

THE PLATINUM PRESS

Volume 10 - Issue 1

Chaparral High School

Temecula, CA 92591

September 30, 2022

The PLATINUM PREVIEW

SCHOOL NEWS



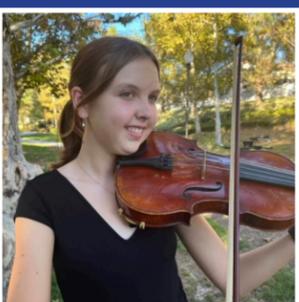
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National Recognition Awarded to Unified Sports

Reagan Delahunty '25
Managing Editor

Unified Sports is an inclusive group on campus that allows students with intellectual disabilities and those without to work together in nationwide athletic competitions called Special Olympics. In these competitions, students of all races, ethnicities, ages, and mental abilities can come together and enjoy a friendly competition without worrying about being judged. This group has become a large part of the Puma community and is celebrated both on and off campus. For the past two years, Special Olympics have been a large part of the Puma community and now, Chaparral High School is officially recognized as a Unified School. Unified Sports Coach Mrs. Cindy Salazar explained the honor the recognition means for the participating students and the Puma family. On top of the annual Special Olympics events, campus culture has evolved and has begun to show greater

acceptance for students with special needs. "Chaparral is an amazingly inclusive school with everything that we are all doing continuously on campus," Salazar commented, while announcing the award. All their hard work and dedication to the games made the achievement possible and a fantastic accomplishment for Unified Sports and Pumas in general. Unified Sports Coach Mrs. Alyssa Gallegos explained how humbling the experience was, being the first time Chaparral was recognized as a Unified School. "I hope that this helps as a reminder to like what our school stands for, and that is having inclusivity on campus and making everyone feel welcome and loved," Gallegos commented. The work, coordination, and planning that goes into the competitions pay off in the end. President of Impact Peer Leader Buddies, Junior Madi Galat, expressed how amazing it is watching students make connections through Unified Sports. She stated, "For me, it's been great to see the connection



Junior Madi Galat and Senior Natalie Evans (left to right) celebrate Chaparral history.

and the bridge between everyone." She explained that both in the classroom and on the field, there are no rifts between students; everyone is a team and works as one. "It's really great to see all the connections and everyone making friends and just becoming one in a unified school and having everyone just together," Galat expressed, emphasizing the many friendships and connections Unified Sports creates. Unified Sports special athlete Senior Natalie Evans continued, saying that the class and the competitions have been "great" and makes everyone "happy" to be in the class and work together with other students. Sophomore Drake Durrance, an Impact and Unified Sports member, explained why the recognition is important to Chaparral. He stated, "It's a big step to show that this is a fun class to be a part of, this

something that you want to do. . . It would help with people joining, wanting to be more involved with the special students on our campus." Durrance stated that being a part of Unified Sports "brings us all together and be one collective community." As the new school year continues, Unified Sports readies themselves for their many competitions to come. Today, September 30, Unified Sports will be competing in a flag football game at Murrieta Valley High School. As they currently hold first in the league, all coaches and students alike who are a part of Unified Sports are excited and are looking forward to all of the new connections that will surely be made during the games. Salazar stated how necessary it is to be a unified school, and recognized that this is only the beginning of "building those bonds and acceptance no matter where the students are in life."



Unified Sports students win National Recognition making Chaparral a Unified School.

Ben Sullivan-Douglass Stops at Nothing to Excel

Katie Ivey '26
Staff Writer

Every spring, juniors are applicable to participate in the Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT). This test allows students to prepare for the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) that they may choose to take during their senior year. It is also an opportunity for students with exceptional academic and leadership backgrounds to apply for the National Merit Scholarship Program. The National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC) awards outstanding seniors nationwide with college scholarships. To become a candidate, they must provide a copy of their test results, a detailed resume of their high school career, a school endorsement, and an essay. Senior Benjamin Sullivan-Douglass scored perfectly on the PSAT and reached National Merit Scholarship Semifinalist status. For years, Sullivan-Douglass has wanted to take the PSAT to prepare for the SAT and become eligible for a National Merit Scholarship. Before taking the PSAT, Sullivan-

Douglass made sure that he studied diligently to ensure that he performed exceptionally on the test, since many colleges require satisfactory SAT scores for serious consideration. When the time came, Sullivan-Douglass felt ready for the PSAT; "I'm in hard math classes, so my math brain has been cultivated," Sullivan-Douglass reasoned. Additionally, both of Sullivan-Douglass' parents are English teachers, granting him opportunities to improve in the subject. Furthermore, Sullivan-Douglass has taken many rigorous courses during his high school career, including a large number of Advanced Placement (AP) classes. AP courses challenge students to improve their critical thinking skills and encourage a growth mindset, further preparing them for standardized testing. Candidates of the NMSC must have leadership qualities; Sullivan-Douglass participates in various extracurricular activities to fulfill this requirement. Sullivan-Douglass is the co-captain of the Varsity Boys Swim team and a Science Olympiad

officer. As a club officer, he is responsible for leading the meetings and helping his teammates. "To be able to step back, and put [others'] interests in front of your own, and then realize that you've grown. I think that's helped me a lot with leadership," said Sullivan-Douglass. Extracurriculars and community service have taught him discipline, work-ethic, collaboration skills, and other leadership qualities. These leadership characteristics, beyond qualifying him for the prestigious scholarship, can help him to excel in other parts of life. Sullivan-Douglass continues to aspire to be one of the National Merit Scholarship winners announced in the spring of 2023 and achieve the title of 'Merit Scholar'. If he wins, he hopes to use the money for tuition at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology; with hopes to become a in-space engineer. Sullivan-Douglass encourages all of his peers and other students to try their best on the SAT. "The score really reflects how well you can study for the SAT, not how smart you are. You shouldn't let it define you."



Senior Benjamin Sullivan-Douglass pushes himself past the limits to reach his goals.

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE



Principal Tina Miller

Pumas,

Another successful school year is underway. Students, you continue to excel in academics, athletics, arts, and extracurricular activities this semester. We hope that you enjoyed Club Rush and found a club that sparked your interest or aligned to your passion. We also look forward to seeing you attend our upcoming events and performances. We love seeing all of our Pumas in the stands and in the audience supporting each other and demonstrating Puma PRIDE.

We are almost halfway through the semester, and progress report grades will be completed soon. If you are doing well in your classes, keep up the great work and do not lose focus. If you need to improve your grades, do not give up. You still have time to improve your grades. Remember to frequently check your grades on Infinite Campus. Please also continue to check out other important school news and events on the main CHS social media links. You can find these links on the Get Connected handout on the CHS website.

Go Pumas!

News Briefs

Names in the News

Noah Billan and Marinne Sheldon receive a Letter of Commendation through the National Merit Scholarship Program congratulating them on their PSAT/NMQT.

Awards

Students on campus were given different awards from the College Board for their outstanding performances on the PSAT/NMQT, PSAT 10, or AP Exams.

National African American Recognition Award (NAARA)

Nalia Nyema wins National African American Recognition Award.

National Hispanic Recognition Award (NHRA) Winners

Angel Parra, Carol Baustia, Christina Maxwell, Dallas Sandoval, David Toschak, Evan Lackey, Mya Salcedo, Pedro Chaidez, Ryan Jara, Samantha Roldan, Sensi Flower, Sofia Perez, and Sydney Vinson win National Hispanic Recognition award.

National Indigenous Award (NIA)

Dalas Sandoval, Joseph Latham, and Sensi Fowler win National Indigenous Award.

NJROTC Begins a Path for Success

Daschle Davenport '24
Staff Writer

As the Navy Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps (NJROTC) move into the new school year, they are prepared for the many events that are planned for the months to come. NJROTC has already showcased their talents and knowledge at some of their recent events with even more scheduled to come.

NJROTC is a diligent course that is built upon self-discipline and leadership skills. Members are ingrained with the values of citizenship, patriotism, and determination as they endure rigorous physical and educational lessons. Training Corps are given the chance to represent the school as they display their talents at large scaled events and competitions. The members of NJROTC will participate in their first competition at Troy High School in Fullerton on October 1. This event will be a physical competition where members will participate in a line of grueling activities, landing anywhere from push-up competitions to volleyball games. "We compete



Credits William Lauper

NJROTC presented colors at a charity golf tournament at the Twin Oaks country club.

against the fifty-two other schools within our division," said Retired United States Marine Corps First Sergeant and NJROTC Instructor Mr. Leo Ruiz. These performances require a tremendous amount of skill and preparation, which is why NJROTC members are currently training in order to execute their work above and beyond given standards. Members display their motivation to improve every day as they train throughout the week, showing their determination at times as early as 6:30 in the morning before school for drills. According to Ruiz, "[NJROTC focuses] on discipline and basic marching techniques." This training requires a great amount of determination but it proves crucial towards their performance at future events. At these competitions, participants will have the chance to present their knowledge from the program, with an inspection that covers everything from their uniform to what they know about military life. Members will then display their physical dexterity and coordination as they move into the

marching and physical portions of this event, where participants complete challenging rhythmic movements. The students show their determination to succeed through the duration of these rigorous competitions.

Not only does NJROTC perform at events to showcase their trained skills, but they also participate in various excursions to learn more about military life. Some members of NJROTC will be able to do this during their trip to the Miramar Air Show. This is an annual air show held at the Miramar Air Station in San Diego. There, they will be given the opportunity to learn more about aviation and other important topics involved with the military education course.

Looking to the future, NJROTC is on a one-way path to greatness as they have already shown tremendous amounts of skill, determination, and dedication through numerous events and training. As members continue to persevere through their events of the coming year, the student body will observe great accomplishments.



Credit: William Lauper

NJROTC members participate in training.

Nice Matters in the First Spirit Week

Kayla Wiley '24
School News Editor

From September 26 to 30, the theme of the week was kindness. Because Nice Matters Week was the first spirit week of this school year. This year, Sophomore Veronica Hoover was the committee lead of Because Nice Matters Week and worked hard alongside Sophomore McKenzie Butt, Freshman Gaby Amaral, and Freshman Caden Twiss to provide the school with an engaging week full of compassion. The four have done all that they can to make sure that students were not only excited to participate in the many lively spirit days of the week, but to also learn a valuable lesson about the importance of embracing empathy.

The first spirit day of the week was Pajama Day. This attire symbolized

students getting comfortable with kindness, which is an important part in preventing bullying from occurring. Jersey Day followed, which was meant to represent teaming up against bullying. Next up was Sunglasses Day, serving as a representation for blocking out harmful bullying. After that, was Black and Purple Day, a visual depiction of the bruises that bullying has the awful potential to leave, both physically and emotionally. Today, the final spirit day of the week, is Green and White Day, meant to stand against bullying and show the student body that a fresh start is always possible.

Throughout the week, the main goal was for students to realize that the way they treat one another matters and will impact the people around them. This type of self-realization brings the student body a step closer to helping the school prioritize the golden rule;

treat others that way you want to be treated. Hoover said, "It's important to spread kindness on campus so everybody feels comfortable with each other." Keeping school a pleasant place to be is crucial for the well-being of all students. When students go to school with the fear of being mistreated by their peers, it affects all parts of their lives, and they dread going to a place that makes them feel uneasy and ostracized. Without kindness, it would be impossible for students to focus in a place that should be full of learning.

This week was a complete focus on showing how being nice to those around you can create a more positive and accepting environment; one that is absolutely necessary for a school setting. The purpose of Because Nice Matters week, as Butt stated, is "spreading kindness around to people that are your peers or people that you may not even know. Just connecting more with one another in a kind way." In order for this connection to happen, it is imperative that the student body keeps empathy in mind. She added, "[It's important] to be kind to people because a lot of people go through things that you don't know about. Whether it's at home or with friends. . . just keep people as happy as they can be." At school, everyone can choose to be kind to those around them and it is best for everyone when that chance is taken. However, each and every student must act as a union and make these empathetic decisions together in order for it to take full effect. Because Nice Matters week is an essential reminder for students that kindness is the first step to keeping school an exceptional place.



Credit: Kayla Wiley

Students display school spirit by participating in Jersey Day during Nice Matters Week.

CHS TUTORING!
Free to all PUMAS!
Math
Tues, Wed, Thurs, Fri
Before School - 7:30am - 8:20am
Library

If you need help in another subject, there is Peer Tutoring

Scan here

Three New Leaders

Loretta Topp '24

Staff Writer

Photos by Loretta Topp

Mr. Lloyd Dunn



Mr. Lloyd Dunn is one of the newest assistant principals on campus, and with his new position, he brings a fresh and welcoming feeling to the school. Coming from Antelope Union Valley High School in Lancaster, where he was also assistant principal, Dunn hopes to make school a welcoming place for students to call their home away from home, and create a close-knit community with both the students and staff. Dunn has been in education for fifteen years, where he taught mathematics for nine years and was the assistant principal for six years at Antelope Union Valley.

The assistant principal position had always intrigued him, but Dunn's reason behind taking the job was rather the school's location. "We always wanted to live in Temecula [or] Murrieta," Dunn stated; the main motive for the move was his kids and the schools around the area that

appealed to him and his wife. This job opportunity was just a push into that direction.

In the short time that he has been here on campus, students have already made it more welcoming than he could have imagined, being friendly to Dunn when he goes into classrooms for checkups. Dunn has also been to several different school sporting and social events; what stood out most to him was the students' and staff's kindness. "Kids who don't really know me, but they know I'm new, come up and say hi to me," he recalled. Dunn hopes to create the same welcoming atmosphere that the students gave him when he first arrived during his tenure as assistant principal.

Having been a teacher for more than a decade, Dunn knows all the ins and outs of high school life. When asked what advice he had to give to the students, he replied, "You can't go to high school twice. I've never met a kid that says 'ah man, I did too much' . . . but lots of people say 'I wish I would have done this and that.' They wish they would have been more involved," he advises, "this is the time to do it." Dunn wants students to be more active in their high school life, and he prides himself in his involvement in pushing students to be the best version of themselves.

Mr. Tim Lucore



Practices, sports schedules, and games in general are now majoritively organized by the newest Athletic Director and Assistant Principal, Mr. Tim Lucore.

Having already been in education for ten years, Lucore previously taught mathematics at Bella Vista Middle School, and later became the assistant principal at Great Oak High School, where he oversaw disciplinary actions on campus. Lucore shared the effect that being in charge of discipline at Great Oak had on him and why he chose to take the job transfer to Chaparral, "Three years of negative interactions everyday takes a toll. Athletics has always been a dream of mine. [I] always wanted to be an APAD—assistant principal athletic director. When the opportunity came here, I jumped on it." Athletics had always been his passion, so the administrators knew

he would be the perfect fit.

Lucore primarily deals with athletics and oversees some smaller departments, like Navy Junior Reserves Officers Training Corps (NJROTC) and Physical Education. He coordinates most of the sporting events by scheduling games and practices, securing officials to manage said games, providing away-game buses, and arranging the punctual arrival of the other schools' teams. "[There are] a lot of things that go into athletics," Lucore said, "that I think people don't see on the outside." The next time you go to a sporting event, keep in mind all of the hard work that is put into it.

After all the madness, Lucore does enjoy his new position. He looks forward to attending work each day, and though working long hours, Lucore does not mind because he is doing something that he is passionate about. Lucore spoke on his new position and stated, "I love working in positivity and the positive aspect of it." As for what he wanted the students to know, "I'm easily approachable, even though I have somewhat of a rough exterior," Lucore shared. If you attend a future football game, or when simply walking to your next class, be sure to flash a smile and wave to Mr. Lucore.

Mrs. Jennifer DeLeon



The new school year has brought in a new face to the Associated Student Body (ASB) family, Mrs. Jennifer DeLeon. DeLeon has worked in education for nineteen years and in that time has worked at elementary, middle, and now high schools. Previously, she worked as the ASB director at Margarita Middle School, where she additionally taught science and math. However, "ASB was [her] favorite part of the day," DeLeon said, so when the opportunity to be the new director at Chaparral was presented, she knew she had to jump on board.

Though the school year has just started, there have been many activities and events that have occurred, run by ASB. The Luau was the first major dance of the year and the event went incredibly well; "We had a great turnout at the Luau," DeLeon noted. However, there are a lot more behind the scenes efforts from

DeLeon that began even before the school year started. According to multiple staff members, the school's business days this year had been the most successful and efficiently organized in a while. When taking over the immense responsibility of ASB Director, DeLeon had one mission in mind for the entire student body: she wanted to make the school feel more inclusive and community-oriented. Recognizing the various individuals, clubs, and organizations on campus, DeLeon aims for every one of the 3,000-plus students to feel included and get involved as much as possible. "I like to create opportunities for different students," DeLeon said, "because some students are involved in sports, some students are involved in academics, and some students are involved in things like ROTC, and since there is such a wide variety of different kinds of students at our school, I'd like to reach out and get them all involved in some way, shape, or form."

DeLeon's words of wisdom to share with the students truly exemplified her main goal of increasing student participation. Her advice was quite simple and came down to two words: "Get involved." Surely, with DeLeon as the new ASB Director, the school will be a fun place to learn.

Enthusiastic FAB Five Demonstrates Strength in Numbers

Kayla Wiley '24
School News Editor

The FAB 5, a spirited group that makes special appearances at different sporting events and keeps the student section engaged, has been decided for the 2022-2023 school year. The official members are Seniors Liam Rosen, Belle Brehm, Marianne Sheldon, Dylan Choi, Nerissa Moore, and Nate Steele. Yet, unlike the previous years, this year's FAB 5 consists of six students instead of the traditional five. Aligning with tradition, most members represent a letter of Puma P.R.I.D.E. Rosen, Brehm, Sheldon, Choi, and Moore portray passion, respect, integrity, determination, and excellence, respectively. Newly, this year's bonus member, Steele, represents the exclamation point at the end of P.R.I.D.E.!

The FAB 5's purpose is to keep the student section lively as they cheer on sporting teams. This is done with energetic cheers and chants that implement Puma P.R.I.D.E. and unity in the bleachers. As a team, the FAB 5 ensures that students are not only having a great time, but are also proud of their school. They hope to inspire every student to act on this pride; being acceptable spectators by respecting all participating sports teams so that everyone may enjoy the game is a big part of this role. Rosen said, "With the FAB 5, you can really make a difference and inspire other people to be more spirited themselves." This has been the goal of the FAB 5 since its creation in the 2017-2018 school year.

Though it is a change, the FAB 5 expressed how having six team members

makes them more compelling. With more numbers, there is greater strength, power,

and ability to make an impact on the school.



Credit: Sophia Tran

This year's FAB 5 demonstrates Puma P.R.I.D.E in their everyday lives to inspire others to follow the same path.

Sheldon claimed, "We need Nate. Like, if you didn't have Nate, you wouldn't be FAB 5." Brehm added, "If we didn't have Nate, it just wouldn't work as well. We need all six of us in order to effectively support our school and bring school spirit." Steele, just like the rest of the members of the FAB 5, is determined to keep the environment of the student section a desired place to be. Throughout the different games, the six have formed a family bond. While they are still known as the FAB 5 due to the five letters in P.R.I.D.E., each of the six members prove essential. They are all a crucial part of maintaining the best possible etiquette for the student section. All six seniors have profound morals and individual traits that make them best-suited for their roles. Sheldon, representing integrity, said, "I'm always trying to align my values with my actions. I feel like I just have a deep moral compass that helps me do the right thing." Steele expressed that he is best fit to represent the exclamation point because "[He is] very loud, outgoing, and usually when you're writing something, you put an exclamation mark at the end to really try to get your point across, and [he feels] like that really describes [him] as a person."

For nearly all of the members, being a part of the FAB 5 has been a dream since freshman year. Now that they have achieved this goal, they are set on inspiring students as they had once been inspired. Future Pumas are sure to remember the legacy that this year's FAB 5 leaves behind as they continue with the goal of making the Go Green section an exciting place to be.

Updated Renovations

Daschle Davenport '24
Staff Writer

During summer break and continuing to this day, the school has undergone many new renovations that have been completed, in progress, and now, newly approved. These modernizations have been split into two years with some of the first year renovations in progress and others finished over the summer. These range from inside of classrooms to the exteriors of all of the school buildings and entrances.

As many have seen, the school has already completed many modernizations. Most noticeably, the school has been painted to both a light gray and a dark gray in many buildings to match the school's theme and colors. Also, the student parking lot was completely remodeled. Along with these more noticeable improvements, new window wraps have been added to school windows, as well as carpets added to all of the classrooms, which has been a nice improvement for staff. "It's nice to have a little fresh look to it," Principal Mrs. Tina Miller said. The school also had the entire pool area fully renovated to include decking, shade, and remodeling the pool itself.

Along with these completed improvements, there are many that are still in progress, as seen around the school. Some of these larger improvements include a new gym lobby on the opposite side of the current one, which will serve as a new entrance for the building, giving the gym a more intriguing sight to walk into. Alongside this renovation, the bathrooms on the same side as the lobby are currently still under

construction. In the 700s area, the math building has not completely finished its painting. This is still planned to be completed sometime this year during one of the holiday breaks, making it easier for the workers as they will not have to worry about students during their project. There are also some smaller improvements that are still planned to be finished, including touch ups on the railings and other little changes around the campus which will make a great difference in the look of the school.

Recently there has been a school-board meeting in which newly proposed school renovation priorities, known as "Phase 2", were discussed and approved by the district. The Phase utilized surveys, which were sent out to district staff members to find out what improvements were needed for campus. Upon an overview of the campus, the district committee has prioritized many new project plans for the next four to five years throughout the school. These new projects include science room upgrades, a new athletic facility, landscape improvements, turf replacement, necessary air conditioning systems, and additional outdoor seating for students. "We plan to really revamp that campus and make it look nicer," District Board member Mrs. Nicole Lash said during the board meeting.

These numerous renovations that have been either planned or completed will add a visually positive look on the campus, and provide the Pumas with a greater feeling of pride for their school. "I think it's just nice to feel like we're up to date with the school" Miller stated to express her viewpoint on the improvements' benefits to the school.

Pumas Fight Against Period Poverty

Alyza Reclusado '24
Staff Writer

All around campus, Senior Carol Bautista has worked hard and made her mark by leading Pumas Against Period Poverty (Pumas APP) to combat the struggles that menstruators face daily. Pumas APP was created to bring attention to the lack of accessible period products in schools and its improper menstruation education given to students. Furthermore, Bautista has set numerous goals for the club to benefit students of all identities on campus. The main focus of Pumas APP is to advocate for the conviction of menstruation being a natural occurrence and nothing to be ashamed of. This mission to reduce the negative stigma surrounding periods and uplift menstruators is carried out by the new implementation of complete and universal access to period products. Since its creation, Pumas APP has garnered waves of support, fostering a caring school community that is committed to putting an end to period poverty.

In the girls' school bathrooms, Bautista's efforts are evident with each facility having new dispensers containing pads and tampons that are easily accessible and free to all. Though these dispensers have provided great benefit to many students, the journey leading up to the implementation was complicated. Although completely natural, periods are considered to be a taboo and private subject that people tend to neglect and shy away from. Bautista's first step was to be willing to step out of her comfort zone before she could start encouraging others to do the same. She expressed, "Finding your voice is the

first thing you have to do. You have to see the issue and want to take action and do something about it." Pumas APP began to make its mark with Bautista initially placing small baskets with free period products in each girls' bathroom on campus for everyone to use. However, sustaining these products throughout the year proved to be a difficult task, as these hygienic

work with Aunt Flow, a company dedicated to supplying free period products to businesses and schools, to implement period product dispensers in girls' bathrooms on campus.

Even with everything that she has achieved to abolish menstruation inequality, Bautista has many more goals set for the future of Pumas APP. She hopes to accomplish more for non-female identifying individuals who do not have access to the girls' bathrooms. Bautista carries around products at all times and will provide them to anyone upon request, with no questions asked. She also has ambitions to expand the cause to other districts, especially those in poverty-stricken areas. Pumas APP encourages people to get involved regardless of identity; Bautista clarified, "Not everybody who wants to combat against period poverty has to be a menstruator themselves." For those interested and willing to help, reach out to the Pumas APP Instagram (@pumasapp), or find Bautista or Roldan to get directions on how to make a change.



Credit: Alyza Reclusado

Senior Carol Bautista stands up against period poverty for students.

Senior Carol Bautista stands up against period poverty for students. items are purchased at substantial prices. Though, for Bautista and Senior Samantha Roldan, another large contributor to Pumas APP, the gain was well worth the loss. Bautista stated, "If it helps someone out, it is definitely worth it." From there, Bautista reached out to figures within the district, sending a Google Document outline to teachers, principals, and district administrators that shared how to take action against period poverty. Soon enough, the district began to

those who can empathize and understand the idea behind the cause. Bautista wants people to reach an understanding about periods and eliminate the negativity and privacy surrounding menstruation, informing people that this natural process is not anything to hide. It is estimated that 17 million menstruators live in poverty in the U.S. alone, but due to students like Bautista and Roldan and school organizations like Pumas APP, period poverty is being resolved, one school at a time.

Staff Facts of the Month

	Instructional Aide	Marquez won tickets to a Miley Cyrus concert off the radio while in line for school. She graduated from Chaparral in 2013.
	History Teacher	Myers loves to travel and has been to all fifty states and all seven continents.
	English Teacher	Ciulla owns over 200 Funko Pop! bobbleheads, a large number from the Star Wars franchise.
	Assistant Principal	One of Dunn's favorite pastimes is birdwatching. He has photographed and documented about 215 so far.
	Activities Director	DeLeon was in a Snapple commercial when she was a teenager.
	English/Yoga Teacher	Fox's cousin's father-in-law is the Dean of Windsor, who conducted the funeral for Queen Elizabeth II.
	Librarian	Beasley is a strong supporter of having animals on campus and believes that they can help improve mental health.

Go Club: Promotes Chinese Culture

Navin Gopalan '24
Copy Editor

The Go Club was established this year by Junior Kevin Yang and Freshman Tony Yang with the purpose of promoting and popularizing an ancient Chinese board game called 'Go'. The club's leaders have been hard at work devising lessons and ways to teach the complex board game to their fellow Pumas. The brothers have been playing Go since they were young, and in starting this club, they hope to improve both their skill and the overall popularity of the game.

The game of Go is an ancient strategic board game that originated in China over 4000 years ago. It plays much like the classic game of chess, but the objective of the game is instead to surround more territory than your opponent; with a larger scope and more combinations of movements, the game is unique and challenging. Club President Kevin Yang was very interested in Go after learning how well-respected the game was from family members in Asia. "Go was always big in Asia," he explained, "but not a lot of people in the [western hemisphere] knew about it. So I decided that starting a club at school was a good way to make it more relevant." However, creating a new club was not without its challenges. Kevin struggled to commit himself to introducing the game to the broader campus. "I kept thinking about

how there was a reason that Go wasn't well-known in the west: it might not be interesting for people." However, Kevin found the courage to ignore such thoughts and simply try it out. "Better to do something and fail," he advised, "than regret not doing it."

The leadership plans to introduce the game slowly and steadily. Kevin, who recently won the North American Go Federation's 2022 Pro Qualification tournament in June, said that "teaching the game and different strategies to get better will be [the club's] main priority. Of course," he added, "we're expecting many people to not know how to play." He also wants to promote love for the game by constructing "fun events such as tournaments, two-v-twos, fun variations of the game, and much more." The main goal of the club is to

allow more people to become aware of the game and increase its relevance. As treasurer of the Asian Pacific Culture club as well, he hopes to encourage more students on campus to learn about the game of Go and embrace Chinese culture. "I was taught a little Go by Kevin," Junior Elijah Lee said. "[I joined the club] to expand my knowledge and overall become a better player."

With a successful meeting in Mrs. Rebecca Holdstein's room on September 26 under their belt, the club's future is bright. "We could expand to bigger scales [in the future]," Kevin theorized, "and maybe get more schools involved." As the club gains footing in its first meetings, they "hope to interest more people with the game and expand the club on campus. . . by hosting tournaments and many other fun events."



Credit: Navin Gopalan

President Kevin Yang and Junior Elijah Lee practice Go ahead of their first club meeting.



The ideas expressed in the Editorials section do not reflect the views of *The Platinum Press* as a staff, but rather those of the journalist who wrote them.

If readers desire to respond to an editorial, *The Platinum Press* values all opinions and welcomes letters to the editor. Just as *The Platinum Press* respects each individual's right to a differing opinion, we ask the same of our readers. Each journalist is well within their rights to express their opinion on any given topic, no matter how controversial that topic may be. This is the intent of an editorial, not only to provide journalists with a medium to express an opinion, but to allow the editorial to be a catalyst for further discussion of a given topic.

All letters must be signed and submitted to Mr. Leonhardi in room 413 or left in his mailbox. They will also be accepted via school email at rleonhardi@tvusd.us

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The Irrational Hate Against the New Princess

Sky Roman '24
Copy Editor

In the most recent years, it is evident how progressive changes have continuously been made within the entertainment industry. Diversifying the casts of movies and television shows to include minority groups that have historically lacked representation is becoming increasingly common. Concerningly, however, there seems to be a large number of communities who oppose this change. The release of the trailer for the Disney live-action adaptation of *The Little Mermaid*, which casted Black actress Halle Bailey as Ariel, has become a polarizing issue. On one hand, many praise this diversification as a step in the right direction by Disney. On the other hand, many take unnecessary issues with it. The concerns that many might have regarding the race of this fictional character are baseless, and only goes to show how adamant people are on suppressing the needed representation for minority groups; all of this under the guise of upholding "tradition."

When analyzing the backlash of this film, a recurring narrative can be seen throughout all of this outrage. Many claim that the race of the actress takes away from the story being told, yet *The Little*

Mermaid has nothing to do with Ariel's race. The story follows the adventure of a mermaid, who out of rebellion, decides to leave her home in the ocean and discover a new life on the surface. There is no indication that the events in the movie have any correlation to her race. Ariel being depicted by a Black woman does not change the story in any way, so the pushback makes little sense. Even further, mythical creatures do not have an "assigned" race. While yes, European folklore consist of mermaids, they are not the only cultures in which mermaids belong to. Many others, including various African and Asian cultures depict these mythical creatures, so

or Saturday school. The issue with these rules is that it allows students to think that despite their irresponsible actions, it can easily be disregarded in the form of a detention and Saturday school. When, in reality, a grown adult is not always given multiple chances to make them up, because they are expected to know the consequences that come with their actions. It is contradictory for school systems to teach responsibility and owning up to one's actions, yet enable students to repeatedly make mistakes that can simply be resolved after a simple consequence is given. Informing students of the potential consequences they will be given if they make mistakes only promotes second chances that, in

the real world, some may not get.

In order for students to begin preparing for real world situations effectively, they must also be treated as young adults. When attending college, or anything pertaining to life outside of high school, one is not going to have a handbook on what should, or should not be done. It is up to that individual to make those decisions and learn from their mistakes. Teachers frequently tell students things such as "When you are in the real world..." or "When you are in college, your teacher will not be on top of you," yet continue to treat students as children rather than individuals who will later impact society; students will want to work because their grades depend on it, not because they are continuously being threatened and reprimanded for unnecessary reasons.

often only depicted their struggles and revolved entirely around race. The emergence of movies and shows that depict people of color in shows without their race being used as a plot device is what makes this adaptation so groundbreaking, although it is the bare minimum. Criticism of films and television are nothing new, and when they are legitimate critiques, there is no issue with broadcasting it to the world. However, when these "critiques" are simply just grasping at straws, it becomes increasingly clear that this is just another way to hide their bigotry, as well as their discomfort as the Western film industry strays from what they have grown accustomed to.



Credit: Twitter.com

Halle Bailey's role as Disney's Princess Ariel has sparked unnecessary controversy due to racism against the actress in the film.

no, the race change is not "cultural appropriation" of European folktales either contrary to popular belief. Furthermore, the demographic that are showcasing the most uproar, are not even the target demographic for the movie in the first place. While most of the youth are excited about the real-life depiction of a classic animated movie, older generations seem to be the most offended by this race change. Not only that, but the adaptation is not going to replace the original movie. It will still be available to watch for those who prefer the traditional depiction. Not every movie can be catered toward the wishes of a certain demographic, that is nothing new, so the

amount of outrage for this movie in particular, simply because they do not like an insignificant change in the appearance of a fictional character, is illogical.

It is undeniable how important representation is for all groups of people. The reactions of children across the country, mostly young black girls, for *The Little Mermaid* posted on social media often depicted faces of shock and excitement. Considering the small amount of representation from both animated and live-action Disney princess movies, this was a big deal for many communities as it acts as a sense of pride. Not only that, but it is noticeable that historically, media made to represent minorities

often only depicted their struggles and revolved entirely around race. The emergence of movies and shows that depict people of color in shows without their race being used as a plot device is what makes this adaptation so groundbreaking, although it is the bare minimum. Criticism of films and television are nothing new, and when they are legitimate critiques, there is no issue with broadcasting it to the world. However, when these "critiques" are simply just grasping at straws, it becomes increasingly clear that this is just another way to hide their bigotry, as well as their discomfort as the Western film industry strays from what they have grown accustomed to.

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School Systems Enforce Unrealistic Routines

Hailey Mera '25
Editorials Editor

School has always been a fundamental stepping stone to college, and while this may be, it is also a place where many individuals create habits that will follow them into adulthood. The rules that are enforced throughout many educational environments may seem as efficient preparation for adulthood, but it is not. On the contrary, rules such as these promote impractical mindsets that do more harm than good.

An example of this harmful impact is the rule that when a student is tardy a certain amount of times, they receive detention,

or Saturday school. The issue with these rules is that it allows students to think that despite their irresponsible actions, it can easily be disregarded in the form of a detention and Saturday school. When, in reality, a grown adult is not always given multiple chances to make them up, because they are expected to know the consequences that come with their actions. It is contradictory for school systems to teach responsibility and owning up to one's actions, yet enable students to repeatedly make mistakes that can simply be resolved after a simple consequence is given. Informing students of the potential consequences they will be given if they make mistakes only promotes second chances that, in the real world, some may not get.

In order for students to begin preparing for real world situations effectively, they must also be treated as young adults. When attending college, or anything pertaining to life outside of high school, one is not going to have a handbook on what should, or should not be done. It is up to that individual to make those decisions and learn from their mistakes. Teachers frequently tell students things such as "When you are in the real world..." or "When you are in college, your teacher will not be on top of you," yet continue to treat students as children rather than individuals who will later impact society; students will want to work because their grades depend on it, not because they are continuously being threatened and reprimanded for unnecessary reasons.

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The unrealistic routines enforced in school promotes laziness amongst students.

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In order for students to begin preparing for real world situations effectively, they must also be treated as young adults. When attending college, or anything pertaining to life outside of high school, one is not going to have a handbook on what should, or should not be done. It is up to that individual to make those decisions and learn from their mistakes. Teachers frequently tell students things such as "When you are in the real world..." or "When you are in college, your teacher will not be on top of you," yet continue to treat students as children rather than individuals who will later impact society; students will want to work because their grades depend on it, not because they are continuously being threatened and reprimanded for unnecessary reasons.

With the teachings that entail real life occurrences such as taxes, bills, and being a homeowner, school is a major step prior to college life; after all, this is where students gain their knowledge about careers and schools. In addition, the rules that schools have so heavily instilled in students do not allow the formation of more responsible mindsets. While it is recognized that these rules try to enforce responsibility, in the real world, one is not penalized for their actions. Instead, that individual is usually responsible for dealing with the consequences by themselves. One thing the educational system will not fail to do is prepare students to take tests, complete assignments, and focus on academic knowledge. Unfortunately, that is not the case when it comes to preparing us for the real world.

Portrayal of school systems teach academic lessons, rather than real world ones.

Benefits to New Start Times

Isobel Sierleja '25
Staff Writer

Beginning this school year, the start time is pushed back an hour later in order to allow students to receive proper sleep. This later start means that individuals must begin sports practice, homework, and all after school activities later in the day. Of course, the annoyance students carry is understandable, however, in the long run this change should be viewed as an extremely beneficial one.

The new schedule allows students to get more sleep and curate a more mindful morning routine. When people are rushed in their waking hours, it starts their day off abruptly, and can end up tanking their entire mood. However, students can now take advantage of the extra time they have been granted

in the morning in various ways. Whether that means getting an extra hour of sleep, or waking up an hour earlier to take time for themselves. Many students on campus have long term goals they want to achieve, such as reading, going to the gym, or a hobby that they have been wanting to explore. No matter what the goal is, the new schedule can be used to implement one's greatest desires into their morning routine, without sacrificing their sleep schedule. Instead of waiting until the weekend or after school, taking that small, extra hour of time everyday can carry one so much closer to their achievements in a long term setting.

Additionally, starting school an hour later has decreased the amount of tardies in the morning. When students are late to school it can affect a large portion of their day, leaving them to

form subconscious opinions of the kind of person they are becoming. This extra time has also led to less Saturday schools being assigned, and therefore saving students the time they need to enjoy their weekends off. In the previous year, hundreds of students' punishments consisted of giving up half of their Saturday, now however, more and more students get to enjoy their relaxing day off. This overall increases the moods of the students, parents, and teachers on campus.

With the extra hour, students have more time to prepare, plan, and have time by themselves before heading into a busy and productive day. All in all, this new bell schedule is in students' best interest. Starting at eight thirty allows everyone on campus more time to prepare for their day and it allows students to work towards their goals.

Start Times' Uncovered Burdens

Hailey Mera '25
Editorials Editor

In an attempt to rectify students' sleep schedule as well as allow them more time in the morning to get ready, many school districts have made modifications to the arrival and departure times of their schools. In doing so, not only does this place a burden on students who normally partake in other activities outside of school, but it also adds stress on students who now have to stay up later to ensure that they complete their assignments. It may seem as though this new change is in students' best interest, but what is constantly being overlooked are the personal lives led outside of school. Students are not solely subjects of education, students have lives outside of homework and tests.

Granted, waking up at eight in the morning may seem like a luxury compared to last year's schedule. However, it affects much more than just when one wakes up. With the new school times, many students' existing schedules are compromised; sports and extracurriculars being the biggest factors. While not every student participates in these events, a majority of those in school do. With this, practice times are being pushed an hour later, causing students to get home later than they would usually. This leads to interruptions within one's designated time to complete assignments, attend work, or any other outside responsibilities held by that student. Now, students must



Students' personal lives are being interfered by the ineffective demands.

compromise their set routines to ones that are insufficient as well as an immense burden.

In the first month or two of school, the weather changes drastically from what seems like endless, heat filled days in the summer to the windy and cool temperatures experienced in the fall. Following the change of temperatures, the sun begins to set quicker. Most students do not even get home until thirty to sixty minutes after school gets out due to traffic or waiting on their transportation for long periods of time. At this juncture, the sun is then setting at a quicker rate than it was in the summer. Consequently, those who walk home or complete errands after school are now stuck with the unsettling reality of having to accomplish these tasks in the dark. Inconveniences such as these not only inflict fear into

the students, but the families that they belong to. What was once viewed as a convenience is now a disadvantage to most.

Oftentimes, the negative effects this schedule poses upon students are neglected because individuals think that waking up later makes everything suddenly better. Meanwhile, what those who made this decision failed to take into consideration, was how students have separate priorities outside of school. Whether it be involvement in a club, sport, work, or even babysitting one's sibling, these activities take time. Although an hour may not seem like a drastic difference from a surface level, those who are now deprived of the luxury of being able to go home, eat food, and get some homework in before practice or a club meeting, would definitely say otherwise.



The new school schedule allows students more time to rest and prepare for the busy school day ahead.

Involvement in Sports Does Not Determine Students Stature

Brielle Olson '26
Staff Writer

Many believe that participation in sports determines a person's overall popularity and worthiness of social acceptance. When it comes to sports, most think that it takes being on a team to even be recognized by the supposed "greater part of high school society." In reality, it has been shown that being part of a sports team can be both beneficial and detrimental to students. While it can promote a sense of accomplishment, it can also, should someone not make the team, bring on feelings of self doubt. Furthermore, sports improve physical health, but can be very demanding both mentally and physically.

In many schools, sports are viewed as being on the top of the social pyramid, making it appealing for many people to join sports teams. However, when it comes to trying out or getting cut from a team, it can leave many with thoughts of themselves as 'not good enough' or 'not hard-working enough.' One should be a part of a sport because of interest, not peer pressure. People can also feel more pressure based on their grade, gender, or self body image; however, being a part of a sport should not dictate one's feeling of self worth. When someone tries out for a team and does not make it, it

can affect their feeling of oneself and possibly damage their self-esteem based on how they view the situation. That being said, not being part of a sports team should not impact how a person is viewed or perceived by their peers. Playing a sport does not make anyone better than anyone else,

nor should it make people feel less of themselves. A person's self-worth should not be defined by association, but instead based on one's character and personal perception.

While all of this may be true, there is also another point of view that could be taken, because even

though someone might not make a team, it can also show opportunity for growth. For example, when someone does not make the team it can offer an opportunity for character building, and it can also encourage a display of humility among students. In general sports are

heavily funded compared to some of the other activities the school has to offer like art, music, band, or drama. Some people are not athletes but they are artists, musicians, actors, they found passion in something other than a sport. These are often labeled as 'uncool' when held in comparison to sports, when in reality it could be really interesting to someone. However, there are also benefits of participating in sports. When participating in sports it can promote new friendships, and overall physical health. Participation in group activities like sports, can help to promote new friendships with people who share similar interests, and improve necessary social skills, all while doing something of interest or that is a personal passion. However, all of this applies in activities like band or drama as well. Many people can form connections and gain important skills in any passion they have. The teams also have a certain number of spots that have to be filled on the team, leaving the same unfortunate problem with one's feeling of self worth.

People should not join a sport for higher social status, but rather go into it wanting to learn how to play the sport and find something they are passionate about as well as interested in. Involvement in sports should not dictate one's belief of their capabilities or what they are and not capable of.



Academic focused students are often overshadowed by student athletes, who are seen as superior in the eyes of many.

Advanced Drama Returns to the RoleAbout Theatre Festival

Lauren Padilla '24
Copy Editor

Established over ten years ago, the Orange County RoleAbout Theatre Festival is a one-day performing arts competition held at Woodbridge High School in Irvine, California on October 8. It is open to any scholastic or competitive thespian who qualifies, and Advanced Drama is privileged to participate in this event in nearly all of the categories offered. Performers are judged by professionals as well as fellow students, producing well-rounded evaluations that improve skills and abilities.

Typically, the festival takes place from late October to early November, giving the class additional time to work on other skills and activities. With the competition date quickly approaching this year, groups began rehearsing right away as the pressure to arrange their performances increased. Each day a specific category conducts a workshop in the drama room where they perform their scene and receive feedback from classmates. The group is advised on how to adjust their set, while categories that are not on stage that day, practice on their own in the 200s wing. Many performers are in multiple categories, so they must be attentive to the amount of care they put into each area. A Squad Captain, Senior Sofia Santos,

detailed how this influences their confidence in performing, "I think that my Film and TV scene is going pretty well. . . but for improv. . . we hadn't started off practicing as much." Fellow A Squad Captain, Senior Adam Gromko expresses how his confidence shifts with each rehearsal or mood, "It's very fluctuating. . . some days I'll feel confident with my projection, my acting; [or] the emotional part of it is better than the physical part of it." Sophomore Scarlett Sidley volunteered at the 2021 festival, gaining valuable insight into its lengthy process. Observing peers taught her to "be confident when you're going up and. . . in everything you do." In competition, confidence exemplifies preparation, which is a crucial element that judges look for within a performance.

Advanced Drama is centered around competing against others, so they are ecstatic to venture outside the classroom and perform on a different stage. Drama Teacher Mr. Christopher Irvin eluded, "It's not about the competition. . . it gives us the opportunity as a class. . . [to] share the day together. . . interact with other schools, see the work the other schools are doing, and how the results come." In addition to performers, participating schools are required to bring student volunteers who serve as judges or room monitors. Each role is significant to this day as they bond with their classmates, unwind, and have fun despite the nerves felt from

the stage. Gromko recognized the value in this as he stated, "[We are] very grateful. . . it's something that we never take for granted. . . it is so special and we hold it very dear to our heart." Gromko described how past festivals, including RoleAbout and Fullerton, taught them how to handle not winning every time. He expressed, "Loss is something that is going to happen [recurrently] throughout people's lives. . . and yeah winning is nice, but. . . no matter what happens, you're still with your friends and you're still having a good time." Despite many students not achieving a win, they continued to uphold a good attitude and have fun while performing. Santos advised, ". . . give it your all and you can only do the best that you can do at your scenes. . . it doesn't matter what the judges think because you know you did good."

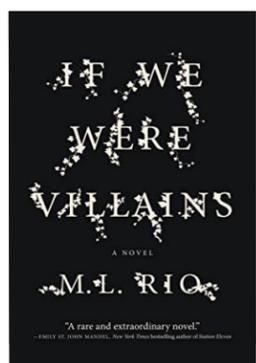
Anticipation spreads through campus as scenes and sets are refined. After the loss of in-person competitions due to the COVID-19 pandemic, performers and audience members alike have gained a renewed appreciation for this opportunity. With all of the preparation put into impending performances, the Orange County RoleAbout Theatre Festival is sure to be a significant event. Irvin concluded, "We've been fortunate that Chaparral has done well at this particular competition in the past, so we'll see, every year is different."



Advanced Drama rehearses their set in order to ready for the upcoming theater festival.



Seniors Adam Gromko and Marissa Crowder prepare for their RoleAbout improv scene.

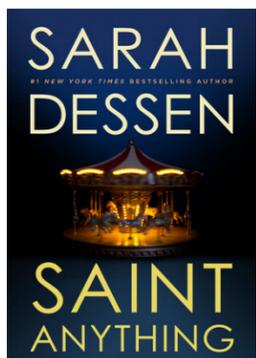


Lauren Padilla '24
Copy Editor

If We Were Villains is a thrilling murder mystery novel written by M.L. Rio that follows the lives of seven intelligent Shakespearean thespians attending Dellecher Classical Conservatory. The story is told from the perspective of one of these students, Oliver Marks. The text shifts from his present-time interactions with Officer Joseph Colborne to his previous experiences surrounding the murder of fellow actor and close friend that took place ten years prior. They observe the students in conservatory education as they build bonds, break friendships, and experience romance, obsession, and jealousy in the pursuit of giving the performance of their lives. Some take embodying their characters too far, manifesting real consequences.

The latter part showcases them coping with regret and anger as they work to maintain their innocence.

The varying timelines work together to aid the reader in putting together this case, yet Rio continues to preserve the ever-changing and shocking end. Though I am not a Shakespeare enthusiast, the Shakespearean references and texts throughout this book presented his work in a pleasing manner that was captivating and simple to understand without being well-versed in his writing. The unique point-of-view and enthralling storytelling make this novel one of my all-time favorites; I never wanted to put it down, and it left me bewildered for days. It reminds readers to not prioritize fame and materialistic things, but rather regard and cherish their relationships as they are what should truly be valued. I recommend this book to anyone who loves solving a mystery.



Reagan Delahunty '25
Managing Editor

New York Times bestselling author Sarah Dessen's Young Adult novel, *Saint Anything*, is a heart-wrenching story following Sydney Stanford after her family is thrown into the spotlight due to her brother's accident. Not being one to enjoy the center of attention, Sydney struggles to come to terms with being known in the public eye. She must learn to forgive her brother and herself in order to move on from the incident and move on with her life. The story follows her as she meets the Chathams who own the local pizza place where she meets Layla, who is welcoming

and befriends Sydney, Rosie, who is secretive but kind, and Mac, who is quiet and protective. The close-knit family helps Sydney take her mind off her own family and immerse herself in a positive environment. Being around the Chatham's, Sydney feels comfortable in herself again. With the Chatham's help, Sydney embraces who she has become and enables her to focus on friendship, forgiveness, love, and most importantly, herself. The story features sweet romance, amazing friendship, and family problems that give most people a connection to the novel.

I recommend this book to any student or staff member who loves a good read. The novel is well-written, organized, and enjoyable to read at any time or place. The story is interesting and relatable, with just enough spark to keep the readers interested while keeping it realistic. This is a story where both tears and laughter will be a common occurrence. The characters' self-conflicts are very relatable and the novel told a story that was both compelling and heartwarming. The relatable story, realistic situations, and lovable characters make it an excellent read that is worth your time.

Chloë Zuñiga '24
Copy Editor

Late to the Party, a coming-of-age romance novel by Kelly Quindlen, is a relatable story about feeling misplaced in high school's extroverted environments. The story follows the introverted, sapphic, seventeen-year-old girl, Codi Teller, through a time of broadening her social and comfort horizons with the assistance of new friends, and the unknowingness of such by her old ones. The main character explores many firsts within the book: kisses, parties, queer relationships, and more. These experiences allow readers to connect to the story, especially with the inclusion of various side personalities and relationship dynamics.

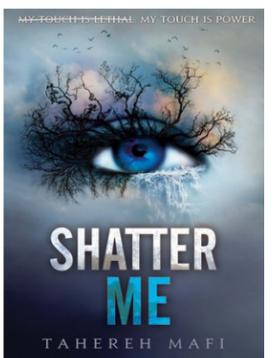
Quindlen avoids stereotypical characteristics when portraying the "popular" and "wallflower" characters and their connections; enabling readers to sympathize with personas that they both differ and relate to. Having endured numerous experiences like Codi Teller's, I identified with her character almost immediately, and found myself unable to put the book down until the final word. The fast-paced writing and objectively short chapters, abundant in enticing situations, aid in the captivity of the novel. While Quindlen's writing includes a coming-out storyline, I recommend this book to those of all identities; its message being rather to "come out" of one's comfort zone and discover a sense of self. All readers can identify with the novel because of its range of representations and narratives that make audiences feel a sense of belonging.



Kayla Wiley '24
School News Editor

Shatter Me by Tahereh Mafi, a New York Times bestselling author, is the first book in a series of six that details a gripping story about a girl deprived of the ability to feel human touch without irreparable consequences. Seventeen-year-old Juliette Ferrars is the heroine of this story; her journey is one of growth as she learns how to deal with her lethal touch. Juliette starts as a frightened prisoner who has been held in an asylum against her will for nearly a year of her life. However, everything changes when she is finally taken out of captivity and turned over to someone new: the mysterious, charming, and intriguing Aaron Warner. Someone who allegedly aims to use her as a weapon against those who oppose The Reestablishment, the controversial institution running this dying world. As the story progresses, Juliette has no idea who to trust and is forced to rely on herself to stay alive through her battles of isolation, fear, and betrayal.

Not only is the plot itself incredibly interesting, but the way the book is written is one-of-a-kind. Mafi's writing is a physical depiction of the torment that goes on in Juliette's mind. Some of her thoughts are occasionally crossed out, she has an obsession with repetition and many unusual hyperboles are used. As Juliette grows, so does the writing style, allowing the readers to fully immerse themselves in the story and gain a deeper understanding of the protagonist. It is extremely difficult to not find yourself caring deeply about what happens to these beloved characters. I would strongly recommend it to anyone who is a fan of the dystopian genre paired alongside the breathtaking enemies to lovers trope; it is a near guarantee to not disappoint.



Blackpink Returns From Hiatus Star Wars Exhibits Diversity

Athena Ebuen '24
Staff Writer

Blackpink is a four member group that debuted back in 2016 consisting of Jennie, Lisa, Rosé, and Jisoo. Since the release of their last album, *The Album*, in 2020, the members of *Blackpink* had not released any new music together as a group, but instead focused on individual projects and participating in other activities outside of Korea. It was not until this year on August 18, when they dropped their single called "Pink Venom." Since then, they have released their official album, *Born Pink*, on September 16 with "Shut Down" as their title track. A worldwide tour is scheduled to begin on October 15 to promote their new album.

Born Pink is *Blackpink*'s new album that was released on September 16, following the release of their music video (MV) "Shut Down." This eighth track album includes "Shut Down," "Pink Venom," "Typa Girl," "Yeah Yeah Yeah," "Hard to Love," "The Happiest Girl," "Tally," and "Ready for Love." Music genres included hip hop, Korean instrumentation, classical, 90s rock, and retro-pop. Freshman Chanel Ejanda, who has been a fan since 2018, said that her favorite songs from the album are "Yeah Yeah Yeah" and "Hard to Love." "I like the beat and instrumentals of those songs. Honestly, their hype songs aren't really my type, but their chill songs are really good," Ejanda expressed. Also, Sophomore Ethan Sandoval



Blackpink featuring in their music video for their new hit single "Pink Venom" that reached 90.4 million views.

shared that his favorite song from the album was "Shut Down" because he can "listen to it no matter what mood [he's] in." Despite the album containing only eight tracks, fans and other listeners are still glad that they have finally produced something

after going on a hiatus for the last two years. Although solo artists Lisa and Rosé have released their solo projects, listeners have hoped that their hiatus as a group did not hint at a sign of future disbandment, referring to the "Seven Year Curse." Their contracts with the company expire after seven years, but the decision regarding whether or not to continue the group rests with them.

Since their debut, they have accomplished many achievements, including at the 2022 Music Television (MTV) Video Music Awards (VMA). *Blackpink* was nominated for a few categories at this year's VMAs. Categories included Group of the Year, Best Metaverse Performance, and Best K-pop. The group won Best Metaverse Performance for their song "Ready for Love" in collaboration with PlayerUnknown's Battlegrounds (PUBG). Much of the *Blackpink* fandom, also known as Blinks, were excited and amazed at the history the group made that night. Ejanda shared her reaction saying how it was a "high achievement" for the girls. Not only did they receive their awards, but they also performed their single, "Pink Venom," becoming the first K-pop female act to perform at the VMAs. After a long wait, their new album, *Born Pink*, has finally been released, catching the attention of fans who have been waiting for the album for quite some time.

Despite being on hiatus for two years, *Blackpink* is still able to make its way back to the top. As *Blackpink* shuts the elevator doors in the MV "Shut Down," they will leave behind

their previous eras as they continue to rise in the K-pop industry. The group has paved its way since their first world tour, *In Your Area*, to Coachella in 2019, MTV's VMAs, and now another world tour, *Born Pink*, setting forth on October 15.

Grace McCafferty '23
Staff Writer

"A long time ago in a galaxy far, far away . . ." *Star Wars: Andor*, a prequel to 2016's anthology movie *Rogue One*, premiered on September 21, 2022.

It follows rebel spy and saboteur Cassian Andor (Diego Luna) and his adventure as the embers of Rebellion against the Galactic Empire spread. *Star Wars* fans are looking forward to the increase in representation throughout the series, as well as a more mature take on *Star Wars*. Rather than focusing on the Sci-Fi aspect of *Star Wars*, *Andor* takes a more adult-thriller approach, focusing on the emerging conflict between the Rebellion and Empire, and the morally-difficult decisions needed to be made by characters like Cassian Andor. After six years of anticipation, *Star Wars* fans are brimming with enthusiasm.

While most of the shows and movies within the *Star Wars* franchise are TV-14, *Andor* is unique in its mature-style and very un-*Star Wars* characterization of their main characters, showing them as morally gray and, at times, bad people. *Andor* will be taking an in depth look into the past, giving fans the chance to hear stories of characters like Cassian Andor, Senator Mon Mothma (Genevieve O'Reilly), and Revolutionary Saw Gerrera (Forest Whitaker), which they have seen on screen but have never been given time to truly get to know. Senior Lucas Fox stated that he "grew up with [*Star Wars*]" and it had a huge impact on his life. Many



Diego Luna playing his starring role Cassian Andor in his new show.

like Fox feel a connection between themselves and the *Star Wars* franchise, as it connects with fans emotionally and, for some, played a significant role in their childhood. Being able to grow with the franchise helps fans keep their connection with the series—rather than continuing on being wistful for their past, fans can experience a new style of filmmaking to help grow their love of the films while the franchise grows with them.

The casting of Latino actor Diego Luna as Cassian Andor is one of many ways that the show approached diversity. While *Star Wars* lacked racial diversity among its cast in the past, fans are ecstatic with the new representation on screen. Senior Liam Rosen gave his insight saying, "*Star Wars* is something that has opportunity for representation and I feel like it has been very lacking," continuing on to mention how he hopes this is a new step forward for the fandom.

While there have been people of color within the franchise, in the words of Luna on DateBook "[The] *Star Wars* universe introduced diverse characters the right way" in the most recent show. Alongside Luna, his coworkers Adria Ajona, Antonio Viña, Muhannad Bhaier, Abhin Galeya, and Kingsley Amadi help add to the diversity within the casting. Going forward, there is hope that more and more representation in the franchise will continue to grow as it already has made steps forward in the new show.

After the long wait, fans can finally relive their childhood. As said by Anikan Skywalker himself, *Star Wars* has brought "Peace, Freedom, and Justice" to our empire and is persistently bringing families closer one film and series at a time. *Star Wars* continues to bring joy to the hearts of their fandom releasing new episodes every Wednesday on Disney+, fans can eagerly await a new path for the *Star Wars* franchise.

McGuire Performs in the World-Renowned Carnegie Hall

Katie Ivey '26
Staff Writer

Many musicians aspire to become celebrated members of their trades. Some wish to become famous; others want to perform in esteemed locations. For Freshman Kaitlyn McGuire, these dreams have already become a reality. Alongside her Youth Orchestra, McGuire performed in the acclaimed Carnegie Hall, where many famous artists, including Billie Holiday, Judy Garland, and The Beatles, have played. In the music world, Carnegie Hall is one of the most prestigious places to perform.

McGuire started her musical journey at the age of seven, learning the violin. "I got inspired [to start playing the violin] because my dad used to watch Lindsey Stirling videos on the T.V all the time, and I was like 'I [want to] do that.'" After a period of playing the violin, McGuire switched to the viola. While these instruments are similar, McGuire noticed the differences in sound and decided to switch to the richer, deeper, and slightly louder viola.

As time passed, McGuire worked to perfect her playing. Eventually, McGuire and her teammates were invited to play in Carnegie Hall. "I was so excited," McGuire said. The Youth Orchestra performed as part of a competition with other orchestras. Her group of young musicians reached the gold tier, the highest award, due to the fact that they



Freshman Kaitlyn McGuire playing her viola as she hopes to reach renowned platforms to showcase her talents.

memorized the songs unlike their competitors. McGuire describes playing in Carnegie Hall as a surreal experience. "It was really beautiful," she said, "I hadn't seen [the theater] before we

walked out on the stage. [We went] straight from being in the back hanging out to [being] on this big stage with a big crowd of people. It's such a change so quickly. It was so fun [and]

it was so pretty." When the Youth Orchestra performed, the audience was packed, almost reaching the maximum. "It's scary," McGuire said, "Even though you have people around you, it doesn't necessarily feel like you have people with you because you have to be silent."

McGuire notes how this experience has significantly influenced her life. "Wow," McGuire expressed, "I went to Carnegie Hall. It's just a part of my music journey... What a great [location for a] first [major performance]." McGuire acknowledges that Carnegie Hall has changed why and how she plays. "Before I knew that we were going [to Carnegie Hall], I was thinking about quitting. My parents kept me going... I [now] want to keep playing because I don't want to stop too early and [prevent myself from] hav[ing] amazing opportunities."

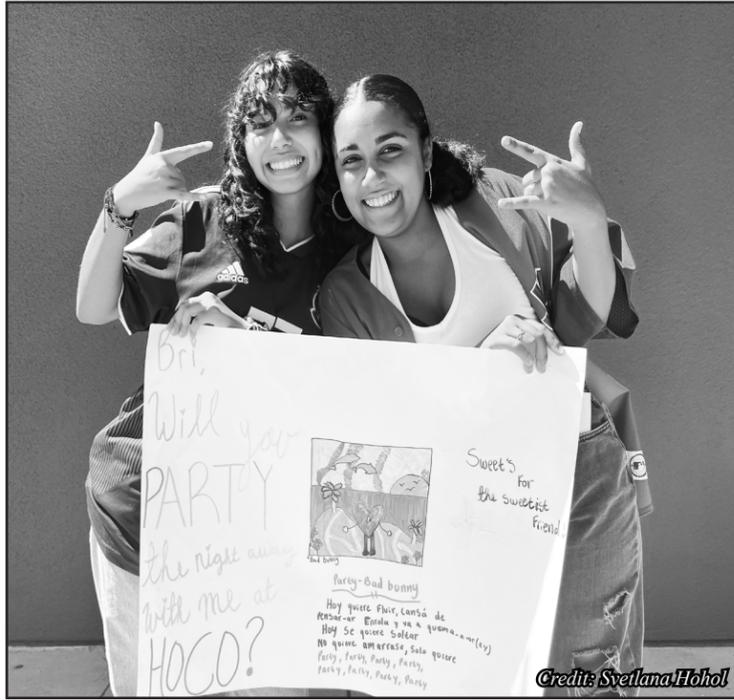
One day, McGuire hopes to become a professional violinist. McGuire anticipates that playing in such an esteemed location will help her stand out when the time comes for college applications. It is a dream of hers to return to Carnegie Hall and perform solo. To achieve this, McGuire has been working tirelessly to improve her playing, becoming a member of two orchestras and taking private lessons. McGuire encourages everyone who wants to step out of their comfort zone to try playing an instrument. "[Starting out,] it's [going] to seem really hard at first," she said. "Practice is a big part of it. Everyone will tell you that, but there is really no other way to get better... Make it something fun."

Homecoming: A Twist on Proposals

Svetlana Hohol '25
Editor in Chief

Months have passed since the Associated Student Body (ASB) has announced this year's homecoming theme as Alice in Wonderland, with the dance taking place on October 15. As the excitement grows with every passing day, so does the anticipation students hold, in hopes to receive a creative and thoughtful homecoming proposal by a special someone. Usually these proposals hold a romanticized reputation, but this year, students have been creating core memories through a slight twist on this high school tradition.

For many, there is much expectation to be asked to homecoming with an exciting proposal and be taken on one of the most joyous nights of their high school years. However, this expectation may lead to disappointment when the big day gets closer and there is no sign of any proposal. This may discourage many people from attending the event, meaning they miss out on important memories. Yet, unlike the stereotypical idea of going with a romantic interest, students like Sophomore Ava Querido decided to create a special memory, a moment one both her and her close friend Sophomore Brianna Corona can share forever. One day, Querido and Corona were having a conversation about being asked to homecoming and when Corona expressed her doubts about receiving a proposal, Querido made the decision to prove those doubts wrong. "I didn't want her to feel like that, so I stayed up all night making a Bad Bunny poster for her," Querido stated. Creating the concept of the poster was no problem for Querido, as Corona always expressed her love towards Puerto Rican rapper "Bad Bunny." After all the preparation, it was finally time for the proposal.



Sophomores Brianna Corona and Ava Querido display joy for this year's homecoming.

As Corona was walking to school, Querido grabbed her attention and surprised her with the proposal. Corona said, "It made me happy and it made me feel very loved and appreciated." Now, the two friends enjoy reminiscing about it from time to time.

Students can still create their own lighthearted moments with the ones they cherish the most. Whether it be platonic or romantic, students can still partake in the popular trend of homecoming proposals. In most cases, homecoming proposals from close friends create a stronger bond with its own special touch. Incorporating meaningful items or designs is what gives the memory of the gift more of an impact. Asking a friend can create positive energy and make one feel more appreciated. Proposing to a friend can be more of an exciting experience, rather than the anxiousness of romantic proposals. It eliminates the stress caused by the possibility of rejection.

These proposals should be stress-free and fun, so that all students can have a positive experience with the tradition. Sometimes going with a date to homecoming can cause awkwardness and nervousness in the atmosphere, which for some, can result in ruining the experience. Querido emphasized, "It's better going with friends, because when you have a date it feels like you have to stay with them the whole night."

It should be more of friend groups having a good time." Homecoming is a time to create exciting memories with people who encourage confidence and happiness. Attending with friends can make one feel more comfortable and enhance their overall experience.

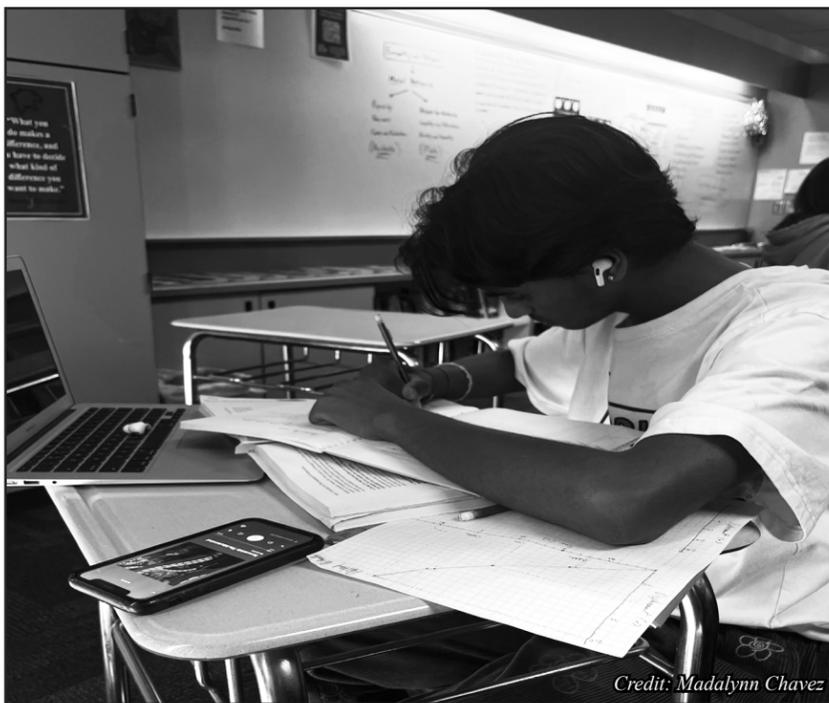
High school is the time to share bonds with others and create heartfelt memories that will last a lifetime. Homecoming proposals are not just for couples; they also are for those who want to embrace and cherish those they care for.

Podcasts: A Beneficial Media Source

Madalynn Chavez '24
A&E Editor

Expanding the mind, learning new information, and understanding alternative perspectives are the principle foundation of podcasts. As technology usage and dependency rises, society's functions are molded around them. In the early 2000s, portable technology changed how people were educated through these new devices. Rather than reading articles or watching the news, podcasts were introduced as an advanced medium of educational entertainment. The creation and consumption of podcasts is a captivating process that has a unique influence on the world.

Podcasts offer content on various topics from addressing deep-rooted societal problems to recorded conversations between celebrities. The highest appeal of podcasts is the practical design that aids in their popularity. Instead of listening to music, podcasts offer similar access but enhanced benefits. Junior Akshay Mittapally, an active listener



Junior Kkshay Mittapally listens to his favorite podcast while he works on his physics homework.

of podcasts since sixth grade, described, "Videos require visual stimuli, if you have a person in front of you sometimes you're not always attuned. When you have it literally in your ear and it's towards you, you're going to listen a bit more." With the diversity of media platforms, podcasts stand out for effectively controlling retention.

Mittapally found that podcasts improved his sleeping habits and widened his knowledge on topics of psychology and technology. Advanced Placement (AP) Seminar and film studies teacher Mr. Christopher Klair has podcast recommendations on his classroom whiteboard for students. Klair began listening to podcasts a few

years ago, starting with comedy and venturing into educational content. Klair finds that podcasts help students understand themes discussed in class. He explained, "When we can actually hear experts unpack their thinking in real time in conversations, sometimes it's a little bit more engaging." While some podcasts offer

Contreras' Message

Suicide Prevention



Aura Contreras

MSW, LCSW, PPSC
Temecula Valley Unified School District
Licensed Clinical Social Worker

Hi everyone! My name is Mrs. Contreras, or Mrs. C for short, and I am the new school social worker at Chaparral this school year. I am excited to be here and looking forward to meeting you.

With that said, September is Suicide Awareness and Prevention month, and although it is a difficult topic to discuss, it is an important one. The more we talk about it, the more we break the stigma around it. Teens who feel suicidal are not likely to seek help directly; however, parents, school personnel, and peers can recognize the warning signs and take immediate action to keep them safe. Suicide rarely happens without warning. As a peer, you may be in the best position to recognize when a friend might need help and help them get it. You may see signs in a person, hear about them secondhand, or see them online on social media. Never ignore these signs.

While suicide is typically associated with the pain of mental illness (in particular depression and associated feelings of helplessness and hopelessness), there are sometimes specific situations that trigger suicidal actions such as breaking up with a partner, failing in school, being bullied, or experiencing abuse, loss or other challenges.

It is important to learn these warning signs and know what to do if you see any of them in yourself or a friend. Suicide is preventable. By listening, talking, and acting you could save a life. When a youth gives signs that they may be considering suicide, get help. No one should ever agree to keep a youth's suicidal thoughts a secret and instead should tell an appropriate caregiving adult, such as a parent, teacher, or school counselor. If you or someone you know needs more resources or are worried about a friend, please reach out to your school counselor. If you or someone needs immediate mental health support, please dial 988 for the National Suicide Prevention Hotline. It offers 24/7 call, text and chat access to crisis counselors.

episodes as short as fifteen minutes, most unfiltered conversations create a run time of two hours. This allows listeners to obtain a range they cannot acquire from other media.

The production podcasts can be as simple as uploading phone recorded audio to a streaming site, or contain an entire set up of microphones and professional editors. High or low-quality, podcasts' main purpose is influencing and educating an audience. In the Career Technical Educational Digital Arts program, a section of the course focuses on developing podcasts. Digital Arts teacher, Mr. David Carlson, made a podcast to better understand what he taught students. His podcast "Virtual Teaching: Stories from the frontlines" consists of two episodes that summarize his experience as a teacher throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Carlson claimed, "I just wanted anyone who heard the podcast from teachers, parents, students or just random people to get some insight to understand what it was like from inside the world of teaching. A perspective that people who don't teach don't have." A common goal of podcasts includes presenting multiple positions on different subjects to

inform consumers. Hearing both sides encourages people to be open-minded when forming their opinions. Ambition to influence others' opinions drives the creator to establish a podcast. Carlson expressed, "It was something I was super passionate about, virtual teaching, I was in the middle of it. I was drowning and I was swimming to the top, everything was right at my level of consciousness." With so many podcasts in the world, it is harder to stand out amongst the competition. Nonetheless, communicating through the format provides an outlet for expression that can impact people.

Finding a podcast to be interested in can be difficult and time-consuming, but the benefits make exploring worth it. Experimenting helps to narrow down what genres and styles are personally intriguing. Searching "Top Ten podcasts" on Google or looking through Spotify's recommendations are great ways to start finding captivating podcasts. Motivating others to explore podcasts, Carlson voiced, "Knowledge is power, learning knowledge through a podcast and getting someone else's perspective on life, I think that's always a valuable thing."

Chaparral High School - The Platinum Press - September 30, 2022

Dobbins Pushes to the Limits

Julian Stanfield '24
Staff Writer



Credits: Stacy Dobbins

Junior Stacy Dobbins places football as a top priority, and will stop at nothing to reach his goals.

Forged by a love of football that has been passed down to him by family, Junior Stacy Dobbins has brought the Varsity Football team an unbreakable drive to keep playing. Entering his third year of playing on the Varsity team, Dobbins is ready to tackle this year's season and sprint past any opponents in his way.

At a young age, Dobbins' family, more specifically his brothers, who also play football, were the ones that got him into football and taught him how to play. "I kinda grew up into [football]," Dobbins explained, "[My brothers] taught me everything I know pretty much and I just started [playing] since I was about five years old." He went on to say that football has been a major focus of his and that the sport "is basically [his] everyday thing." Through football, Dobbins is able to clear his mind, providing him these benefits outside of his physical practices.

As a wide receiver, Dobbins excels in his agility and, as a football veteran, he has developed a strong mentality that causes him to always push himself. He is looking to improve all of his skills this season and help take his team to the California Scholastic Federation (CIF) tournament. To accomplish his goal of improvement, Dobbins practices outside of school and watches videos of the teams' opponents to study their playstyle and prepare for upcoming games. As for his chemistry with the team, Dobbins has a good relationship with his teammates, stating that his time with them is enjoyable. He said that, "I love all my teammates. . .we hangout outside of football also. . .like after the games, we love to hangout and go to In-n-Out."

During last season, Dobbins broke his collarbone in the team's first game; however after seven weeks of recovery, the player unfortunately broke it again.

This made him unable to play throughout the rest of the season. Rather than becoming discouraged from the situation, Dobbins stated that missing out on last year's season has only motivated him to play harder to make up for the time he lost. This determination pushed him to become the player that he is today. Due to last season's injury, Dobbins has said, "[My greatest achievement was] being able to be play [this season] cause I didn't get a chance to play last season [and] it hurt me a lot. . .so I say being able to play now, being on the team, that's an achievement to me."

Currently, Dobbins has no current offers from colleges, but he is working to find one that he hopes is willing to welcome him. Whatever the outcome of his search may be, Dobbins has proved himself to the school to be a truly determined individual who will stop at nothing to play the sport he loves.

Water Polo Takes Over the Pool

Paityn Perry '26
Staff Writer

As the 2022-23 school year begins, sports have become a big part of students' lives—and water polo is no exception. The Varsity Boys Water Polo team started their season during the summer for their training camp. As of now, the boys have gone undefeated and have been putting in maximum effort to keep it that way and eventually win a league championship.

Despite starting the season off with a record of 8-0, the boys have not yet failed to give it their all at practice to keep this record alive. Head Coach Mr. Josh Stone expressed, "We can improve on our ability to play as a team and [trust with] each other." More practices and group bonding sessions outside of the pool will help the players to play better together. Aside from that, the players have been working hard in the pool to improve their general capabilities. "We've been conditioning a ton early on. We never want to go into a game as the less 'in shape'

team in that game." Coach Stone explained. "So far, we've been dominant with our conditioning level, [and] that's helped carry us to wins." Although the team has been on a winning streak, they have not made time for slacking off. The players have been doing a great deal of training, ranging from an hour and a half to two hours every day, to ensure the opposing teams can not keep up. "We win and lose as a team, but we also condition and struggle and fight as a team. We take practice serious[ly] because how you play in games is a reflection of how hard you work during practice" stated player Junior Jack Houglund. "Most teams we play against can't swim with us and get tired before we do; we tire the other teams out." Despite having the weakness of a smaller team size, the boys are able to make up for it with their swiftness, agility, and physicality.

The team has had an amazing start to the season being undefeated, and a factor

that has had a big impact on how they play is their chemistry. The players have strong bonds that continue to grow everyday, especially with many of the boys who have been playing together for three years now. They know and trust each other in and out of the water; and for the newer team additions, the returning players have been nothing but welcoming. Small events like "pasta parties" held together the night before every game, hanging out at school, and having good communication, all help the boys continue to excel. The players have become stronger individuals but they need to be stronger together as well. "Playing as a team instead of hunting for individual stats [is crucial]. Team accomplishments are much longer lasting memories than individual." That being said, the team has great potential and many big opportunities to look forward to. The Varsity Boys Water Polo has an exciting season ahead.



Credit: Chloe Zuniga

Senior Christian Gutierrez practices shots with hopes of continuing a strong competitive season.



Athlete Spotlights



Photos and Spotlights by
Navin Gopalan '24
Copy Editor

Ricardo Martinez '23

Football



Senior Ricardo "Ricky" Martinez first stepped onto the football field as a freshman in 2019. Initially joining the team with hopes to socialize, he became integrated into the football community and instantly became a fan-favorite player, along with kicker on the Varsity Football team. "If you do your job," Martinez said, "you get a lot of credit for it." He especially enjoys hanging out with his fellow teammates and making memories with them. Throughout the football

season, Martinez has shined in the Varsity games, putting six field goals and extra-point-attempts through the uprights. As he continues onto his fourth year on varsity, Martinez hopes to improve his skill set and continue to enjoy playing football. "[The most memorable part of football] for me is every day, going to practice, and making a lot of funny memories with my teammates," Martinez said. "And the games, just having a good time." The football team and its fans have had a great time watching Martinez make the ball soar through the goal posts in attempt of victory each Friday night. "Ricky is the best and most athletic kicker [in] football," teammate Junior Jaiden Willie-Gonzalez '24 said. "He inspires me." In the future, Martinez simply wants to "help his team win" and study English in college while continuing to play football.

Devin Hicks '25

Girls Volleyball



Since freshman year, Sophomore Devin Hicks has dominated the volleyball court, advancing to play on the Varsity team with ease. She highlights her relationship with her cousin as a cause of her initial engagement in volleyball, wanting to simply, "give it a try" in fifth grade, has continued to excel in the sport to this day. Holding the premium position of setter, Hicks has been key to her team's twenty victories this season, as well as their current placing as second in the

Southwestern League. With this position, Hicks takes on the role of being a main leader on the court, as she is involved in and is a major component of every play. The part of the sport in which Hicks enjoys most is the experience of being a team player. "The relationships. . . that we create with the team [are amazing]," she stated. She also loves the traveling aspect of the Varsity games; the team has played as far as Long Beach, California. "Just getting to go places, play your favorite sport, and have fun [are the most memorable experiences]," Hicks noted. Being a sophomore on the team, she is continuously inspired by her fellow athletes as she works to improve her skill. In the future, Hicks hopes to continue her volleyball career in college studying business at Utah State University as a part of their athletic and academics programs.

Benjamin Rochon '23

Boys Water Polo



Senior Benjamin Rochon has been a proud role model in the pool since joining the Boys Water Polo team during his freshman year. He cites an injury during his football career in eighth grade at Bella Vista Middle School as the cause of his dedication to water polo. "I decided that football wasn't really the right 'rough sport' for me," Rochon stated, "so I switched gears." He went on to join the water polo team at Empire Aquatics, along with many of Chaparral's

current water polo players, and lead them to victory. He continued his devotion to water polo the following year, joining the freshman team and quickly advancing to play on the schools Junior Varsity and Varsity teams as the left second position—an important role in helping his team to win six games this running season. "He is hard-working," said fellow Varsity Water Polo player Junior Dylan Ranshaw '24, "and he's always encouraging others to do better." Although Rochon takes multiple Advanced Placement (AP) courses, he makes time for water polo because he loves the group mentality and the community of the team. "It's all about culture," he said, "and working hard and pushing yourself to your limits." After graduating this year, Rochon plans to continue his passion at Riverside City College, while studying forensic science.

Volleyball Spikes Down Competition

Dallin Grey '24
Sports Editor

The Varsity Girls Volleyball team has been putting their all on the courts since the beginning of August, dominating in two tournaments alongside many other non-league games prior to their league season start earlier this month. After a hard-fought season last year that landed the team in fourth in the Southwestern League, the Pumas have come out swinging, hoping to win their league and the California Interscholastic Federation (CIF) tournament.

In preparation for their season, the team's focus every practice was, and is, volleyball basics; footwork, hitting, passing. "We work on fundamentals



Senior Bella Rittenberg soars to strike a ball.

every practice," Head Coach Mrs. Gale Johnson said, "Players need to have solid fundamentals to be successful or we'll end up beating ourselves instead of making [the] opposing team beat us." Before anything else, the team works on hitting the ball over the net, the most

crucial aspect of volleyball. They churn through the motions over and over, engraving the technique in their muscle memory. "I think it's really important that we... have strong fundamentals to be a good team, to beat, like, some of the best teams in our league," explained Junior Chloe Peters, Varsity

defensive specialist and libero. Equally pivotal to the team's success is their friendship. "Volleyball is a high-error sport. Every player makes mistakes," Coach Johnson said. "It's difficult to perform in volleyball if you feel your teammates are unhappy, disappointed, or frustrated with you. Therefore, learning how to be a good teammate is just as important as learning basic fundamentals. . . . When you get to know someone beyond their surface, you have more patience, love, and respect for them." Every season, once Varsity has been chosen, the team will take a three-day beach retreat to strengthen their bond. The team will relax in a hotel together, hang out on the beach, and participate in bonding activities, fostering a sense of family. They also take special care to not allow this relationship to dwindle throughout the rest of the season, ensuring that communication flows on and off the court. "We all mix very well, we love each other," stated Senior Bella Rittenberg, Varsity right side hitter and setter. "That [love] just helps, like, boost each other up."



Senior Makai Ford and Junior Sara Garcia block a ball.

their league has been the principal target for the team all season. After a perfect 16-0 preseason record, the team looks to transfer that momentum to their league games; so far they are 4-1 as of Wednesday September 28, with their lone loss attributed to highly-ranked Vista Murrieta High School. Instead of allowing their drive to falter, the team has been inspired to work hard and prepare well for future games. "Working together and playing smart," Peters noted, are the keys to success in matches. "You practice how you play," Rittenberg added. "If we're working hard, going after balls, talking—that's all going to, like, [translate] into games and. . . we're going to have more confidence because we've worked on it so much."

Beyond the league championship, the Pumas are looking to win CIF and move on to state competition. "I think if we work on just a little bit of things that we're missing, I think we could definitely be up there," Rittenberg stated. In a very competitive league, let alone a very competitive state, the road to such success for the team will be difficult, but the Pumas are nonetheless confident that they will be a top competitor. "We think we could win [CIF]," Rittenberg noted confidently, "It's definitely a possibility." With a rematch against Vista Murrieta scheduled for October 3, the team keeps their eye on the prize as they move closer to those important tournaments.

Freshman Phenoms

Information gathered by
Nerissa Moore '23
Editor in Chief

JACK



YENDES

First introduced to the sport in the fourth grade, Freshman Jack Yendes is one of the Boys Varsity Water Polo team's newest shining stars. Finding strength from Head Coach Mr. Josh Stone, Yendes shares, "Coach Josh Stone inspires me to be a better player everyday." Finding further motivation, Yendes comments on the support and comfort of his fellow teammates, "My whole team works hard at practice and motivates each other to be better." Yendes will continue to grow as a water polo player throughout high school, treading his way to success.

REGAN



HOENE

Just joining the Varsity Field Hockey team this year, Freshman Regan Hoene found herself on the team with a push from teammates, "The coach's daughter, Holly... and mostly everyone on the team [are] inspiration because they are amazing and have such a positive attitude," Hoene commented. Focusing her attention on lacrosse, Hoene wishes to continue her sports career collegiately out of state. Hoene's clear natural talent will bring her far on the field.

Alums Steven Jones and Justin Dedich Continue to Dominate

Jackson Gamero '24
Staff Writer

It is said that only about 6.5 percent of high school football players will end up making it to the collegiate level, with even fewer reaching the highest level of college sports in the Division I (D1) category. However, Chaparral has had two recent alums who have defied the odds—Alum Justin Dedich, a team captain and offensive lineman for the football team at the University of Southern California (USC), and Alum Steven Jones, a starting offensive lineman for the University of Oregon (UO). Currently ranked number seven and number twenty-five, respectively, USC and UO are both top-tier football teams in the US.

Jones started playing football at the age of five, participating in a flag football league. He explained that although he enjoyed watching and playing a wide variety of sports, he was best at football and decided to stick with it. So far in his football career, however, Jones has not been without help. "My parents. . . have been with me every step of the way," Jones explained. "[They] have always been there to help guide me in the right direction." In his time at the school, he was impacted in positive ways. The inclusive feeling on campus helped him build relationships with people on and off the field, as well as helped him

to "understand what it takes to be a collegiate athlete." Despite his success so far, Jones still has things he would like to improve even more, such as certain aspects of his blocking when his team runs the ball. Although he received a plethora of offers from prestigious universities such as the University of Utah and the University of California, Los Angeles, he chose UO, who had additionally offered him a scholarship during his senior year of high school. He had been a UO fan since he was a kid. So far in his time playing collegiate football, some of his favorite memories include beating Ohio State University, a top-ranked team at the time of defeat, and beating the University of Washington.

Dedich, on the other hand, started his time at Chaparral during his sophomore year, when he transferred from another school. The decision to transfer turned out to be a positive, as his time in the school's athletic program helped him to progress substantially. "It was a great decision for me to go to Chap[arral] because it helped [to] leverage me football-wise and helped me get recruited. . . it impacted my life drastically," Dedich explained. Similar to Jones, Dedich was also impacted by the relationships that he formed on and off the field when at the school. Dedich received a multitude of offers from schools such as the University of Mississippi and the University of Arizona, but he ultimately chose USC due to their excellence on both

the football field and in academics. Recently, he was named a team captain of the USC football team, chosen by his teammates. Though, with this honor, comes more responsibility, such as being able to speak up and get the team going, even in difficult situations. Dedich, however, has risen to the occasion, while simultaneously gaining praise

from other teammates in the process such as Andrew Vorhees, one of the top offensive linemen in the nation. "What a phenomenal player, awesome man, great leader. [It was] well deserved. [He is] just one of the best vocal and genuine dudes out there. . .," Vorhees exclaimed. Now, Dedich is ranked by some sites as a top twenty-five interior

offensive lineman in the country. As Jones and Dedich continue to build their own careers at their respective colleges and potentially beyond, they simultaneously leave an everlasting legacy at Chaparral. Both alums hope to continue their football careers after college. Currently, they are both on Associated Press-ranked top twenty-five teams in the U.S.



Former Pumas Steven Jones and Justin Dedich (left to right) excel at the collegiate level, and leave a legacy at Chaparral.



FOOTBALL FAVORITES

PICTURES BY THE PLATINUM PRESS STAFF



WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE CHEER OR CHANT?

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE PART ABOUT FOOTBALL GAMES?

WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR FAVORITE FOOTBALL GAME MEMORY?

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE FOOTBALL GAME THEME?



"We believe that we will win; love that because everyone gets pumped up and everyone starts jumping."
-Natalia De La Torre '24



"My favorite part about the football games is when we make a touchdown because the student section would go crazy."
-Mikayla Ward '23



"My favorite football game memory is when I met one of my best friends at a game."
-Eleanor Chon, '24



"I enjoy the pink out games because it is a great way to show school spirit and cancer awareness, plus it's a great color."
-Melanie Abraham '25



"My favorite cheer is push 'em back and this cheer is called when we are on defense and I think it is a fun cheer that encourages our Pumas."
-Savannah Fuentes '24



"I love the music that they play, like everyone starts dancing along and it's cool."
-Heidi Adams '26



"My favorite football game memory would probably be when I ran down to the field and took pictures."
-Jackson Suemnick '24



"I like the Go Green theme because it represents our school."
-Jonanathon Persechini '24



"Dude I Love Football.' It's just a funny chant and the first time I heard it at my first football game I started laughing uncontrollably."
-Joshua Ferguson '26



"I think having band or cheer come out is my favorite because they look and sound really cool."
-Elijah Lee '24



"I went with my friend, to a football game . . . if our team won, I got to slap him across the face with a handful of paint . . . we won and then I filled my hand with a handful of blue paint and I slapped him across the face."
-Marinne Sheldon '23



"I liked the Las Vegas theme from last year's homecoming game."
-Sofia Cisneros '25



"My favorite cheer is rock with the green because its simple and fun and everyone knows it."
-Leah Supulveda '26



"My favorite part is the level of school spirit, it makes me feel immersed."
-Christian Ebuena '24



"My football memory is when the Puma came over and then gave me a high five, and then we took a photo together."
-Isabella Arrieta '24



"My favorite football theme is the blackout game because it looked really cool in the stands and everyone was decked out."
-Cailyn Griebe '23