

BINGO!

As students continue to wrap up the school year through online learning, school spirit is not lost. Students from the AHS leadership team have continued to work together to make sure that school events and activities continue virtually. For students in leadership, the process of organizing these virtual activities has required them to step out of their comfort zones and come together in new ways. “Our main form of communication [for leadership now] is through Facebook and an app called Slack. We are doing our best to communicate with each other, and we have a great team who [is] doing really well. It has definitely been hard-

er to get more engagement because we aren’t physically together to work with each other and motivate one another,” said ASB President Phoebe Urbano (12). The effort that students in leadership have put into planning their activities including virtual bingos, activities for Teachers’ Appreciation Week and Virtual Springfest have paid off. Students from all grade levels were encouraged to stay involved with these school activities. “The way the activities were promoted were very interesting. For example, the flyers really stood out, and the overall promotion of the event [encouraged] me to participate. I also participated to feel more included with our school,”

AHS students stay united through virtual activities
Aarya Vaidya
Staff Writer

said Isha Kansal (10). These activities have led many students to stay connected to their school during this time. This is especially true for freshmen who have not yet had the opportunity to experience events like Springfest directly at school. “It was definitely unexpected to experience it virtually, as I was really looking forward to it [being in-person]. It was still cool to see how American works and how leadership can plan fun activities, even in times like these,” explained Keren Skariah (9). Though students were able to feel more connected during their time home during these activities, the experience felt much more different than doing the activities at school.

“There is a lot less student involvement in my opinion because a lot of students don’t really feel as hyped to participate as before,” said Kansal. On the other hand, virtual events have given some seniors the opportunity to reflect on the past years and get more involved in school spirit. “Throughout high school, I did not participate [in school activities] as much as I wish I would have done. I would always say, ‘there’s next year’, which isn’t always the case. Covid-19 proved to me that we shouldn’t rely on those words...because you never know what’s going to happen next year,” said Brianna Ulloa (12). For Ulloa, these activities have left an unexpected impact on her friendships. “I didn’t think this was

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Aparajita Vemuri takes Buddy, her puppy, on daily walks to improve their owner and pet relationship. “I take him on multiple walks throughout the day to clear my mind from the stresses at home.”

CONFINED AT HOME WITH THE PARENTALS

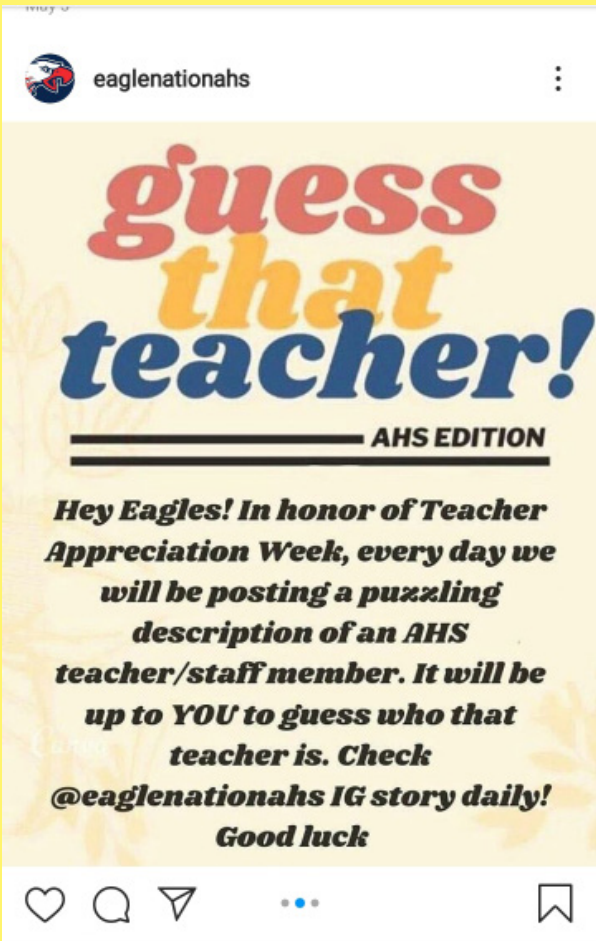
How different students at AHS are quarantining with their parents

Michelle Fong
Broadcast Editor

There is sufficient data to prove that teenagers today have impressively moody attitudes due to hormonal shifts in their brains. This usually results in over-sensitivity, which is conceived as grumpiness or rudeness but is that always the case? Here is a hypothetical situation: So you take a moody teenager who already “hates” their parents combined with a forced quarantine at home with the rest of the nation. What do you think would eventually happen? Probably a lot of petty arguments and disagreements is my guess. During a typical day when there were no orders to remain at home, teenagers would go to school and engage in extracurricular activities and parents

would most likely be at work - both busy. The lack of social interaction with each other normalized by busy schedules have caused Sagel Provancher (10) to rarely get an opportunity to spend quality time with her parents. “I barely saw [my parents] because I was busy most days with balancing cheer, work, and hanging out with my friends so I was never home. My parents were also busy anyways so even when I got home I don’t usually see them,” explained Provancher. As time passed and their busy schedules remained consistent, it was inevitable that their demeanors adjusted to their

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Students in leadership have planned several virtual activities which has kept students feeling connected during distance learning. “These activities have given me more to do in these boring times, and it’s allowed me to have a little more normal[cy] in my life...It makes me want to try to be more involved with school,” said Keren Skariah (9).

EAGLE ERA

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Our Mission Statement
We at the Eagle Era strive to be a reliable and compelling source of news for the members of the American High School community. We are dedicated to regularly providing students, staff, and the community beyond with newsworthy information accurately, truthfully, and objectively through printed issues, online articles, and social media posts. We hope to include a diverse range of content that impacts the readers of the Eagle Era in a unique yet creative manner. As a student-run newspaper, we aim not to reflect the values interests, and ideas of the staff alone, but of the AHS community as a whole.

Letter from the Editor

Hi Eagles,

I hope you're all doing okay even though times have been tougher than usual! My name is Liana, and I'm so excited to be co-editor-in-chief with the lovely Becca next year. Journalism has been so good to me, and I'm so fortunate to have this opportunity to give back. To be honest, I felt like writing in this space would come naturally, but it really doesn't. Without the structure of in-person school and the shared experiences that come with it, there isn't much light commentary we can make about current happenings. Please stay inside if you can-- it's a privilege that

many people do not have. Transitioning the Eagle Era online in the past few months hasn't come without its hardships. We've been interviewing, writing, and designing all at home, but it's encouraging to see what we're capable of. Our editors, staff writers, and advisor are truly remarkable people who inspire me in so many ways, and I'm incredibly grateful to have grown alongside them in the past year. Even though we can't distribute copies in person, I hope you enjoy this year's last paper. Until next year!

Take care,
Liana Dong
Co-Editor-in-Chief

Dear Eagles,

While the circumstances are disappointing, there is still a feeling of celebration in the air as summer begins and many are embarking on new, while restricted journeys. There is so much to be proud of and excited for.

There has been a common trend recently to shine light on good news rather than constantly be bombarded with bad news, especially in the era of COVID-19. While this is important for a plethora of reasons, sometimes bad news cannot be ignored. While the existence of these cases are in no way new, instances of blatant racism towards the African-American community have the attention of the media and a good amount of the students at AHS over the course of the past few weeks. As you are probably aware of, racism does not disappear even in the diversity that we have at this school. Its end starts with us as individuals, as a school, and as a newspaper. While we are unsure exactly what this means for the Eagle Era, we hope to be

gin discussions on racism and justice in our community that span beyond this month and go into the coming year by becoming educated ourselves and prioritizing these important issues coming to light.

This was supposed to be an introduction of sorts, so after saying all this, hello! My name is Becca and I will be Co-Editor-in-Chief along with Liana Dong and the rest of the talented and energetic team returning next year! Journalism has led me to be able to explore everything from school clubs to public transit to homophobia and transphobia, and I've learned so much from those I've met doing these articles and their unique perspectives. I'm so excited to dive in even deeper next year into more issues that matter to us as a student body and I hope you stick around (maybe even get an actual physical copy, what a dream!) See you soon!

Rebecca Beddingfield
(she/her)
Co-Editor-in-Chief

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO ME

Quarantine Birthdays may not be so bad after all

Khushi Kanchibotla
Staff Writer

Stuck at home with only your family may not seem like a fun way to celebrate your birthday. Not having the usual celebrations with your friends and the ample amount of gifts may seem quite boring, but some of American's students have found some ways to retain the fervor that is usually associated with birthdays.

Ruchi and Rashi Haria (11), celebrated their birthday on April 18th. The twins weren't expecting anything special, maybe their mom making their favorite food, but they were in for a surprise. Due to social distancing, of course, parties are forbidden. However, that didn't stop their friends from slipping a few gifts on their front porch. Bhavi Kenia (9), a family friend of the Haria's dropped by to decorate their driveway and says, "Personally I wanted them to have a special birthday even though we are in quarantine. I consider Ruchi and Rashi as more of a family rather than just being friends. They expressed that they really enjoyed and liked this surprise made me feel like I had accomplished what I wanted. So ultimately I didn't want them to feel that no one was going to be there to celebrate their birthday so my friend and I planned this surprise for them."

In fact, the twins found this birthday to be a little more special than their previous ones. With no expectations, the Haria's were surprised with the outcomes of their 17th birthday. Rashi Haria says, "The fact that people went out of their way to make our birthday special even with the virus was sweet."

As twins, the Haria's did not feel that they had any benefits than the other people celebrating their birthdays. Rashi Haria says, "I mean people still have their family to celebrate with, so I don't think having a twin had any advantage."

The Haria's didn't have previous plans to celebrate their

birthday, but sophomore, Haley Nguyen did. Nguyen had plans with her friends to have a sleepover the night of her 16th birthday. 16th birthdays are usually seen as a milestone in a teen's life; however, for Nguyen, the changes haven't affected her that much. She said, "I spent more time with my family doing things I would've been doing with friends. It felt nice to be able to spend time with my sisters and cousins."

With the celebrations come the inflow of gifts from friends and family. Gifts are sometimes just given for the sake of it, or to show the love or appreciation towards the birthday person. For the Haria's, they said that the "company and celebrations" make up the birthday for them. For Nguyen, she still has her inflow of gifts. She says, "There wasn't really a lack of gifts. Since I got older, most people just give me money so they just venmoed me or let me order some clothes online."

For high school students, the elaborate celebrations may be slowly losing their excitement as each year comes and goes. However, birthdays are still very special for younger kids. The big cake, the special dinners, the games with their friends is what make their birthday special. Ella Smith, our AP English teacher Mrs. Smith's daughter, seems like she had the best quarantine party one could ask for.

Having a treasure hunt on her actual birthday and then a five-hour zoom call the Saturday after, Smith sure seemed to enjoy herself. Smith also believes that this quarantine birthday was better than the birthday she would have had without the shelter in place. She says, "I am actually thankful that the previous plans got ruined as my dad was able to stay at home for my birthday. He had travel plans previously which got canceled

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SENIOR COMMENTARY:

The Game of Life: High School Edition

4 out of 5 stars. It wasn't perfect, but I had fun.

Michelle Lee
Editor-in-Chief

Rude awakening: high school is not like the movies. Surprise.

I'm not sure what I was expecting when I was entering my freshman year, but it was something along the lines of pristine halls, tall lockers, a giant cafeteria, huge friend groups, and ten-minutes breaks between classes where you somehow have all the time in the world for a conversation. Think High School Musical without the music and Zac Efron.

Anyways, I was wrong. That's fine. It's all good. I'm here to learn, and I had already mapped out my ideal high school path. Picture a Monopoly© board—just one simple route. Start at Go, surpass freshman year, get through sophomore year, prep for and take the SAT in junior year, pass AP exams, maintain a 4.0 GPA, and have fun in senior year before graduating and attending a UC. Along the way, though, the board somehow turned into Snakes and Ladders.

Start at Go.

Pass freshman year. Freshman year began with me hardly knowing anyone in my classes. Like, there are people I know, but I don't know them, you know? I got to play fun little games like “How good is my memory” and “Do they enjoy talking to me or are they being polite?” I wasn't the most social person in middle school, and that really backfired on me. I still wasn't past that aspect of me in freshman year either, so I hesitated a lot when initiating conversations. I dreaded partner work because who was I supposed to pair up with?

At some point, I managed to befriend some people, whether it happened through group projects, assigned seating, or sheer boredom. Perhaps a combination of all three? Whatever the case was, I don't regret taking a step out of my comfort zone, and words can't describe how much I adore my friends. It's intimidating to be placed into an unfamiliar environment with unfamiliar faces, but there's really no other way to meet new people. You have to be strangers before

being friends. Overall lesson: Start the conversation—what's the worst that can happen?

Pass sophomore year. In my second year of high school, my motivation slowly started to decrease, especially in the subjects I had little interest in—math and science. I would procrastinate on work and stay up late. I would study for an hour or two and feel like I knew the material...until it's the day of the test and my mind goes blank. Percentage by percentage, my grades for those two classes crept downward. They didn't hit rock bottom—I can assure you of that—but they didn't meet the standards that I held myself to. I was disappointed in myself, but I didn't know how to fix my habits, so I guess I took the easy way out and didn't bother to try.

Looking back on my four years, that's the year I regret the most. I can't help but think, “Why didn't I try harder? Why didn't I do more?” I learned the hard way that the input determines your output. I can't exactly go back in time (I've got high hopes for the year 2100 though), but I can apply this to my next four years of school.

Land on SAT and roll dice. Shoutout to the people who took the SAT twice. Four hours of your weekend in the early morning consecutively doing reading, writing, and math problems AND an essay? Yes please, sign me up! And don't forget the SAT subject tests.

The first test I took was actually the Korean subject test rather than the actual SAT. I'm a Korean-American, so I thought I would have an advantage, never mind the fact that I skimmed the prep book and had the speaking ability of a five-year-old. Fast-forward an hour later...

Dad: How was it?

Me: I need to cancel my score.

Long story short, I overestimated myself. Don't do that. For the actual SAT, I did put in more effort—just not enough for the first time. It didn't help that I was a bundle of nerves during the entire exam or that I misgendered the author of the article for the essay section. I felt that

I could do better, and I was much more collected the second time because I had gone through the process before. I suppose the moral here is that if at first you don't succeed, try again (but not more than three times because that doesn't look good on college applications apparently).

Land on AP exams—buy for \$110? AP exams really have no business being that pricey, but hey, that's capitalism for you. The first exam I ever took was AP English Language, and I was probably one of the few juniors who had to get walked through the process of filling out the scantron and placing the sticky labels; I was an oblivious sophomore, so I didn't take AP Euro. The second one I took was AP Calculus AB. For those of you who remember those two exams, you're probably thinking, “Wait a minute, Calculus exams were before AP Eng,” and you're very right. Storytime: the universe was not in my favor and I was blessed with food poisoning on the day of my first exam. Not an ideal situation. I was stressing over taking the exam, stressing over not taking the exam, and then stressing over making up the exam. I was luckily able to confirm a make-up exam but was a little upset that I'd have to wait a week or two to take it.

This actually turned out to be a blessing in disguise. Just like with the SAT, I had already spent all of my stress the first time, and I had more time to review the material, so I got to the room feeling relatively calm. I took it, completed it, and later found out in July that I passed.

Pass junior year and obtain GPA card—roll dice for 4 or higher to get a 4.0. I rolled a 3. I'll own up to the fact that it was all on me though (except for my sophomore math class). Also, they really weren't kidding when they said that junior year would be the toughest year. There were AP classes, AP exams, SATs, and pre-senioritis symptoms. I managed to develop a terrible habit of staying up late. A proper sleep schedule? Not for me. My stress level was a rollercoaster that

kept going up, and I had no idea when it was going to fall.

Nonetheless, I genuinely enjoyed that year. That was when I made a majority of my upperclassmen friends. That was when I had an AP Calculus teacher who actually made me look forward to a math class (shoutout to Ms. DSouza!) and a U.S. History teacher who never seemed to run out of interesting stories (shoutout to Mr. Zamora!). And that was when I joined Journalism for my first year and met the wonderful Mr. Savoie and the equally wonderful editors and staff writers.

Pass senior year and collect diploma. This was it. This was going to be our year. We were going to have an amazing spirit week, a hyped-up prom, and a moving graduation ceremony before going out with a bang. Er, so, not exactly what happened. But hey, one out of three is pretty good—two if you count ongoing graduation plans. I just hope I don't wake up one day and find a USB in the mail with my downloadable diploma.

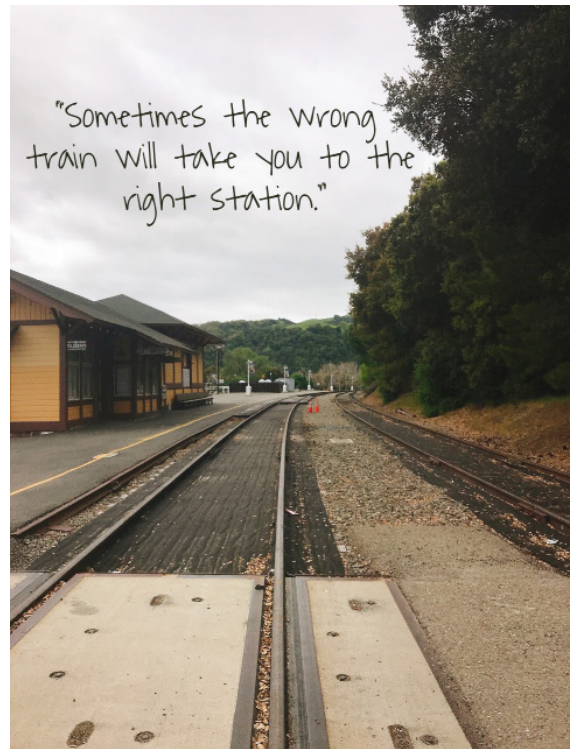
Regardless of the current situation, it's safe to say that I've made some fantastic memories from this school year, like waking up exhaustingly early for senior sunrise, screaming on the water slides at senior picnic, and running across the school c Perpetually Uncomfortable ampus to get to a boba place before tables fill up. Now, what to do with my prom dress and graduation gown...

Land on College—pick a chance card. At a relatively competitive high school, there's a lot of pressure to get good grades, attend a good college, and enter a good job field. Surrounded by classmates and friends who perform so well at school, my

self-esteem went down and that was further reinforced when college admissions were announced in March. I loved seeing people post pictures of themselves wearing smiles and college merch, but they were simultaneously punches to the face reminding me of my inbox holding waitlist and rejection emails. For a majority of my time at high school, I held myself to some high expectations—and who doesn't?—and I never stopped to consider the possibility of not reaching them. The colleges that I did get into were still pretty good schools, but they weren't schools that made me excited for that new chapter of my life; I could imagine myself going, but I couldn't imagine myself being happy.

It's definitely easier said than done when told to stop comparing yourself to others. Not to get all philosophical or anything, but life is one big competition that can either push you forward or hold you back. And at that moment, I was being held back; I literally had nothing to gain from being stuck in my bubble of “you're not good enough.”

Game Over. There's a saying that I recently heard that says, “Sometimes the wrong train will take you to the right station” (from the movie The Lunchbox, referenced in the K-drama, Crash Landing on You). The plan that I had for myself at the beginning became something different over the last four years. There were detours, pit stops, and roadblocks along the way, but in the end, I'm where I want to be. So, full steam ahead.



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Stephanie Carrera
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Kareena Randhawa
Jimena Rodriguez

CSU Chico
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CSU East Bay
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Congratulations Ch...



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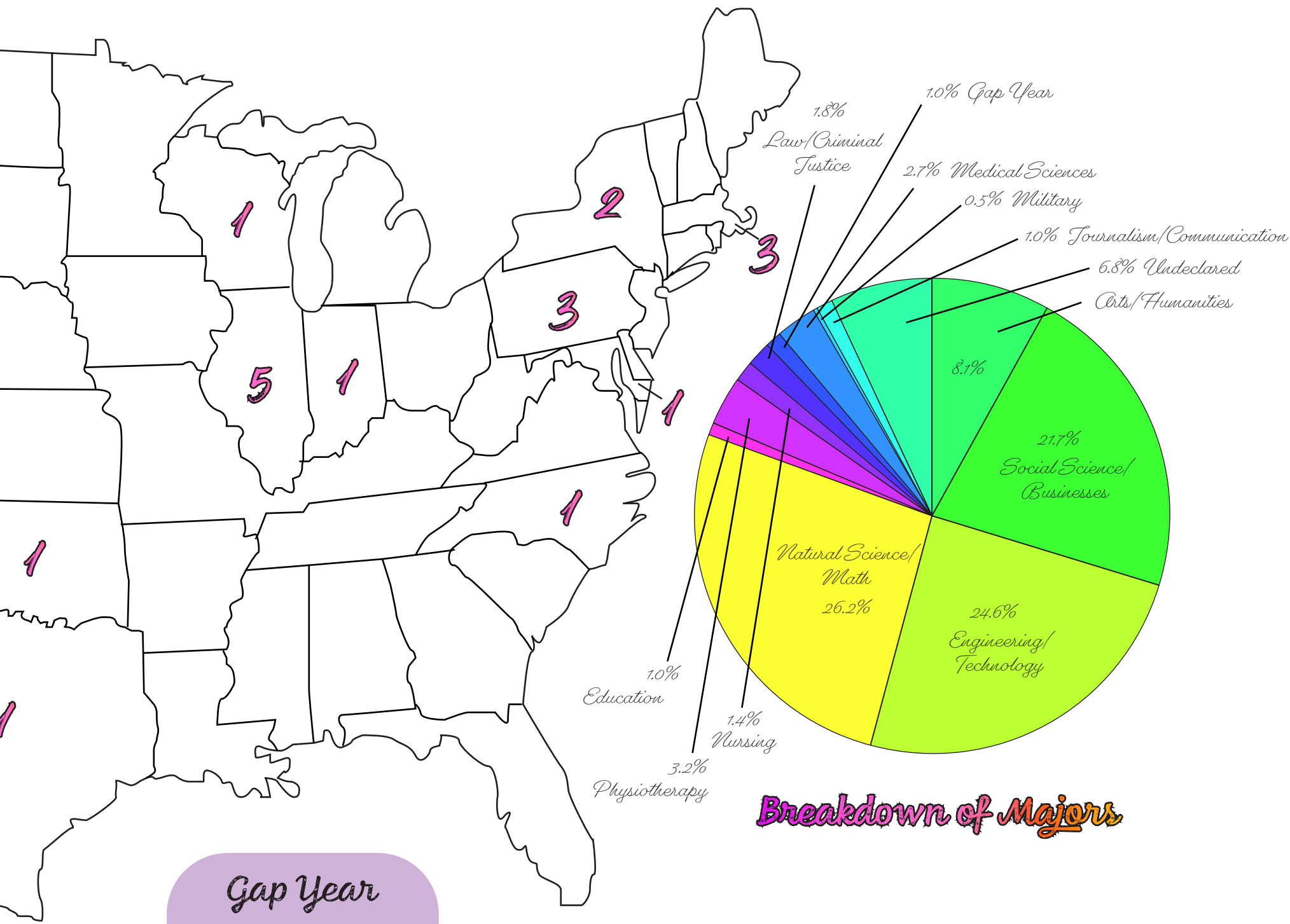
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Class of 2020!



Breakdown of Majors

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S. Marine Corps
Jonathan Moriwaki

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Raji Kachana

San Diego State University
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APART IN DISTANCE, BUT NEVER IN HEART

How the AHS community is adjusting to social distancing while making mental health a priority

Annie Liu
Editor-in-Chief



This year, ASB decided to hold virtual Springfest activities in an attempt to keep the AHS community connected. “Everyone is going through something. Whether it’s good or bad, worse or better, it’s important that we all have a safety net,” said Urbano. “The AHS community will always be here to support and motivate everyone, especially when we’re all home and separated from people we care about.”

Stuck at home, away from friends, and attending classes via Zoom. With quarantine and shelter-in-place orders being in effect, this time period can definitely be a challenge for many students to adjust to. As social distancing becomes the new normal, it is impacting students in different aspects.

For senior Prisha Davda, this period is definitely a trying time. “I feel stressed and overwhelmed because I have so much time to overthink things and because of the uncertainty in the world,” she describes. “I definitely feel trapped...[and] I don’t feel that connected because I’m not out and about [as I normally would be].”

She’s not alone. As students face the challenges that quarantine has brought to their emotional health, the AHS counseling department has recognized the importance of providing support and is working extensively to be a resource in order to help students maintain their mental well-being.

“Counselors are available to meet with students virtually. We have been sending weekly updates to students (as well as parents/guardians) with information and resources,” explains Ms. Nahigian, an AHS counselor. “[We] also sent out a survey to students in order to assess student needs and determine the best areas for support.”

Much of the distress that social distancing can cause is the feeling of being disconnected with others. Ms. Nahigian explains, “For students who are struggling right now, I would encourage them to reach

out to their counselor or another trusted individual in their life. This time period can feel very isolating, but it is important for students to know that they are not alone and that people are here to listen to them.”

For Leadership, which plans school activities throughout the year, maintaining that sense of community and unity during this time is a top priority. Within the past two months, Leadership has put together several virtual events, including Springfest, the Art Show, and Alumni Project.

“News about COVID19 is flooding social media, so we thought it would be great to do something fun to keep our school’s spirits up! We hoped that it would reconnect people because we’re all cooped up at home,” explains ASB President Phoebe Urbano (12). “The events we’ve held virtually were more directed for our staff and students to have an ‘escape’ from reality, and allowing them to focus on school spirit and past memories is a great way to bring about the lightheartedness that our communities need during these hard times.”

These virtual events have been aimed to help students feel heard and recognized during this time, giving them a way to continue to interact and connect with their peers.

“Our Art Show still allowed our artists to express their artwork as well as our students to admire them,” describes Urbano. “We created the Alumni Project to help ease the stress from college decisions—not just

in the present, but we also hope that it will be used for many years in the future.” Regarding future plans, she mentions, “[Leadership is] in the midst of planning more events to bring excitement to home and recognition to our students who’ve lost the opportunity to showcase their skills.”

Academics-wise, online learning has been an unprecedented change for many students. The Fremont Unified School District introduced pass/fail grading as well as a “hold-harmless” clause for second semester grades, meaning that students’ grades cannot fall below what they were on March 13, 2020. Even with these measures in place, distance learning can be overwhelming, and balancing schoolwork with everything else brought about by the pandemic can be a struggle.

According to Ms. Nahigian, balancing commitments and emotional well being is incredibly important. Between the two,

she explains, “Emotional well being should always be prioritized, as this allows us to do our best in school and work.”

A big part of emotional well-being is taking care of oneself, which has become an even more pressing priority than usual. Ms. Nahigian emphasizes that some of the best ways to prioritize self care is by “doing things that you enjoy, exercising, and keeping in touch with friends and family.”

For Davda, this is advice that she has taken to heart. She explains that she has been trying to keep herself healthy by exploring various interests during this newfound free time.

“I do some type of physical exercise each day to stay sane. For example, I joined an online Zumba class, and I do classical dance and morning yoga. I found these classes on a college’s website for free. I also paint, watch TV and movies, clean, and cook,” she explains. At the end of the day, she de-

scribes, “the two things that have made me feel the best during quarantine are exercise and talking to people. These two things improved my mental health.”

As students adjust to the implications of social distancing on their emotional health, the AHS community has worked hard to provide students with as many resources and as much support as possible. Ultimately, many students are trying to maintain an optimistic mindset despite the current situation. In Davda’s case, quarantine has become an unexpected bridge in the transition between graduating high school and starting the next chapter of her life, and she expresses how she’s finding the silver lining: “[Despite how difficult this time is], I’m happy to be able to spend time with my family before I leave for college.”

Additional Resources:

Counselors are available for virtual appointments (via Zoom) Monday - Friday, 8am - 3:30pm. We regularly check School Loop, emails, and voicemails during these hours. If you are experiencing an emergency or are in crisis, please dial 911 or go to the nearest emergency room.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-8255 (available 24 hours/day)

Alameda County Crisis Support Services Crisis Line: 1-800-309-2131 (24 hours/day)

Alameda County Crisis Support Services Local Text Line: TEXT SAFE TO 20121 (4:00 pm - 11:00 pm, 7 days/week). Available for Alameda County residents only.

Communications Come In

How are some students keeping in touch with each other?

Weston Liang
Staff Writer

During these trying times of lockdown, we are all restricted within our households, only leaving to purchase essential items and conduct essential business only. Visiting friends is unfortunately one of the restricted activities. Because of this, students now must resort to forms of online communication. Sure, it may not be the same as face-to-face interaction, but during a time like this, anything can help.

“I use Zoom for my teacher and primarily Discord for friends. Sometimes I’ll call them, but I don’t text that often and it’s usually school related when I do,” responded Vijay Boparai (11).

When it comes to student-teacher communication, the Zoom app is probably the most frequently

used app. However, that choice isn’t 100% agreed upon by all students. Internet memes have surfaced poking fun at teachers for using a program that most students have never heard of. Despite all of this, it may be wise for school matters to be dealt with via Zoom.

“I don’t really like using [Zoom], but I guess it’s the best option for teachers. I wouldn’t want to see teachers using Discord, for example, because that will ruin my impression of Discord,” answered Mengting Chang (11).

Chang’s answer is actually pretty surprising. One would assume that most students would appreciate it if their teachers used something more relatable, like Discord. One of Boparai’s



“Communication is pretty important. On a scale of 1 to 10, I’d give it a 9. Obviously no one is going to communicate 24/7, but communication allows for connections, and connecting with others inspires growth,” Answered Mengting Chang (11) on the importance of communication.

teachers uses it. However, Chang’s reasoning is understandable to an extent. It’s generally agreed that your social life and your school life is to be separated from each other. When teachers begin to use the program you use for communication, it seems pretty invasive. At least that’s how some may think of it. Some other students may not have that much of a problem and some might be fine with the system as it is.

“I think Zoom is a very useful site to use as an alternative to attending school

in person. Unless they find something other than Zoom that offers similar or better features, they should keep Zoom since it is easily accessible and easy to learn how to use,” suggested Yaminah Hasim (11).

Something to note is that while Discord is very popular among many, it may not be as convenient for some. Zoom meetings do not require an account from everyone, but Discord calls do and they can only be hosted among people that have each other’s contacts. Zoom meetings can be entered with

a simple link while Discord is unable to do that. Discord is definitely more suited to easy friend-to-friend communication, rather than to host entire classes. But of course, some teachers have managed to pull it off.

But what makes communication so important? We’ve always been communicating before the lockdowns occurred. Why is communication now all of a sudden becoming such a topic, such as the “stronger together” hashtag?

“Since quarantine, peo-

Continued on 10

SENIOR COMMENTARY: It’s Okay to Be Weak and Pathetic

Trinity Advincula-De Los Angeles
Design Editor

Thank you everyone. All the friends that I’ve made along the way, whether we became close or we were just acquaintances. Those I don’t talk to anymore. All the teachers who have taught me not things that are purely educational, but also about the world we live in, and being human. And who saw something in me that even I didn’t see in myself.

I’ve always been bad with words, so I made this

drawing to hopefully express all that I feel in my heart to everyone who has been with me in my high school adventure. I’ve always loved renaissance and baroque art, and of course, anime. It seems like two things that can’t mix, but even though they’re so different, it feels like they still belong with each other.

Even if it felt like we are in two different worlds, and are so different, the people I have met gave me hope. You helped me realize there is always hope. Even if it feels like I’m so stupid and

small, that I am helpless and incapable of anything, I am capable of doing things. *You* are capable of doing things.

If there is anything I want to tell anyone who struggles to feel like they belong, or they feel like their lives are a waste. You are deserving of life, and you are deserving of love because you were born into this world. No matter who you are, or what you want to be, or what you aren’t, or what you are not good at, you are special because you were born, and you are alive. You will never

be a waste. Please remember that, you are not special because of what or who you are, but because you have a heart, and you are alive. Please take care of yourself and open your heart to the world.

A good friend of mine told me that the greatest freedom in this world is to do something you love. It sounds cliché, but if there is something you love, there is a guarantee that you can change the world with that. After all, what do we have to show for ourselves if what we give the world doesn’t feel real and genuine, right? Even if it doesn’t bring the same fortunes or prospects, if it is something you love, you will be inspired to share that love, and in doing so I truly believe you can change the world. I know it sometimes feels like doing what you love, and giving love, is not something that belongs in this world. But even so you might find that you feel even more free and alive than you ever have in your life. You’ll feel that love is stronger than anything else that comes in your way. You’ll feel you belong.

Thank you to everyone that saw my flaws, and those moments when I was vulnerable and pathetic, yet you still welcomed me

with open arms and warm heart. Warm...warm...so very warm. In this cold world and injustice and pain everywhere, you gave me warmth. Even when you were hurting, you still gave me love and appreciated me. You showed me a new and beautiful part of life each time. You made me feel I had purpose, and I was important.

It’s so easy to feel small against the world, but don’t let the world and people take control of you and discourage you. Throughout these years I’ve learned that the world is full of ugly things, and people who are capable of cruelty. But even in those moments where I lost hope because of those things, the people in my life also showed me many beautiful things, and showed me that life can still be beautiful. They gave me hope even when I felt like there was nothing I could do. Thank you so much for showing and teaching that to me: that life is not what others determine for me, but what I decide for myself. Even if I am pathetic and weak, I can still love people and be loved. I can still do good things, and live a good, fulfilling life.

Thank you for letting me cry and be flawed, and still accepting me. I won’t forget you. My heart is warm.



SENIOR COMMENTARIES

PERPETUALLY UNCOMFORTABLE

Why I've learned to never let myself stay in my comfort zone for too long

Annie Liu
Editor-in-Chief

If someone told you that you could stay somewhere where you'd always feel safe and surrounded by familiar surroundings, it would probably sound like a pretty good deal, right? Four years ago, I definitely would have thought so. Stability, predictability, and a feeling of security—what's not to love?

That's exactly the allure of comfort zones. They present themselves as these perfect sanctuaries where you'll never feel pressured to do anything you're not

sure about or scared of. No risks involved, ever.

Or so it seems. Over the past four years, I've come to realize that there is actually a huge risk in staying in your comfort zone for too long—the risk of stifling personal growth.

Let's set the scene. August 31, 2016: I entered high school as a shy freshman who was used to being quiet and reserved all the time. I never raised my hand in class, rarely talked to new people, and didn't like any

sort of attention. I was the most comfortable with being an unseen part of my community, but I also hated the way that my shyness held me back from trying new things that I was interested in. It was an internal struggle for me to balance out those two opposing feelings, and yet, more often than not, I gave in to the side of myself that told me to just stay within what felt familiar.

However, as high school went on, I slowly decided to venture out and take a few risks. It started off small: things like starting conversations with people in my classes that I didn't know really well or joining clubs that seemed interesting to me. It definitely wasn't easy—I was nervous about attending things such as club meetings. Little by little, though, I started realizing that by being willing to go beyond what I was used to doing, I was able to open myself up to so many new rewarding experiences that I wouldn't have imagined.

At the beginning of my sophomore year, I decided to go one step further and apply for officer positions within clubs I enjoyed. These became my first tastes of leadership, and I still remember how daunting it felt to be given these new roles that held so much responsibility. Never in a million years had I pictured myself in any sort of leadership role, and I was afraid of so many things that could go wrong. Would I mess up important tasks? Was I capable of being responsible for something bigger than myself? The fear of failure was always a lingering thought in the back of my mind, but I tried my best to push it away as I tackled these new opportunities, telling myself that regardless of the results, I was learning from each new experience I put myself through.

By the time junior year rolled around, I'd gained a lot more confidence in myself, and I decided to try something I'd always want-

ed to do but never had the courage for: joining the Eagle Era. Having been an avid reader of the paper since freshman year, I'd thought a lot about becoming a part of it, but I'd always been hesitant about the large amount of interviewing involved. However, seeing the positive effects of previously pushing myself out of my comfort zone, I decided to finally take the plunge.

Journalism definitely threw me straight into some of the worst nightmares my past self could have had—having to interview strangers, school administrators, and even district board members was something that terrified me at first—but I'm so glad I went through that phase, because without it, I wouldn't be where I am today. At the beginning of my time as a staff writer, I was pretty intimidated. I relied on my need to earn a good grade in journalism as my motiva-

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MIR. SAVOIE, MY FAVORITE

How a particular teacher made my highschool career worthwhile

Michelle Fong
Broadcast Editor

The dreadful years of high school have finally come to end, and I am still in disbelief that these years that felt so long had gone by so quickly. Coming into high school my freshman year I thought that it would be filled with drama and classes would not be as difficult as upperclassmen have described to me in their personal experiences. I was partially correct though as my freshman year was a breeze to me since it did not really "count."

During maze day leading up to my sophomore year, I received my schedule and my immediate reaction was "Who is this Savoie, W person?" My friends and I were excited to be placed in the same English 10 Honors class but we were puzzled by this unfamiliar name. All of us started to have brutal predictions of how his class was going to

be like which created more tension between us and a teacher that we had not even met yet. During the first day of school we have already started to hear rumors that he was going to give us a timed-write and we were all stressing out and searching up big words that we could potentially incorporate into the essay. When the fifth period began, we were reassured that the timed-write would not be that day, but the next day he definitely left a bad first impression on us. We questioned how we were going to survive a year of Mr. Savoie.

As the school year progressed, we quickly realized that the reason for his initial persona was because he was new in the district and was not sure of how things were run in a bigger school compared to how school was run in

his previous school which was way smaller. One of the qualities that I admire about him is his ability to turn any situation into a valuable funny memory. I remember one time he really went off on us about chewing gum and eating in class but then the awkward silence and his facial expressions made everyone laugh after. Another time, we had to do a research project and complete a rough draft. Most people were procrastinating and did not start, so he projected our blank rough drafts through the projector and exposed us. Although that was funny, it reminded us that we should be on top of our school work and have better time management so that he would not get the opportunity to expose us again.

Towards the end of the school year, I usually reflect with my friends about how the year went to our teachers and when Mr. Savoie's name came up in the conversation, I realized that he helped me transition from an irresponsible freshman to a sophomore who sud-

denly well rounded and knew what she wanted to do with her life. This all began when Mr. Savoie wanted us to write an intergenerational essay. I had trouble with this essay because of a language barrier between me and my grandparents. However, throughout the interviewing process, I was able to understand what was considered the norm for our culture back in their day and I felt that that helped me grasp onto a closer relationship with both my cultural background and with my family. This was what made me realize that I was interested in news reporting and journalism and Mr. Savoie also happened to be the succeeding Journalism advisor for the upcoming school year.

Having Mr. Savoie as my advisor for Journalism for two consecutive years, it helped me build my interest at a deeper level. Before taking the course, I told myself I was going to just test the waters and see if I liked writing articles and interviewing people but as time progressed, I realized

I like the idea of broadcasting and wanted to give that a try. The way that Mr. Savoie had the course set up allowed for us to incorporate any ideas that we had and he just supported us along the way. During my junior year, I started my own podcast series which I was initially very skeptical about but it actually had a successful turn out. During my senior year, I wanted to try something like the YouTube "Middle Ground" series by Jubilee and started "Halfway Point." Although creating that series was very difficult, Mr. Savoie supported me and my peers and never gave up on us even when the whole editing process became a little annoying. Now that my time being his student has come to an end, I will take everything that I had acquired from him to the next chapter in my life. I am so honored to have had Mr. Savoie as a mentor to me through the most important and rigorous years of my life and I just wanted to say, Thank you Mr. Savoie.

“Bingo!”
Continued

how it was going to turn out. To be honest, these activities have actually brought me closer to friends that I didn't think I was going to become close with. It's making me cherish the moments that I have with them now before we go onto the next chapter of our lives," explained Ulloa.

For students in leadership, including Urbano, this has been their primary goal keeping students and teachers together during quarantine.

"I hope these events will strengthen our relationships and connections with others at school. We want everyone to know that our community is a safe space and that they shouldn't feel afraid to share things that make them happy. Especially with our current situation, it's important to establish that sense of connectivity and friendship."

“Confined at Home with
the Parentals”
Continued

distance relationship. Now that she has to stay home with her parents she feels that it is very difficult to have a day go by without any trivial disagreements.

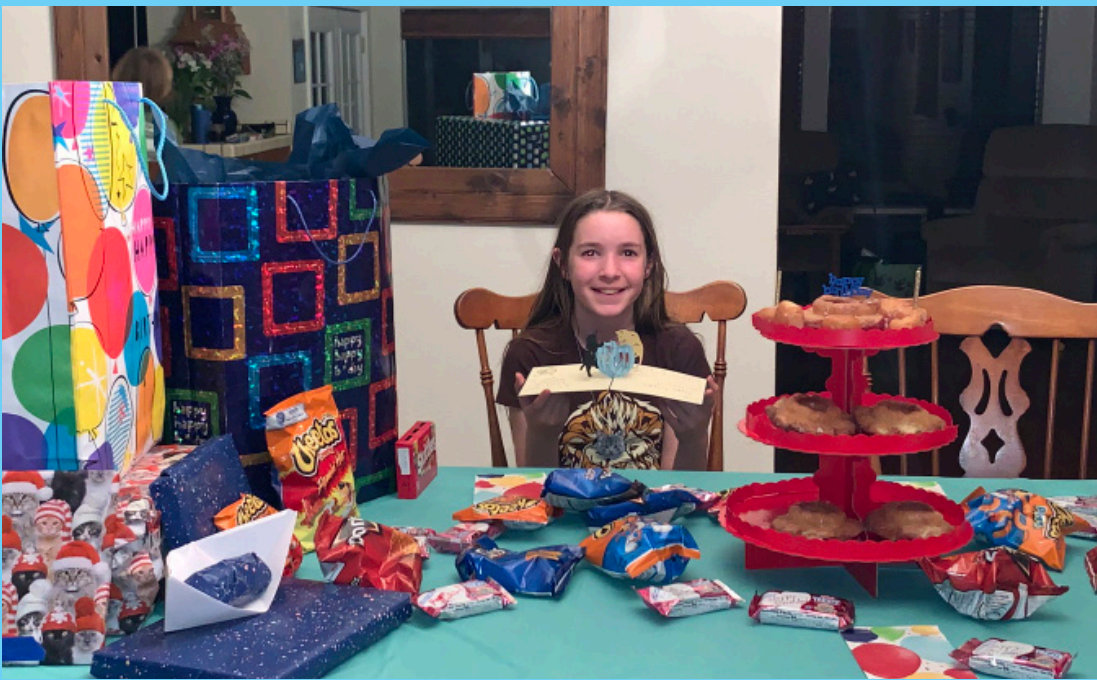
"It is difficult to quarantine with them because we normally don't spend that much time stuck together. We just argue about who forgot to do the chores and just basically everything is petty in my opinion," described Provancher.

She wishes for her family to use quarantine to their advantage as a way for their family to mend the broken bonds that have been set in place before quarantine.

"At this point, we just need to learn to live together without fighting, because there is really no purpose of fighting since we live in the same house," concludes Provancher.

Similar to Provancher, Savvy Giang (9) also experienced communication troubles with his family before quarantine regarding parental favoritism and quarantining is definitely not something he wants around for long.

"I am not very close



Smith celebrated her birthday on April 29th with her immediate family and then had her zoom call on May 2nd with her extended family and friends. Smith admits to being a little disappointed due to the lack of gifts but says, “My aunt’s presents kind of made up for the absence of the other gifts. I think she gave me around 6 gifts.”

“Happy Birthday to Me”
Continued

due to the quarantine.”

If Smith had a normal birthday party, she would have gone to school, hand out goodie bags and have Happy Birthday sung to her by all her classmates. Even though she misses the normal procedure that would have happened, Smith's classmates still sang happy birthday to her via a

zoom session. Her favorite author, Kazu Kibuishi, also dropped into the call and wished her happy birthday which made her day.

Smith's birthday party however, seemed to win the birthday party of the decade. On her five-hour zoom call, Smith celebrated with friends and family. Smith ad a destination

birthday party with her friends, everyone dressing up for a place they would like to visit. Her friends also baked their own cakes for the party.

So, if you have an upcoming birthday that happens to be during this quarantine, fear not as there are ways to make this birthday as memorable as the last.

"My parents still favor my sister in terms of things like chores, grades, and limits. When I was her age it was totally different. For example I was yelled at for going past bedtime but my parents wouldn't even bother telling my sister to sleep on time. I was so mad every time my parents would let something my sister would slip through when I would do the same but get yelled at!" exclaims Giang.

Following the safety guidelines during COVID-19 are very important but sometimes spending so much time in the house with parents can be overwhelming and cause some people to have urges to go outside.

"I feel like I would want to leave the house when my parents are being too controlling over me. For example, my parents will always complain about my sleep schedule whether it's getting too little or too much sleep," says Giang.

"My parents would get on my case about sleeping, studying, and being productive so I just go on walks to clear my mind

and spend quality time with my puppy," recounts Aparajita Vemuri (12).

Similar to Vemuri, Nathan Chun (12) results in going on runs or working out when the tension builds up in the house.

"My mom would find fake Facebook posts and treat them like facts and I would try to debunk them, leading to arguments. My parents and I are too stubborn to change our minds and when this happens I usually just go on runs or workout," explains Chun.

While being teenagers and confined at home with parents is stressful, these teenagers are hopeful that their relationships with their parents will improve in the future.

"I don't necessarily desire an improvement to our relationship, because I'm okay with how it is right now, but it would be good to see a change. I would just want my parents to have the same circumstances against me as to my sister," says Giang.

Perpetually Uncomfortable
Continued

tion to force myself to do interviews. However, as I did more and more interviews, I found that I started to truly enjoy the process. I learned far more than just journalistic writing from being in the Eagle Era—I learned about how to talk to people of all sorts of backgrounds and opened my mind to the stories and experiences of so many people that I may not otherwise have been able to learn about.

And now, as senior year comes to a close, I often find myself reflecting on everything I've done in the past four years. If I had to sum up my high school experience in one theme, it would have to be all the times I've forced myself beyond what felt safe and familiar. Through all those times, I've realized that pushing myself to do what I didn't think I could do has led me to some of the most rewarding opportunities I would ever come across.

I wouldn't be who I am today if I hadn't constantly told myself to keep moving and keep trying new things. I've learned that, ironically enough, I don't really find the comfort in being comfortable anymore. I no longer want to settle for less when I know that I'm dreaming of something more; I want to latch onto that dream and chase after it, even if I'm terrified by all of the things that could go wrong or all of the new things I'd have to face. The biggest thing that kept me from going outside my comfort zone in the past was my fear of failure, but I've realized that failure isn't the end of the world. Instead, to me, it's far worse to decide against trying something altogether than to go for it and not succeed.

A new chapter of my life is approaching soon, and there are so many exciting new experiences that await. Am I nervous? I'd be lying if I said I wasn't. But this time around, I'm more than ready to take the plunge into pursuing my goals, no matter how daunting they may be. I've already started getting involved in extracurricular groups within the college I'm headed to in the fall, and while it's been slightly nerve-wracking to join all of these activities, the question of "should I go for it?" doesn't even cross my mind anymore. No more hesitation. That's so 2016.

Communications Come In (cont.)

ple have been isolated in their own homes seeing the same views everyday. This leads to a boring and monotonous lifestyle. In order to lift up the spirits of the students, they choose to talk with their friends every so often,” explained Hasim.

Many people are starting to realize that they’ve been taking free face-to-face communication for grant-

ed. Now that the choice is restricted, people now put in communication with friends and family as a basic daily necessity. While there are some people that can stand extended periods of time with limited communication, some others require it constantly. Communicating with friends has essentially turned into a new pass-time hobby for

some. Anything to break the now-monotonous life.

Because of this, we should all also try to be grateful that we have such technologies. If you were to go back far enough, it most likely would not be this easy. Imagine if this quarantine occurred during such a time of just landline telephones. Imagine how monotonous life would get.

“I would probably be a slob [and] just not doing

anything at all. I would try to read, but I don’t like rereading books so I would get bored and likely depressed, and just sit in my bed and not do anything,” explained Boparai.

Even though not doing something may seem easier than doing something, in the long run, it will negatively affect your life. During these trying times, it’s now an even more appropriate time to get work done.

If you have schoolwork, finish your schoolwork. Once you’re done with that, work on or find a new hobby. Remember, school is technically still going on.

Hasim herself advises to “Be on top of your work for school but also take breaks whenever needed! Don’t burn yourself out when working and be sure to keep your mental health in check by talking to other people.”

Michelle Lee
Editor-in-Chief

There’s 104 days of summer vacation and COVID-19 comes along just to end it, so the annual problem of our generation is finding a good way to spend it. Like maybe...

THE DO’S AND DON’TS
OF
SHELTER-IN-PLACE

DO

DO keep in contact with your friends

DO binge-watch a TV show or two...or three or four



DO sleep late and wake up late while simultaneously telling yourself that you’ll fix your sleep schedule soon

DO get some fresh air and take a walk while social distancing—bring a family member or your dog if you want company

DO start a garden for some quick and easy produce; waiting period may vary from 1-4 months



DO fulfill that need for a baking montage and bake some sweets—you’re being productive AND getting to eat,

DO pick up a new hobby and attempt it for a day before giving up upon finding out that you’re not instantly good at it



DO binge-watch a TV show or two...or three or four

DO spend time with your family and make silly, irreplaceable memories—go on a picnic in your yard, yell at the annoying antagonist in a movie, argue over how many holes a straw has

DON’T



DON’T travel unnecessarily (go on a stroll if you like, but don’t go trekking through L.A. for a shopping spree)

DON’T spend nine hours playing videogames—go for ten

DON’T cut/dye your hair without a plan; we’re not seeing each other for a few months, not forever (hopefully)

DON’T do stupid things for the sake of TikTok, enough said

DON’T put off those twenty assignments you’ve been given (@people who’re still doing work); time is an illusion, but that unfinished schoolwork definitely isn’t

DON’T bother keeping track of the days—is it Wednesday? Friday? May? June? Get the full Quarantine Experience

DON’T protest wearing masks to stop the possible spread of the virus :)

DON’T neglect yourself; remember to take care of yourself, drink enough water, and remind yourself that you’re loved