta

Add 1/2 cup of cashews, a couple teaspoons of minced garlic and 1.5 cups of water to a blender and mix really well, about 30-60 seconds. Put this aside. Pro tip: Soak the cashews in water for a couple hours if your blender isn't very powerful, but if you have a Vitamix or food processor you're fine.

Put a pot of water on to boil. Next, grab a pan; I used a medium cast iron. Add 1 tablespoon of olive oil and let that heat up for a bit. Add panko bread crumbs, paprika and 1/2 teaspoon salt. Stir that for about 5 minutes until it's golden, and then just put it in bowl and set aside. When your pasta water is done boiling, cook about 8 oz of macaroni. I just poured in about 1/4 of my huge box.

Now it's time to make the roux! Grab a medium saucepan and melt 1 tablespoon of olive oil with your vegan butter. Add about 1 1/2 teaspoons of minced garlic and sauté that for a few minutes. Add your flour and whisk so that there are no clumps! Wait until it's sort of golden and then add your cashew milk concoction. Whisk that really well, it should be sort of yellow. Add nutritional yeast, apple cider vinegar, turmeric and the remaining teaspoon of salt. Let this simmer for a few minutes until it thickens. I also added pepper for some extra seasoning.

When your pasta is finished cooking, add it to the sauce and mix it all up! Serve in a bowl and sprinkle with some chopped parsley and extra bread crumbs. Enjoy!



Kanelbullar

(Swedish cinnamon buns)

Flour paste mixture:

5 tablespoons water
5 tablespoons milk
3 tablespoons flour

Dough:

5 tablespoons melted butter, cooled
1/2 cup milk, warmed
2 teaspoons instant yeast
1/4 teaspoon ground cardamom
1 teaspoon salt
1/4 cup granulated sugar
3 cups + 2 tablespoons flour
1 large egg

Filling:

5 tablespoons softened butter
1 teaspoon flour
3 tablespoons light brown sugar, packed
2 teaspoons cinnamon

Topping:

1 egg
1 tablespoon water
Pearl sugar

First, we make the flour mixture, which I like to call play-dough, because that's what it smells like. Add the water, milk and flour to a medium saucepan and whisk until there are no clumps. Put this on medium heat and whisk constantly until it thickens. Set this aside to cool.

Dough time! Melt the butter and heat the milk to give them a chance to cool, then prepare the rest of your dough ingredients. Whisk together the cardamom, yeast, salt, sugar and flour in either the bowl of your stand mixer or a medium bowl if you have a hand mixer, like I do.

Attach your dough hook and add the melted butter (cooled), warm milk (should be warm to the touch but not scalding), egg and play-dough concoction to the dry ingredients. Mix until this is fully combined, scraping the sides of the bowl when you need to.

Remove the dough ball from the bowl and knead for about 8 minutes. It should be soft but not incredibly sticky.

Put it back in the bowl and cover with a towel or plastic wrap for an hour, or until it's close to double in size. I usually place it on the stove above my heated oven so that it rises better, but it all depends on the temperature of your kitchen.

Filling! Add all of the filling ingredients to a clean bowl and mix with a fork until it becomes a spreadable paste.

Once the dough ball has risen, preheat your oven to 425 degrees. Begin rolling the dough ball out on your counter; you might need a bit of flour so that your rolling pin doesn't stick, but for the most part the dough should be smooth enough that it won't stick. Try to create a rectangle that's about 16 x 20 (you don't need to measure, just make it as big as you can).

Using an offset spatula (or whatever you want, but this works the best) spread the filling all over your dough rectangle. Fold the entire rectangle into thirds, like a letter. Using a dough scraper or a sharp knife, cut the dough into 12 pieces.

Line two baking sheets with parchment paper, or rubber baking sheets if you have them.

This is the fun part! Take one piece of cut dough, with one end in one hand, and the other end in the other hand, and begin twisting the entire length of the dough piece. Once it looks pretty, twist an end around one finger so that it creates a bun! It sounds confusing but as long as you like the look of it, it doesn't matter at all whether or not you followed my instructions. Just do your best and make sure the bun is very much locked in place! Do this to all of your dough pieces and place them evenly on the baking sheets.

Place a towel over the baking sheets and let the buns rise for an additional 30 minutes. While you wait, mix the egg and water in a small bowl and grab your pearl sugar.

Once the buns have risen, brush the surface with a bit of egg wash, and sprinkle a good amount of pearl sugar on each one. Bake for about 12 minutes, and enjoy!



Our Turn: Change

BY TAI TWOREK

ATTICUS DEWEY

"I think the biggest way I've changed in the past four years is that I've gotten more confident going into new situations. For example, when I started high school, I was really only doing a couple things that I knew I could succeed at. I've always had a mindset that says, 'If you're going to do something, you've got to do it really, really well.' That prevented me from trying new things, or making the effort to make new friends. But as time progressed, I learned that I don't need to be perfect at everything, and that's led me to be friends with some of the closest people I'm with now. I have really gained a new insight into experiences through these things."



ISAAC MCKENNA



"My freshman year, I was very different from where I am now. I was much more shy. I couldn't ever have imagined performing in the way that I perform right now – even wanting to do that. I couldn't have imagined being able to talk to people in the way that I do, like random people I don't even know. I think I've become much more conscious about the world and people who don't look like me. I think there have been a lot of things that have played into that, especially going to the Neutral Zone and seeing people who were really outspoken about their own issues and having them talk to me and be willing to help me understand was a big part of that. I think being more conscious about other people's struggles, realizing more about my privilege and wanting to make that change has been a big thing. That's been a good change. I think most of the changes have been good."

CAMMI TIRICO



"I figured out who I am and who I want to be throughout high school. Coming in as a ninth grader, I did what I did in middle school, was friends with who I thought I should be friends with based off of the other schools, and took classes that people suggested. I think over the four years I figured out what I like to do most, who I wanted to be friends with, class I wanted to take and clubs I wanted to join. I was able to figure out Cammi better and find a better sense of self throughout the year."

All School Photo 2019-2020



